

INSPECTION REPORT

COLLEY LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Halesowen, West Midlands

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103793

Headteacher: Peter Greaves

Reporting inspector: Brenda Iles
12000

Dates of inspection: 10th to 13th June 2002

Inspection number: 244342

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Colley Lane
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West Midlands
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Brian Blakemore

Date of previous inspection: 13th October 1997

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14178	Patricia Willman	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents
3692	David Hill	Team inspector	English Art and design	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
17454	Brian Aldridge	Team inspector	English as an additional language Information and communication technology (ICT) Design and technology	
20911	Judy Dawson	Team Inspector	Mathematics Music	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school serves the local community of Cradley, within the borough of Dudley in the West Midlands. Almost all pupils attending the school live locally in rented or small owner occupied accommodation. Fewer parents than average have higher education qualifications. The school provides for a high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language. In addition, it accommodates up to ten pupils from within and beyond the locality with significant learning, social and emotional difficulties who attend an Individual Needs Centre. The area is undergoing considerable change as local housing is demolished and new social housing and private developments are planned. Five hundred and forty-eight pupils attend the school aged from three to eleven of which 224 boys and 243 girls attend full time. The school is larger than most primary schools. At the time of the inspection 141 children were in the nursery and reception classes of whom 78 attended the nursery on a part-time basis. Pupils who have their fifth birthday in the autumn term are admitted to school in September. Those with spring and summer birthdays start school in January. Attainment on entry, measured using local assessment information, shows children's achievements are below average. A quarter of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is about average. Eighty-two pupils have English as an additional language, thirty- six of whom are at the early stages of language acquisition, which is well above average. Eighty-one pupils come from non-European backgrounds, including 59 pupils from the Yemen; a further 22 pupils are of Asian heritage, almost all of Pakistani origin. Nineteen per cent of the pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is about average. Eight pupils have statements. Over 15 per cent of pupils joined or left the school at times other than the usual admission and transfer times during the last year, which is above average. The school is experiencing a period of significant change with a new school building currently being constructed on site and due to open in January 2003. Difficulties in teacher recruitment contributed to a period of instability during last year. Replacement teachers have been appointed and the picture is now more settled.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Colley Lane is a very good school. Very good leadership, clear vision and a high level of care underpin the school's caring ethos and future plans for improvement. There are exemplary arrangements to ensure the full involvement of all pupils in the school's work. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve their best. Children in the nursery benefit from very good teaching and an exciting start to their education. Good teaching of the younger pupils and very good teaching of the older pupils supports learning well. The curriculum is of good quality and the literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented effectively. Standards have risen annually and attainment is at least average in the important areas of literacy, numeracy and science by Years 2 and 6. Pupils have very positive views about their school, behave well and are very well supported. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in reading and geography by Year 6 and in music by Year 2. Standards in physical education are above average at the ages of seven and eleven.
- The headteacher, deputy head and senior staff provide strong leadership and the school is very well managed.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is very good. The Individual Needs Centre offers excellent support.
- The commitment of staff and governors and the capacity for the school to succeed are excellent.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent

What could be improved

- Opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking skills and to use Standard English.
- The quality of teacher assessment in mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in October 1997 very good improvements have been made. All the key issues of the last report have been addressed very well. Standards have risen in reading, writing, mathematics, physical education and geography by Year 6 and in music by Year 2. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and also those who speak English as an additional language is now very good. The work planned for pupils, including those who are more able, is well matched to their specific needs. Provision for cultural development, which was criticised, is now very good and the provision for social, moral and spiritual aspects of learning has also developed to a very good standard. The strengths identified previously, for example, attitudes and behaviour, have been enhanced through excellent relationships. These improvements reflect very strong leadership, staff commitment, a shared vision for the future and the optimism and enthusiasm to succeed at all levels.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

In the test results for Year 6 pupils, trends over time reflect annual gains in achievements for which the school has received a national award. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are continuing to rise largely as a consequence of very good teaching. In this year's Year 6 reading is above average and writing, mathematics and science are average. Speaking skills remain below average; pupils, especially the younger ones, often find it difficult to describe their learning. Pupils' literacy skills are restricted by their limited use of technical vocabulary and Standard English. A significant proportion of pupils have also experienced interruptions to their learning caused through house moves and adjustments between different cultural environments. Standards in other subjects, including information and communication technology and religious education are at least at the levels expected nationally. In physical education in Years 2 and 6, in music in Year 2 and geography in Year 6 standards are above those expected. The high attainment in physical education is supported by a broad range of sporting activities.

Despite very good provision in the nursery and good teaching in the reception classes children's attainment is below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world at the end of their reception year. Speaking skills are a significant weakness for many children. The Year 2 national test results and teachers' assessments in 2001 showed pupils' skills in writing were average but above those of schools with similar free school meals entitlement. In mathematics and reading results were below those of similar schools. These grades do not take account of the proportion of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language and those who joined or left the school at non standard times. The most recent unconfirmed test results show more pupils have achieved average and above average levels and a continuing upward trend.

The pupils who attend the Individual Needs Centre, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make very good progress. They receive very good support and achieve their best. Higher achieving pupils are also well challenged.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to school are very good
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent and personal development is very good
Attendance	Attendance is below average.

The attendance and punctuality of a significant proportion of pupils adversely affects the school's figures. While monitoring procedures are excellent some parents do not support the school's policies and practice well enough. Excellent relationships support learning and pupils' individual needs well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very 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.

Teaching in the nursery is never less than very good and has exemplary features. Two excellent lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. A high proportion of very good and some excellent lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6. These lessons captivate the imagination of the pupils. They have a very fast pace, questioning techniques involve all pupils and the management of behaviour and understanding of pupils' needs are very good. All teachers have very good relationships with pupils and know them very well. Only two unsatisfactory lessons were seen. In one the teacher's subject knowledge was not good enough to sustain the interest of the pupils and in the other the pace of learning was slow because the work set was too hard. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented well and teaching is good in these subjects. Pupils who are more able are challenged to reach their potential and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make very good progress through the very good support staff provide. The weakness lies in teaching speaking skills. There are too few opportunities for pupils to present their ideas using Standard English.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and an exciting range of activities and clubs support learning well. The curriculum is of good quality and the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented effectively.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good. The Individual Needs Centre provides excellent support for its pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Provision is very good. Staff strongly promote positive values, self-esteem and care for others.

development	
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for and procedures for monitoring behaviour and attendance are excellent.

The school has established good links with parents and community groups. The inclusion of community group members in the school's work reflects the aim to celebrate diversity and involve as many social and cultural groups as possible in its provision. This aspect of the school's work is a significant strength which contributes very positively to the standards achieved by Year 6.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent pastoral leadership and there is a very clear direction to the school's work. The deputy head and senior management team offer very good support.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors provide very good support and fulfil their duties effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a very good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses through the systematic monitoring and evaluation of its work.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used effectively and the principles of best value are applied well.

There is a very high level of commitment among staff, governors, pupils and the community to improve the school. Funds are very well managed and day-to-day routines enable the school to run smoothly. Staffing is generous and supports teaching and learning very well. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory and are likely to improve as the school moves to new purpose built premises.

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 and make good progress • Teaching is good • The school is well led and managed • The school provides an interesting range of activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of parents would like their children to have more homework

Inspection evidence confirms parents' positive views of the school. The amount of homework pupils receive is appropriate for their age. Some discontinuity, which arose when some pupils were taught by a number of different teachers, has been resolved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Colley Lane Primary recently received a national award in recognition of its improving standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Several years ago the standards attained by pupils who were about to leave the school were well below average. This year's Year 6 pupils will leave the school with standards at least in line with the average across the country. Standards are also improving in Year 2, though more slowly.
2. In last year's national tests pupils in Year 2 attained levels that were well below average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. When these results are compared with similar schools standards in reading and mathematics were below average and in writing they were above average. More pupils than average attained the higher level 3 in writing which reflected the success of the school's action to raise standards for more able pupils in this aspect of literacy. The proportion achieving the higher level in mathematics was below average. Teacher assessments in science showed attainment was well below average. When evaluating these results, it should be born in mind that the proportion of pupils who join the school with English as an additional language is above average and a quarter of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 have joined the school at times other than the usual admission and leaving times, which is also above average. In addition, not all pupils have benefited from the school's very good provision in the nursery. Attainment on entry to full time schooling is below the local average. The most recent unconfirmed test results and inspection evidence show a continuing rise in standards for Year 2 pupils. Results have improved by 13 per cent in reading and writing and by 10 per cent in mathematics. This reflects the priority placed on developing reading and writing, the more stable teaching situation and greater continuity between classes and year groups. Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Supported by good quality teaching, they improve their standards from below average to average in those two years.
3. Tests for Year 6 pupils in 2001 showed attainment compared to national results and similar schools was average in English and science and above average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher level 5 was above average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Provisional results for 2002 indicate an improvement in the standards achieved by Years 6 pupils; more pupils have achieved the expected level 4 – 7 per cent in English, 6 per cent in mathematics and 18 per cent in science. Inspectors found that standards in Year 6 were above average in reading and average in writing, mathematics and science. There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls and the schools' analysis of the progress made by pupils with English as an additional language, of Yemeni and Pakistani backgrounds, shows they make very good progress. Similarly pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. The support offered to these pupils is very good. The provision in the Individual Needs Centre and the consistent high quality support from teachers and classroom assistants enable these groups of pupils to achieve their best.
4. The analysis of test results is thorough and is used to identify priorities for development and to set targets for individual pupils and groups. The school uses this information to evaluate its effectiveness and to judge what can be done to make further improvements. The quality of this work is very high for pupils who

are supported in the Individual Needs Centre and the pupils themselves are involved in monitoring their personal achievements. This motivates them, raises self-esteem and restores their interest in learning. The measurement of progress from year to year is systematic and thorough but direct comparisons between the attainment of pupils in Year 2 and later in Year 6 need to be treated cautiously as the school is only just beginning to monitor the progress of pupils who join the school with those who have consistently attended Colley Lane.

5. While pupils' performance is monitored through regular teacher assessments there has been insufficient moderation of mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2. Teacher assessments do not consistently reflect how well pupils are performing in relation to their starting points. This is an issue for the school to address to improve its evaluation of the progress of younger pupils to the same standard evident in Years 3 to 6.
6. Information gained from evaluation is used effectively to prioritise raising standards. For example, the performance of pupils currently in Year 3 has risen considerably during the present academic year. Issues of discontinuity in teaching have been addressed. Current provision is very good and, through very good teaching and the support of classroom assistants, pupils have made very good progress and standards are now average in reading, writing and mathematics for this cohort.
7. Standards in reading are a strength. Pupils who receive help from their parents progress faster. By the age of eleven pupils are fluent expressive readers and enjoy a wide range of fiction and non-fiction. Examples of very good modelling of reading and writing by teachers and classroom assistants underpin pupils' success, particularly those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. These features are particular strengths in Years 3 and 6. Many pupils persevere to reach average standards in writing, benefiting from frameworks and plans that support the development of ideas and the evaluation of skills. There is good application of these skills across subjects such as design and technology and science as pupils label diagrams and write reports.
8. The successful use of the 'reading recovery' approach, additional literacy strategies and targeted support for below average, average and above average pupils is effectively raising pupils' personal expectations of what they can achieve and promoting high levels of self-esteem. Consequently, the ethos for learning is very positive and pupils are confident that their best efforts will be valued and that mistakes will be rectified sensitively. Phonics is taught well and pupils use their skills to spell new and unfamiliar words. For example, Year 1 pupils independently attempted to spell words such as *daughter* and *beautiful*, making phonetically plausible efforts and good use of dictionaries.
9. The weakness lies in speaking skills. While pupils of all ages listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, their use of the broad range of language introduced in lessons is limited. Pupils use technical vocabulary when the teachers ask them to but most need encouragement to do so and rely too heavily on their day-to-day language to describe their learning. For example, one pupil pointed out

that a sentence could be more interesting if it had ‘more words that tell you about what it looks like’. The pupil used the term *adjective* when prompted by the teacher to do so. Frequently, pupils do not respond to questions or present their ideas in sentences. There is an over-reliance on single words and phrases in responses. Too little time is allocated for debate and preparing pupils to present their work to an audience. This is an area for development.

10. Seventy-two pupils have additional language needs, thirty of whom are at the initial stages of learning English. The school ensures all these pupils are fully included in all of its activities. The standard of support is very good, consequently they achieve very well. On arrival at the school they are very quickly helped to learn important words to ensure they have a basic vocabulary for day-to-day use. This enables them to adapt quickly to their new school and to make friends. This security helps increase pupils’ confidence so they try hard to learn the important words and ideas they need to contribute effectively in lessons. Pupils who have English as a second and at times third language learn very well in lessons. Pupils whose families are from India, Pakistan and the Yemen are well represented in the higher attaining groups of pupils. Their need to learn English does not hinder the development of their understanding. Pupils who learn English as an additional language and who also have special educational needs learn very well and make very good progress. Attentive teachers, learning support teachers and assistants, meet their needs very well. A very good example of effective learning was seen in information and communication technology (ICT). A pupil who receives support to learn English as an additional language and who has a hearing impairment was supported sensitively to understand the technical vocabulary used by the teacher and to keep up with the rest of the class. These rates of achievement are supported very well by the value the school places on cultures and the home backgrounds of pupils. Pupils see that their home lives are important to the school and the adults who work with them. This gives them confidence and the ambition to work hard. The analysis of assessment data shows the progress of Yemeni and Pakistani pupils is very good and compares favourably with their peers. This reflects the very good quality of support they receive.
11. The school's published results grades do not reflect the below average baseline attainment and low levels of language of many children who attend the nursery and the wide ranging needs of groups of pupils within the school community. The provision to meet the needs of all pupils is very good because of the high profile given to integrating pupils into mainstream education and encouraging all pupils to understand the needs of one another. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. The generous staffing level means that these pupils are given a great deal of assistance in most lessons and this enhances their understanding of tasks, their concentration and their progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Those with a statement of special educational needs are provided with a learning support assistant and also make very good progress. In the files of the special educational needs co-ordinator there is good evidence of pupils with moderate learning difficulties making sufficient progress to be taken off the special needs register. Equally well recorded are examples of pupils from the additional literacy groups and Reading Recovery

Programme who have achieved the national average for their age by the end of Year 6.

12. Pupils' mathematical skills are developed effectively through the implementation of the numeracy strategy. Pupils frequently express themselves more easily using charts, tally marks and logical sequences of sums to explain their calculations. Work in number and data handling are strengths and good use is made of ICT programs to support the communication and interpretation of data. This was evident in a lower attaining set of Year 5 pupils who interpreted pie charts and bar graphs accurately and used ICT to present the survey outcomes. Recorded work in Years 1 and 2 is not well organised, as there are too many worksheets that do not indicate well enough pupils' progress over time. Similarly in science, work does not show clearly enough the progress made by pupils and the over reliance on worksheets masks the knowledge and understanding evident in practical problem situations when pupils use a broader range of strategies to describe their learning. This is an area for further development to raise the standard of moderation and use of assessment data to the very good standards evident in Years 3 to 6. Knowledge of tables and number facts is good across all age groups.
13. Pupils enjoy science and many describe this subject as one of their favourites. Pupils enjoy the practical opportunities they have to grow plants from seed, learning about the growth and care of plants by tending for garden areas and taking part in the school's 'Healthy Eating' programme. Pupils often find it hard to use scientific language when constructing sentences independently in discussions but when adults reinforce the terms and expect pupils to use them as well, they meet the expectations made of them.
14. Standards in ICT are average and there are many opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their knowledge and skills across the range of subjects. Good use is made of ICT to support recording and research. However, many pupils have limited opportunities to use their skills beyond the school day and their physical skills, for example, word processing and controlling the cursor are slow. In music, standards are above average in Year 2 due to the very good teaching of the coordinators in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. The very good teaching observed in the teaching of four to seven-year-olds has not yet had time to make an impact on the standards achieved by older pupils. In geography, standards are above average in Year 6. Good use of educational visits, the local environment and visitors to the school enhance learning effectively. Standards in physical education are a significant strength. Pupils are proud of their achievements in sports and the successes they have experienced. There is a strong culture of sport and encouragement for pupils to achieve well and represent their school. This enables many pupils, including some who find learning in literacy and numeracy difficult, to excel and experience success. There is a healthy awareness of competition, borne out by the overwhelming response of pupils to come very early to school to share a World Cup football match together on television. The crowded hall, the participation of staff and the awareness of rules and fair play were examples of the school's success in generating enthusiasm, interest and participation.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils, including children in the Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, have very good attitudes to school. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is, with very few exceptions, consistently very good. They respond very well to the strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural values promoted by the school. As a result, the relationships they have with each other, with their teachers and with other members of staff are excellent and their overall personal development is very good. This is the foundation of the happy, harmonious and supportive community atmosphere that pervades the whole school. Despite the recent improvement in attendance, the level is still below that of most schools. Most pupils, however, love coming to school and attend regularly. During their time in school pupils develop an awareness of the purpose and value of education and become increasingly mature individuals with a strong sense of responsibility towards each other and the school community. This is a significant strength of the school and represents an improvement since the last inspection.
16. Most pupils arrive at school in good time and settle happily into their activities. They enthusiastically take part in the many interesting tasks, responding quickly to instructions and listening carefully to each other and to their teachers. In the nursery, for example, the children were fascinated and excited when investigating which objects floated and sank in a tank of water. They took turns patiently and one small boy was thrilled when given the job of fetching the towel to dry everyone's hands. He made sure that the rest of the nursery was aware that he had been given an important job. They move in and out of unsupervised activities easily and naturally, making sensible choices and chatting sociably to each other. They understand the routines of the classroom and tidy up carefully and quickly. They help each other and understand the difference between right and wrong and how they are expected to behave.
17. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 participate in all aspects of school life with great enthusiasm and interest. This makes a significant contribution to the individual success achieved by the pupils during their time in school. The majority of parents who expressed an opinion prior to and during the inspection agree that their children like school and pupils' themselves confirmed this view. Many participate in the very good range of school clubs and are particularly proud of the success of the sports teams. They are enthusiastic and well-motivated learners who listen carefully to their teachers and most contribute well to school life. The majority of pupils work hard in lessons, becoming involved and excited by what they are learning. In a Year 5 lesson in the computer suite, for example, pupils gasped with surprise at the outcome of their work. They enjoy their literacy and numeracy lessons, contributing thoughtful ideas to discussion sessions and responding very well to the challenge of mental arithmetic, trying hard to find the correct answers as quickly as possible. For example, in a Year 2 numeracy lesson, the teacher's enthusiasm captured and held pupils' interest throughout, and they made very good progress. One boy commented that he was often bored at the weekends and would much prefer to be at school!

18. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is consistently very good and sometimes excellent which confirms the view expressed by most parents prior to and during the inspection. They play and work happily and constructively together and clearly understand how they are expected to behave. Pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly manner and have adjusted well to the changes to the school day necessitated by the building project. No pupil has been excluded from the school in recent years.
19. Pupils who learn English as an additional language behave well and have very positive attitudes to their work. They are keen to get on with their tasks and work very well together when placed in small groups with other pupils. They listen to the adults who help them with their work and grow in self-confidence as they achieve their targets. They are happy to learn and keen to share their work and learning. The relationships between pupils, teachers and learning support assistants is a key factor in the increasing confidence pupils show during lessons. Some very good mentoring by other pupils was observed during the inspection. Pupils take great care of one another and many pupils who have a good command of English help other pupils who are in the early stages of language acquisition.
20. Most pupils with special educational needs behave well and are fully integrated into the lesson. They co-operate with their fellow pupils and, with the help of learning support staff, their self-confidence and ability to work on their own develops very well because it is part of the planned lesson objective. When working in the Individual Needs Centre, pupils are given a high level of independence and respond very well. For example, pupils enter results into their own file from their computer programmes and receive great pleasure from organising themselves. The transfer of skills, confidence and knowledge to the classroom is very good.
21. Because of the strong and supportive relationships at all levels in the school, pupils' personal development is very good. As a result of the consistent nurturing and valuing of each individual, by Year 6 most pupils are mature, self-confident and well motivated, equipped with a strong sense of values to guide them through the next stage of their education.
22. The school is a happy and mutually supportive community in which each pupil feels special. Pupils have the confidence to ask and answer questions, to express their own ideas and to contribute to discussions without any fear of ridicule. Their response to opportunities to talk about their feelings and beliefs in their personal, social and health education lessons is very good. They listen carefully to each other without interrupting and show concern and compassion for the difficulties of others. Pupils have been involved in fund raising to build a playground for a Romanian school and have learned about the lives of those less fortunate than themselves.
23. They co-operate well in lessons, sharing ideas and improving their work as a result. Although playtimes are boisterous and exuberant, pupils respect the rules and follow instructions willingly. No unkindness was observed and pupils have

few concerns about bullying, confident that the school will handle any such incidents very quickly and effectively. They clearly understand the need to tell someone if they are unhappy. Pupils show good levels of initiative in the way in which they do their jobs around the school. Year 6 have many important responsibilities which they carry out conscientiously. For example, they monitor pupils coming in from the playground during the mid-day break, they come to school early to distribute the dinner registers and take them to the office after registration, and, after election by their peers, they carry out the duties of house captains. They are trustworthy and careful with the school's and each other's resources. They are friendly and sociable individuals who treat adults and each other with respect and natural courtesy because this is the way they are treated by all staff. On her own initiative, a Year 5 pupil took time to write down her thoughts about the school for the benefit of the inspection team. The letter showed a high level of maturity and loyalty towards the headteacher and staff and reflected a deep understanding of the value of the academic and personal opportunities provided by the school.

24. Pupils are involved in many community activities and represent their school with pride, developing confident and mature social skills. Their quiet and respectful demeanour when lining the road for the funeral of an ex-teacher was reported in the local press and gave comfort to the family. They learn about the background and interesting lives of those pupils who originate from the Yemen. They recognise the needs and achievements of each other and celebrate success. Most pupils can successfully organise their own work and make independent choices. They respond well to the discipline of homework and most complete their assignments on time. Even though some of the younger pupils would rather not have to do homework, they understand that it will help them to learn more. Pupils expect much of themselves, they want to succeed and are prepared to work hard to do so.
25. Because of the excellent systems for following up absence and promoting attendance, the overall level of attendance has improved significantly since last year. It is still, however, below that found in most schools and is therefore unsatisfactory. Over one quarter of pupils are missing in excess of ten percent of their lessons and this inevitably has an adverse impact on the continuity of their learning and the overall standards they achieve. The unauthorised absence for the current year is higher than the national average. However, because this statistic includes late arrivals who are actually in school for most of the day, the true level of unauthorised absence is lower than in most schools and this is a very significant improvement over the very high level recorded for the previous year. Much of the authorised absence relates to childhood illness, coupled with an element of long-term absence and holidays taken during term time. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and arrive punctually. An increasing number are awarded attendance certificates and the class award for attendance is sought after. The process of registration is swift and efficient and pupils settle quickly to their lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT

26. The quality of teaching has improved since the last report. It is now very good in the nursery and Years 3 to 6 and good in the reception classes and Years 1 and 2. Three quarters of the teaching was at least good with just over three lessons in ten being very good. Examples of excellence were seen in the teaching of children in the nursery. One excellent literacy lesson was observed in Year 1 and another in the teaching of numeracy in a Year 2 set. These examples reflect strengths in the subject knowledge of staff and very clear understanding of the needs of the pupils. In the literacy lesson the teacher's love of books and language and skill in teaching reading supported pupils very well. Her enthusiasm enabled pupils to generate their own ideas, based on the text they had shared together, to draft a class story which she scribed. This led to a high level of enthusiasm for independent writing. Supportive structures such as interesting text, pictures, word cards and dictionaries helped pupils to achieve their task without interrupting the teacher or other groups. In numeracy, the lesson taught by the coordinator of the age range, had rapid pace, pupils enjoyed the challenge of finding out to recognise odd and even numbers and were excited by the use of digital cameras to record their patterns.
27. Almost three lessons in ten are very good in Years 3 to 6. Almost all the remaining lessons were satisfactory. Two unsatisfactory lessons were observed, one in Year 2 and the other in Year 4. On these rare occasions work in mathematics was too challenging for pupils so they made slow progress or the teachers' subject knowledge was weak in English.
28. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. The organisation of pupils in sets is working effectively and shows very good improvement from the last report. The analysis and use of teacher assessment is evident in lesson planning and consequently pupils' needs across the full ability range are met well. Support teachers and classroom assistants provide support of very good quality. Their knowledge of pupils' needs and their learning targets enable pupils to receive the appropriate level of intervention to guide learning effectively. The majority of teachers and assistants model language well to develop pupils' limited vocabulary. They use sentences that reinforce new words and ask questions to help them assess the pupils' understanding. However, there is insufficient consistency and attention given to prepare pupils to present their learning in formal situations and to seek opportunities for more role-play and debate.
29. In literacy, teachers read expressively to pupils and in all age group pupils listen intently to stories and discussions. Grammar, punctuation and handwriting are taught well and most pupils present their work neatly and with pride. In mathematics, the oral and mental starter provides opportunities for games and rigour in answering questions within specific timescales. This was very effective in Year 3 where every pupil participated using individual white boards and the teacher quickly assessed their understanding from the written responses. In discussion pupils describe their lessons as fun. They value the relationships which enable them to say they do not understand, trusting they will receive further support and explanation until they are clear of the expectations being made of them. Pupils and their parents feel they work hard and believe teaching is good. These views are shared by inspectors.

30. Teachers ensure the full inclusion of pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs in all lessons. Cultural diversity is both respected and celebrated and teachers and support staff give very good quality support, encouraging independence and the monitoring of personal improvement. Consequently, pupils have a very good knowledge of their own learning. Those who benefit from the provision of the Individual Needs Centre are integrated seamlessly into lessons. This reflects the calm, sensitive approach that supports complex individual needs and enables pupils to regain self-respect and participate in activities alongside their friends. The fact that these pupils are not easily distinguished from their peers is a tribute to the success of the provision.
31. A strength in the teaching is the use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across subjects. Teachers plan tasks that are linked to pupils' experiences to help them to understand the relevance of their learning. Pupils' work is marked regularly and conscientiously, but the quality is inconsistent between classes, for example in English and science, and there are occasions when comments do not indicate clearly to pupils what they have to do to improve. Wherever possible pupils are encouraged to use and develop their talents and skills within the community, for example performing songs in the local shopping centre to local senior citizens and participating in sporting events. Through the very good encouragement of the staff and headteacher pupils' achievements are celebrated within and beyond the school and this enriches learning, generates a sense of personal pride and gives recognition for achievements across the breadth of the curriculum. The balanced approach to learning gives purpose to their work and how it might help them in the community. They are taught to create lists and instructions and to present their findings in simple tables and graphs. This approach supports positive attitudes. Writing frameworks help pupils to use description, sequence and structure in their work.
32. The quality of teaching for pupils who learn English as an additional language is very good. They have specific tuition to meet their individual needs but are also assessed correctly so that they work with pupils of similar abilities, including higher attaining pupils. Pupils are well supported by class teachers, learning support teachers and assistants. Teachers' planning takes account of pupils' language needs and they learn very well in lessons. They have frequent opportunities to discuss their work on an individual basis. Their skills in speaking to whole class groups are not as well developed as they could be. However, pupils are helped to learn English colloquialisms and everyday terms as well as vocabulary that is specific to their learning. The learning support teachers' work is effective in this area. For example, in one session a pupil read from a book that highlighted the differences between buses, taxis and vans. The skilful use of illustrations gave the teacher the opportunity to remind the pupil about the names of animals, for example, the walrus driving a taxi in the story. The teacher also seized the chance to reinforce the difference between fiction and non-fiction by asking the pupil if the story was true or not.
33. The quality of teaching from the special educational needs staff is very good. It has a very good impact on the progress of pupils because they are kept busy in a

purposeful and relevant way so that they are well motivated. Pupils' work is based on secure identification of their special needs and leads to an appropriate programme of study. There are very good relationships in the withdrawal groups and pupils share enthusiastically in the success of others. The special needs co-ordinator keeps high quality records, which are used effectively to plan the next stage of the pupils' programme. In lessons, pupils are fully integrated into the main class and work alongside other pupils confidently and often without continuous support. The whole teaching and support staff of the school accepts its responsibility towards special educational needs and plans lessons accordingly. This is a major factor for the successful development of pupils.

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

34. The curriculum in the nursery and reception classes is securely based on the national guidance for the Foundation Stage and provides well for children's overall development, particularly in relation to their language and mathematical needs and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Teachers, nursery nurses and other adult support workers co-operate well to provide children with a rich learning environment with a suitable balance of activities. The children are given opportunities to make choices and to learn to work and play together. The more formal activities in the reception class prepare children for their entry into the National Curriculum in Year 1. Opportunities for learning through play, which are structured to a high standard in the nursery, are not maintained as fully as they could be in the reception class.
35. In the rest of the school, pupils are provided with a rich and varied curriculum. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are included and, in addition, there is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and for their understanding of environmental issues and aspects of citizenship. There have been a number of improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection with transition between each year group building systematically on previous learning. This is accomplished through regularly updating policies, teachers' knowledge and understanding of schemes of work for each subject and the procedures for tracking pupils' performance.
36. Planning is of good quality. It is consistent in format and approach and, together with the strategy of joint planning, raises teachers' expectations. The inclusion of the year group co-ordinators in planning helps to ensure that previous learning is extended continuously and seamlessly. The school has adopted national guidelines for most subjects and is in the process of adapting these to better meet the requirements of its pupils, for example, in art and design. The physical education scheme used has been specially designed to meet the needs of pupils in Dudley, as has the outline scheme of personal, social and health education. The national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills are well understood by teachers and have led to an improvement in standards of attainment. At the time of the last inspection, extended work in English was limited. This has been addressed and pupils are given extra opportunities to develop their writing skills. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils whom English is an

additional language is of high quality. Withdrawal and setting arrangements are designed to ensure these pupils do not miss out on other class activities or subjects. The school makes every effort to include all pupils in a full curriculum.

37. The school rightly gives prominence to the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. Literacy skills are developed well across the whole curriculum; for example, there is some imaginative writing in geography with good use of specific subject vocabulary in science. Planning files in subjects highlight the importance of developing language skills across the curriculum, although some opportunities for enhancing speaking skills are missed. Teachers are also successful in promoting pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects, such as science. ICT is increasingly being used to enhance learning, especially in literacy and numeracy.
38. Pupils who learn English as an additional language have exactly the same learning experiences the school offers to other pupils. This includes many opportunities to participate in the extensive after school activities programme. Learning opportunities identified by the teachers who support pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are carefully matched to the pupils' needs. The school has developed good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy to pupils whose home language is not English, including the use of sets. Classes in their home language, held after school, help pupils keep in contact with their culture and act as a model for the development of their English skills.
39. The school provides very effective measures to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. This is an extremely inclusive school. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, which has improved significantly from the previous inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. It fully meets the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs and has adopted the recent new requirements very quickly. The support provided by both teachers and support assistants is of very high quality and effectively organised. Individual education programmes, including those for pupils with emotional or behavioural needs, have clear targets for pupils to reach, against which progress is reviewed regularly. Pupils with special educational needs are respected and valued members of the school.
40. Learning opportunities are enhanced through the very good range of extra-curricular activities the school offers. These are largely for junior age pupils but some provision is also made for pupils in Years 1 and 2. A number of activities change with the seasons including athletics, rounders and multi-sports and, in addition, there is an impressive list of year round activities which include dance, drama, art and craft, first aid, environment, football, choir and recorders. There is also provision for pupils whose parents are at work through an after-school club and, in order to encourage inclusion, there are extra classes in Urdu and Arabic. Good provision is made for those pupils wishing to learn to play a musical instrument and very good use is made of visits and visitors to enhance learning in geography, history and citizenship.
41. Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is a strength of the school. There has been very good improvement since

the last inspection. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is now very good. There are planned opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their learning with teachers asking them to relate to a wider frame of reference by asking 'why', 'how' and 'where' when questioning the pupils' knowledge and understanding. During lessons in religious education the pupils are given the opportunity to explore and understand their feelings and emotions and how they influence people. In all lessons the pupils and teachers show respect and value for each other's contributions and the school provides a climate of mutual respect and harmony where all views and opinions are well regarded. The school places a high priority on the cultural diversity within the school community and this is a significant feature of the very good provision for spiritual development within the school. Religious education, science lessons and Acts of Worship make a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. This is evident in the manner in which pupils value the beliefs of others, the sense of wonder shown in growing plants in the classroom and the sheer joy of singing praise to God in hymn practice. The school encourages the pupils to develop their creativity especially in dance and art in school productions and in the Easter Holiday Club organised by the school.

42. The provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. The clear and consistent approach to promoting the principles of right and wrong provides the pupils with a strong framework within which they can make their own decisions. During PSHE lessons they are able to discuss and explore their responsibilities. Older pupils are given the opportunity to explore justice by visiting and enacting proceedings in a local magistrate's court. School codes of behaviour and responsibility are displayed prominently around the school and each class has agreed its own code of behaviour.
43. The excellent relationships in the school are a feature of the very good provision for the pupils' social development. Adults in the school provide a very good role model for the pupils showing respect for others. As a result, the pupils learn to relate to others positively. All pupils are included in lessons and other activities and all are fully involved in the school community. The pupils are regularly encouraged to discuss their work and collaborate with one another during lessons, learning to co-operate and support each other. In a range of lessons the pupils are encouraged to share ideas in small groups. This was well established in a Year 1 class where the pupils discussed how man has affected the environment. The pupils gain an awareness of the difficulties facing children in other countries through their support of the Harghita Children's Camp in Romania as well as raising funds for sporting charities. Older pupils value the responsibilities they are encouraged to take by helping at lunchtimes with, for example, younger pupils.
44. The way in which pupils are encouraged to appreciate a range of different cultural traditions has become a strength of the school and its provision is very good. Cultural diversity is celebrated, festivals and special occasions are recognised and the pupils' investigations are well displayed to celebrate the different cultures within the school. Yemeni families have been involved in these activities with the pupils, helping them to explore life in the Yemen, whilst other adults provide after school Urdu and Arabic language classes. All pupils take a pride in their local

community through their studies in history, geography and religious education and they are very aware of the effect humans have on the locality. Their understanding is enhanced by the visits they make to places of interest locally. The school promotes creativity and the performing arts very well. Visiting groups perform dramatic, musical and artistic events in the school with the pupils ranging from ethnic dancing to ceramic murals. The pupils, in turn, take great pride and enjoyment in their own dance and dramatic performances.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS

45. All pupils, including the children in the Foundation Stage, those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are very well cared for at school. The welfare of each pupil is the first priority of all staff and this has created a warm and caring family atmosphere in which pupils thrive. Whilst the procedures for tracking pupils' academic performance are very good and are used well to support the monitoring of pupils' progress on a termly basis in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics and science, assessment information is not yet used well enough to support planning for individual challenge. This is evident in Years 1 and 2 and across the foundation subjects. The procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are very good and provide a high level of personal support and guidance for each individual. The strong relationships between pupils, their teachers and other members of staff are a major factor in the continuity of care provided for the pupils. The overall quality of the care provided for pupils has improved since the last inspection.
46. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' achievements and progress are very good and the analysis of results is used to identify changes that need to be made to the curriculum and teaching strategies. It is most effective in Years 3 to 6 and in the nursery but there is room for improvement in Years 1 and 2.
47. There are very good and effective procedures to identify, assess and meet the needs of pupils who learn English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs. There are very good systems for assessing pupils' needs and monitoring their progress. As soon as problems are identified an individual programme is written and progress towards the targets is assessed. The school monitors the progress pupils make and shares this information with parents. New targets are set as a result of the reviews. These assessments are of very good quality. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is tracked carefully from the earliest stages of learning English until pupils are able to cope independently in classes. The provisions specified in statements of special educational needs are met in full. Links with agencies, such as social services and the school educational psychological service are very good and their expertise is valued.
48. The school uses national and optional tests for English, mathematics and science. The results of these assessments are used to set targets for groups of pupils in all three subjects. Pupils are grouped by ability for English and mathematics based on the outcomes of these tests. Half-termly assessments enable the teachers to move

pupils to different groups if their results show a marked difference in their achievements. In addition, the results are analysed to plot the progress of different groups of pupils - boys and girls, pupils with English as an additional language, those from different ethnic backgrounds and pupils with special educational needs. The effect of measures taken to support pupils, including the ability grouping, is monitored very carefully. In science, for example, it is clear that the support given by learning support assistants has improved the progress of pupils.

49. There has been some analysis of pupils' answers to the questions in the national tests in order to ensure that the curriculum meets pupils' needs. For example, one aspect of the mathematics curriculum used to be taught after the tests, which adversely affected pupils' ability to answer the questions. This aspect is now taught earlier in the year. Each individual pupil's progress is analysed so that the school can assess how good the progress has been from the age of seven. Many pupils have joined the school in the juniors so direct comparisons of the progress of cohorts are not possible. Data about progress from the Foundation Stage to the end of Year 2 is less secure because of differences in the time the baseline assessment is administered in the reception class.
50. The teachers are in the process of evaluating assessment procedures for subjects other than the core of mathematics, English and science. This review is being undertaken very effectively to ensure that each subject has relevant and manageable systems that guide the teachers' planning. In some subjects, for example, religious education and art and design, pupils evaluate their own progress in the juniors. Other subjects are beginning to collect portfolios of work but these are rarely matched to the levels of the National Curriculum.
51. The school has very good procedures and established practices for health and safety and child protection. Regular risk assessments are carried out, although these are yet to be recorded formally. Special emphasis has been placed on maintaining a safe environment during the building work. Risks are identified and managed well by the caretaker, all members of staff and the pupils themselves. The provision for first aid is very good and emergency evacuation is practised each term. Two members of staff are trained in child protection procedures, and the dedication and commitment of all staff ensure that there is a high awareness of this duty of care. Teachers ensure that pupils understand how to use resources safely and are required to conduct risk assessments of the hall and equipment at the start of each physical education lesson. Pupils receive appropriate information about sex, drugs and the importance of good hygiene and diet through the personal, social and health education programme and their science lessons. A range of visitors come to school to talk to pupils about issues of personal safety and the well-supported First Aid Club teaches pupils emergency first aid. Supervision during playtimes and lunchtimes is very good. The lunchtime supervisors are very well organised and treat the pupils with great kindness and good humour.
52. Because of the excellent relationships that teachers have with pupils, the formal and informal procedures for monitoring personal development are very good. As a result, pupils receive a very good level of individual personal support and guidance. Excellent systems to monitor and promote pupils' attendance have been

very successful over the last year, raising attendance two percentage points over the previous year and reducing unauthorised absence very significantly. Every morning pupils are welcomed into the school by staff positioned at the door. The deputy headteacher analyses attendance patterns, contacts parents as necessary and liaises effectively with external services. Pupils receive 100 per cent attendance certificates termly and annually and the class with the highest attendance each week is rewarded. These awards are valued by the pupils and are a significant element in the rising attendance level. The special arrangements for pupils to watch the World Cup football first thing in the morning ensured that they were in school and ready to start work promptly as soon as the match was over. However, over a quarter of pupils miss important lessons through absence and are not learning as much as they should. The computerised system in each class for recording morning and afternoon attendance is quick and efficient, networked through to the office for the collation of statistics. The dinner registers, which are completed each day and returned to the office, are used as a check in the event of emergency evacuation. A particular strength in monitoring and promoting good behaviour in the school is the consistency and fairness with which staff apply the procedures. All staff, including the mid-day supervisors, follow the school's procedures and pupils know and mostly abide by the simple and sensible rules. Neither pupils nor parents express any concerns about bullying and trust the staff to handle any unkind behaviour effectively. The rewards for kind and caring behaviour are sought after and valued and pupils enjoy the whole school recognition of their achievement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

53. Parents have very positive views about the work of the school. They strongly support the values promoted by the school and are very pleased with the care taken of their children and the range of educational and personal opportunities provided. Parents are provided with good information about the school and its activities and many are involved in school life and in their children's learning. As a result, the school has effective links with parents and their involvement both at home and at school has a good impact on learning. The quality of this partnership has been maintained well since the last inspection.
54. The quality of information provided for parents about school life and their children's progress is good. It is practical, comprehensive and informative. Both the prospectus and the governors' annual report for parents contain much useful information about the school and its achievements. There are very good induction procedures for parents of nursery children, including a home visit, which ensures that parents clearly understand school routines and enables them to feel confident that their children will be well cared for. The quality of the children's annual reports is consistently good. They indicate a good balance between individual strengths and weaknesses, although there is insufficient emphasis on setting clear targets for future improvement.
55. The school employs home-school liaison workers and teachers who visit homes, all of whom make a significant and positive contribution to the school's

relationship with parents. Parents see school and staff members as helpful and supportive. School and local authority dual language assistants run Urdu and Arabic classes and this shows the value the school places on home languages.

56. Consultation evenings are arranged in the autumn and spring terms, and parents have the opportunity not only to talk to their child's class teachers, but also to the teachers who teach the literacy and numeracy sets. Staff are available at open evenings to interpret for the Yemeni parents as well as translating and explaining other school documentation. Most parents attend these important meetings and, because the school welcomes and values parents' involvement, they are always welcome to talk to the teachers or headteacher at any other time should they have a concern or feel they need further information about their child. Other opportunities are provided for parents to learn about what their children are learning and about what to expect of the standard assessment tests. Each term parents receive a curriculum newsletter which gives a very brief outline of what their children will be learning, together with activities planned for the term. This does not, however, include ideas of how parents can help. Regular newsletters and letters are sent to parents to keep them up-to-date with activities taking place in school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the decision making process and are kept well informed about the needs of their children.

57. The school is committed to involving parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school. There is a member of staff with specific responsibility for involving the parents of the Yemeni children and there is appropriate recognition of the particular needs of these children and their parents. There is a policy on homework provision and the majority of parents willingly try to help and encourage their children at home. More specific guidance on how to do this would enable parents to target their help more effectively. Several parents help regularly in classrooms with reading and practical activities and volunteer to accompany the children on visits. 'Reading Buddies' have been trained and make a significant impact on the reading skills of those pupils having difficulty. The Task Force takes much of the administrative pressure off staff and allows them to direct their efforts to classroom activities. A small number of parents help with the clubs, for example, coaching football. The parents' association is very active and successful, providing an important social element as well as fund-raising to supplement resources. This active involvement by parents has a positive impact on the life and work of the school. Although the school has not formally consulted parents about aspects of school life, the informal lines of communication through the parent-governors and the parents' association provides a good representative view of any concerns that parents may have. Parents are always welcomed into the school and the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and all members of staff make time to talk to them and take their views seriously. Most parents have signed the home-school agreement and take their responsibilities towards the school and their children seriously. Some families continue to take long holidays in their countries of origin. The very difficult personal circumstances of a small proportion of families are supported through contact with outside agencies.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

58. The headteacher provides effective leadership of high quality. Very strong pastoral leadership and commitment to the local community have enabled him to command outstanding levels of trust and respect from parents, pupils, staff and governors. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff provide very good role models, projecting strongly the values the school promotes. The strong team spirit and commitment to ensure all pupils achieve their best is a strength of the provision. This supports very effectively the increase in levels of pupils joining and leaving the school at non standard times in the last two years. The aims of the school and expectations of pupils to behave well and to achieve their best are fully understood. The commitment to improvement enables the aims to be met in full. The headteacher and deputy head work in close partnership and involve staff fully in decision-making. All staff feel that they are part of a strong team and roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. The caring ethos makes the school a happy learning environment for staff and pupils. The ideas of all members of the school community are valued and this enables the school to move forward and succeed. Policies are regularly reviewed and are implemented consistently in all classes. Pupils benefit from consistent approaches to discipline and learning. The rigorous monitoring of standards and tracking of progress by Year 6 in the core subjects are features of the very good progress the school has made since the last report. This very good practice has yet to be applied to the foundation subjects. In Years 1 and 2 assessments are undertaken regularly but procedures have not been consistent for this age group and are not as rigorous as those in other year groups. Some teachers do not make enough use of their assessments of the pupils' work to adjust their teaching plans.
59. Since the last report, significant progress has been made to monitor and evaluate strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning to raise standards. Senior staff and co-ordinators observe teaching, review planning and regularly monitor progress measured by teacher assessments and tests. Governors play an important role in this process. They spend time in school, discuss issues with coordinators and report the outcomes of their visits at governors' meetings. This enables governors to have a good knowledge of standards, the strengths of the school and areas for future development. They offer very good support and take part in a wide range of school initiatives. Regular discussions with teachers and attendance at local training sessions enable them to keep well informed. They write the annual report for parents and support the regular review of the school prospectus. Named governors take an active interest in the provision, support and progress of pupils with special educational needs and those whose home language is not English. One governor works in school as a learning support assistant and has a very good understanding of the processes of identification and assessment. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good leadership and in particular the tracking of pupils' progress. The leading teacher for pupils who have English as an additional language provides excellent leadership. She has developed very good systems and ways of working since her recent arrival.
60. The school applies the principles of best value well. The success of initiatives such as the use of booster classes and the current setting arrangements for literacy and numeracy are carefully reviewed. The caretaker ensures the school is maintained effectively and deals with day-to-day maintenance jobs. Teachers' specialisms are used well throughout the school and this supports the shared subject management arrangements. A range of quotes is sought before agreeing to aspects of building maintenance; governors are knowledgeable about budget expenditure and the

successful impact of performance management, which has been implemented for all members of staff. Funds are applied appropriately to support staff training and this ensures that all staff and governors have opportunities to develop professionally.

61. Staffing is generous and supports pupils' learning well. Accommodation and learning resources are adequate. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are used very well to support their progress. The school is well maintained by the caretaker. Some classrooms and areas such as the library are cramped. At present, there is insufficient space on the school field to maintain the level of sporting activities that the school usually provides. In addition, there are too few books in the library to support research, independent learning and a love of books. The new school building, currently under construction on the existing school site and allocated funds, will address these deficiencies. The plans provide an exciting new opportunity for the school to work in purpose built premises.
62. The headteacher, curriculum leaders, governors and secretarial staff manage the school's finances very well. During the last few years very careful planning has been required as the number of pupils has fallen and the school's ambitions have continued to rise. In order to protect the learning opportunities and the quality of teaching the headteacher, teaching staff and governors have analysed the school's priorities very carefully and have designed plans which are painstakingly costed and which meet the challenging aspirations of subject leaders. To this end the school ensures that money set aside for specific purposes goes to those areas of the school's work such as the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those whose home language is not English, as well as individual areas of development such as information and communication technology. The governing body, senior staff and subject leaders are supplied with plenty of good quality information by the secretary who, along with colleagues, supports the work of the school very well. Of particular note is the work of the headteacher and governing body in the development of the new school building. Meticulous research has resulted in an extremely thorough understanding of the implications the new school building brings to the school's budget and very good application of the principles of best value. This ensures that the headteacher and governing body will make the move to the new school thoroughly prepared and that the future is sustainable and productive. Taking into account children's attainment on entry to the school, the good rates of achievement, the high quality of teaching and learning opportunities and the improvements made since the last inspection, the school gives very good value for money.
63. There is an exciting sense of optimism and eager enthusiasm for the school's future success. The commitment of the school community means the capacity to succeed is excellent.

PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL AND INDIVIDUAL NEEDS.

64. The school has a base, the Individual Needs Centre (INC), for pupils with special and individual needs. In addition to pupils that are specifically assigned to the Centre, the resource makes an excellent contribution to the progress and

attainment of pupils with special educational needs across the school. The base is used for some lessons and planning includes teaching for some pupils from the mainstream of the school. A strength of the provision is the very good use of resources and the dedicated involvement of the Teacher in Charge and learning support assistant in assisting and supporting the teaching of individual educational needs pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils make the same rate of progress as others in the class and in lessons observed show that they behave very well and have very good attitudes to their work. In an information and communication technology lesson, INC pupils worked with the class at the same pace and with the same level of involvement, benefiting from the skilled help of the learning support assistant. The work of the INC is an excellent demonstration of the school's commitment to the total inclusion of all pupils in the life and work of the school.

65. The pupils show very positive attitudes to their work and to each other. This means that they make very good progress and gain confidence in their ability to learn and to form effective relationships with adults and other pupils. They work well individually and are willing to co-operate with others to complete work in pairs or in a small group. The teacher and support assistant plan effectively to ensure that pupils take responsibility for their work and behaviour. Rewards and sanctions are very carefully planned to build on pupils' positive attitudes and they make very good progress in valuing themselves and others.
66. The quality of teaching for pupils with individual special needs is very good. The teacher in charge and learning assistant work closely together to form a valuable team that supports teachers in planning and delivering a wide range of learning opportunities. Planning is very good and builds very successfully towards the targets set in each pupil's individual education plan. Lessons are prepared very carefully; learning points are carefully analysed and modelled by the teacher during the lesson. For example, in drafting a story with pupils, the teacher gave meanings to words that would add interest and impact to the text. In very good teacher questioning at the end of the lesson, pupils gave thoughtful, knowledgeable answers related directly to the demonstrated story.
67. The curriculum for pupils associated with the centre is very good. Each subject of the National Curriculum is covered within the pupils' appropriate year group. The detailed individual planning ensures that each pupil receives the best learning opportunities to maintain very good progress. Support from the learning support assistant is of very high quality and enables pupils to benefit from the full breadth of the curriculum. Visitors and visits outside the school further enrich the curriculum and pupils benefit from the availability of the school's very good extra-curricular activities.
68. Pupils' work is very carefully monitored and used to inform the very good lesson planning. The very good co-operation between the teacher in charge, the learning support assistant and class teachers ensures that pupils receive the appropriate care in all situations around the school. Very clear records of pupils' progress and experiences are maintained, giving a clear picture of all areas of development. There are very good opportunities for parents to meet with INC staff to discuss pupils' progress in all areas of their school life.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

- Develop a broader range of practical opportunities for pupils to improve their speaking skills through:
 - investigative work, drama, role play and debate
 - ensuring teachers model subject vocabulary precisely
 - requiring pupils to use the language introduced in lessons in their responses
 - encouraging pupils to speak in sentences when they present their ideas and respond to questions in discussions.
 - encouraging older pupils to use Standard English in formal presentationsParagraphs 9, 13, 28, 32, 37, 71, 74-6, 82-4, 88, 103, 121, 126, 129, 151.

- Improve the quality of teacher assessment and its use in mathematics and science in the Years 1 and 2 by:
 - providing more opportunities for the moderation of pupils' work
 - tracking the rates of progress of pupils from their entry to school to the age of seven.
 - ensuring the work is consistently well matched to pupils' needs to provide realistic challenge
 - ensuring consistency in the quality of marking
 - systematically organising pupils' work to reflect more accurately the progress they makeParagraphs 5, 12, 45-6, 94, 97, 100, 102, 104-05, 107, 109, 127.

The following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan:

- The range and quality of books in the library
Paragraphs 61, 85-6.

- Build on the excellent procedures for monitoring attendance to encourage all parents to send their children regularly and punctually to school
Paragraphs 25, 52

- Develop learning through play in the reception classes to the high standard evident in the nursery.
Paragraphs 34, 70

* Denotes that the issue is already included in the school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	120
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	39	50	25	2	0	0
Percentage	3	32.5	42	21	1.5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	42	401
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		128

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		73

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	118

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	40

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	3.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	35	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	28	27
	Girls	24	26	25
	Total	47	54	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (76)	79 (74)	76 (85)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	27	25
	Girls	25	25	25
	Total	48	52	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (81)	76 (67)	74 (68)
	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 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	39	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	25	33
	Girls	24	23	26
	Total	46	48	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (53)	69 (42)	84 (61)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	27	25
	Girls	24	24	23
	Total	44	51	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (32)	73 (42)	69 (44)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	2
Pakistani	20
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	320
Any other minority ethnic group	59

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	28.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.3:1
Average class size	23.2

Education support staff: YR-Y7

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	226

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	38.2:1
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	98
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	1,211,716
Total expenditure	1,181,220
Expenditure per pupil	2,106
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,801
Balance carried forward to next year	35,297

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	506
Number of questionnaires returned	245

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	37	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	41	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	49	4	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	47	14	2	7
The teaching is good.	60	36	1	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	46	9	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	33	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	38	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	41	45	9	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	54	40	1	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	41	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	33	3	0	7

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

69. The school's provision for children in the nursery is very good and provision in the reception classes is good. Attainment on entry is lower than that described in the last report and overall standards have been maintained. The curriculum is based on the nationally defined 'Early Learning Goals'. The nursery provides a wide range of exciting, investigative experiences to extend children's knowledge and understanding. Very good provision supports children with English as an additional language and children with special educational needs. They receive very good support through interpreters and assistants who ensure they fully understand their tasks.
70. Baseline assessment indicates attainment is below average. A significant number of children have very poorly developed speaking skills. This affects children's ability to communicate their depth of learning, especially in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Teaching in the nursery is of a very high standard and this has a very positive effect on children's learning. As a result, most children make rapid gains in their early learning. Children are also admitted to the reception classes at the start of the autumn and spring terms. Some nursery children do not continue their education at Colley Lane, transferring to schools closer to their homes. The range of learning experiences in the reception classes continues to be broad but the more formal teacher directed organisation lacks the imaginative excitement and opportunities for spontaneous learning evident at all times in the nursery. By the end of the reception year, the children have continued to make good progress but, despite their achievements, are unlikely to attain the early learning goals in the important areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their personal, emotional and social development and creative and physical development are about average. While good progress is made in physical development a small number of children continue to need help to manipulate small objects such as a mouse in information and communication technology (ICT) and to consistently control brushes and pencils.
71. Across all the areas of learning the quality of teaching is very good in the nursery and good in the reception classes. Examples of excellence are evident in the leadership of the staff team. Nursery staff use a broad range of strategies that support early learning very well. They pose questions, lead investigations, join in with children's role-play and enable children to express their thoughts and feelings in words, pictures and actions. Teaching is good in the reception classes. All staff have a clear understanding of the needs of young children and of the importance of play and first hand experiences to extend their understanding of the world around them. This has a positive influence and provides a very firm foundation for learning in Year 1. Lesson plans are very clear and detailed with appropriate learning objectives and attention to the different needs of groups of children. Activities are well organised and encourage the development of communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills. There is a very good balance of teacher directed activities and child initiated ones in the nursery. While the range is evident in reception classes there is more teacher direction and fewer opportunities to encourage investigation. Staff provide very effective support, interacting to check children's understanding. Staff are aware of the weaknesses in a significant number of children's speaking skills and limited vocabulary. In the reception classes teachers do not consistently encourage children to speak clearly and pronounce words correctly to develop thinking skills. This is a weakness. Praise and encouragement are used well and

the excellent relationships that staff develop with children enable them to develop confidence and self esteem and understand the rules that underpin the calm and secure learning environment in which they flourish. Children behave well and value the care they receive. Clear instructions and good quality questioning which encourages children to describe their understanding through a range of media support assessment and underpin plans for future learning.

72. Baseline assessment results are used effectively to help teachers to identify individual needs. Records provide useful information that indicate children's progress towards meeting the early learning goals and the support they need to achieve their best. Staff work well together as a team and this ensures continuity of provision between classes. Staff encourage parents to become partners in their children's learning by sharing books and talking about school activities. Parents praise the induction procedures that include home visits and opportunities to come to school with their children for initial visits. This builds trust and confidence that the range of diverse needs within the multi-cultural community are fully understood and will be effectively supported.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

73. Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. Children enjoy coming to school and the rules and routines of the nursery and reception classes are well structured and provide a warm welcome. The induction procedures are a particular strength. Home visits enable parents to talk to staff in their mother tongues and to feel confident that their children's needs will be understood and well supported. Parents are encouraged to discuss their children's progress with staff and come into school regularly and informally. This informal open door approach is greatly appreciated. Consequently, children are eager to learn and to explore new ideas. Staff teach children the important rules which will support them throughout their time at the school and enable children to understand appropriate behaviour and the difference between right and wrong. Staff explain the consequences of their actions on others, encouraging children to respect the feelings of others and to apologise if they have upset someone. Children are learning to share and work together in a variety of situations, such as computer games, role-play and outdoor play. In the nursery most children work independently and join with others when adults support them. In the reception classes there is more interaction in role-play situations. Older children work independently for sustained periods of time and all are proud of their work. They persevere when tasks are difficult. Relationships are very positive and in assemblies and in story times and discussions children are encouraged to think about their feelings, actions and experiences. In this way they develop sensitivity and awareness of other people, respect for their similarities and differences and knowledge of the different religions, cultures and ways of life within the local community.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

74. Communication, language and literacy are given a high priority. The nursery and reception classes provide a wide range of activities to develop and extend children's language and literacy skills. In the nursery, emphasis is placed on listening carefully to adults and following instructions. By the time children move into the reception class they love stories and rhymes and are attentive listeners. They join in repetitive rhymes enthusiastically following the good modelling of adults. In the nursery children are taught in small groups and have many high quality opportunities to develop their speaking skills. The adults provide very good role models to develop children's spoken language. Provision is good in reception classes and the contribution of the leading literacy teacher

is very good. Challenging questions asked of individual pupils encourage independent thinking. Despite the good provision children's spoken language is restricted and this inhibits progress in other areas of learning.

75. Many children prefer to answer questions with one-word answers, or to point or show others practically what they know. Many children need a great deal of language reinforcement to begin to express themselves with confidence. For example, in the nursery, staff introduce new vocabulary and ideas to children while involving them in exploring why objects float or sink. While more able children use terms like heavy and light others are unable to give reasons. In the reception classes children struggle with positional language such as under, beside and behind. Structured play situations in 'The bear's corner café' provide opportunities for children to talk about their personal experiences and extend their vocabulary. Clearly labelled displays, alphabet friezes and word cards help children to develop early reading and writing skills. Children are encouraged to make marks on paper in the nursery. By the time they leave reception many are attempting to write their own simple sentences using familiar letters, sounds and words. Children recognise their names and write them with good accuracy. Story times and book areas promote a love of books and children are taught to handle books carefully. Higher attaining reception children talk about their favourite rhymes and stories; they recognise initial sounds and use these to read simple words. All children take books home to share with families. This has a positive effect on children's progress. Appropriate elements of the literacy strategy are implemented in the reception classes but the allocation of time is frequently too long for the age and maturity of the children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

76. The nursery and reception classes provide a wide range of activities to promote mathematical understanding. Children enjoy play opportunities in the nursery when they sing counting rhymes learn to recognise numbers and begin to form pattern sequences using threaded beads. They use their ideas and develop their skills in real situations, exploring the weight of objects and filling containers with water. In the reception classes practical experiences continue to support learning but there is greater focus on recording using worksheets. This restricts children's progress because the work is not organised in a way that helps children to recognise their progress. In all classes children have opportunities to compare, match, sort, order, sequence and count using a range of games, routines and experiences. They explore number, pattern and shapes. Older more able reception children count to 20 and use number lines to develop their understanding of order. Teachers introduce appropriate mathematical language but many children need reinforcement to begin to use the terms independently. For example, children consider position when emptying and filling containers in water and sand play but struggle to use terms such as behind, before, after, under and next to. Children are encouraged to use numbers as they decide how many can play in the café or use the computer. Staff use number rhymes to develop children's understanding of early addition and subtraction but many children need considerable support to express their knowledge and understanding orally. Appropriate elements of the numeracy strategy are implemented in the reception class to prepare children for the Year 1 curriculum. This provides challenge for more able children and the oral mental starter is a time for fun, counting together and enjoying rhymes. However, the structured more formal use of time is at the expense of the play activities which are still needed by a high proportion of children, particularly those who have not benefited from pre-school experiences.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD.

77. Children have many exciting opportunities to develop understanding of the world around them. Their curiosity is awakened in the nursery through the visitors who come to talk to them and the walks they enjoy in the locality. During the inspection the children learned to care for plants by planting seeds and plants to enhance their outdoor area and entrance. Because the adults talked precisely and clearly, explaining to these young children the conditions plants need to thrive, they carefully handled plants, compost and simple gardening tools and were delighted at the outcomes. Similarly they return to photographic evidence of their celebrations, for example at Christmas, Divali and when learning about the lives of North American Indians through visiting groups. The opportunities to dress up, take part in role-play and discover are very well planned. Staff seize every opportunity to enhance the children's learning. 'Bob the Builder' was a firm favourite during the inspection as the children were encouraged to watch the building of the new school and act out the roles played by the builders in their classrooms. Role-play is also a feature within the reception classes and the children eagerly show visitors how they have explored plant life for example. Labelled collages of good quality link the creative, communication and scientific dimensions of learning and staff encourage children to talk about their discoveries. Children talk in simple terms about their homes and families and through good questioning techniques begin to describe main events and characteristics. For example; 'Who is the oldest/ youngest person in your family?' or; 'Why do you think grand-dad has white hair?' The celebration of festivals is supported by parents who provide simple costumes to help children to understand and experiences cultural differences and traditions. This develops respect and harmony from the start of their education and is a particular strength.
78. Children learn about the days of the week, the weather and the changing. Staff carefully observe and assess children's skills providing them with support and encouragement to help them improve their manipulative skills, for example, cutting, folding and sticking. The computers are used regularly and a range of programs support learning in mathematics and language and literacy. Construction toys are used well to encourage children to design and make their own models and to discover how things work.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

79. Very good provision is made for children's physical development in the nursery. Children are taught the importance of health and safety from this very early stage and the teacher's excellent guidance and highly imaginative teaching means that children learn to warm up, practise their movements and cool down through a story sequence. This means they are totally absorbed in their learning and make very good progress. Through good teaching in the reception classes this work is built upon and in lessons pupils' performances are in line with the early learning goals and more able children exceed them, sequencing movements and working well with others. A range of large wheeled toys is used on a daily basis to help nursery children to develop their control and directional understanding. They learn to balance and pedal and to become aware of the dangers of going too fast and bumping into others. Good spatial awareness is evident in lessons but when children play independently they need help and guidance to control their movements. They are learning to run, hop, skip, jump and balance and children who are less confident receive very sensitive support to ensure they are fully included in the full range of experiences to improve their skills. Children move around the school safely and line up sensibly to go to different parts of the school. This involves crossing a road to access hall facilities and on these occasions their behaviour is excellent because the rules are clear and kindly and firmly reinforced. While emphasis is placed on developing children's manipulative skills when handling pencils, brushes, scissors, the computer mouse and construction toys children continue to need reinforcement and opportunities to develop greater control

when working independently. They achieve more highly when supervised directly by an adult.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

80. Children enjoy a very good range of experiences in art, music, story and imaginative play. Through these experiences children are encouraged to use appropriate vocabulary and to develop their use of language to express ideas. A very good range of musical instruments, songs and rhymes helps to develop their understanding of sound and rhythm and pattern. Children enjoy taking part in the many very good role-play situations provided, such as the 'hairdressers', 'home corner' and 'shop'. The shops provide children with a range of opportunities to use their imagination as they take on the roles of customers and shop assistants and use a range of interesting and stimulating resources. There are many activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour. Baking is available on a regular basis and children explore different tastes and smells of foods. Staff provide a range of materials with interesting textures from which children can choose to create their own designs, pictures, models and collages. They work with play dough, wood and re-cycled materials to create two and three-dimensional pictures and models. Sand and water play provide additional learning opportunities.

ENGLISH

81. Overall, standards have improved since the last inspection. In 1997, attainment by pupils in Year 2 was broadly in line with standards expected nationally, although their reading was below average and attainment in Year 6 was below the national expectation. At the time of the tests in 2001, when compared with similar schools, the attainment of pupils in Year 2 remained below average in reading but in writing it was above average with more pupils attaining the higher level 3. Pupils in Year 6 attained average levels.

82. Inspection evidence and the latest teacher assessments show the attainment of most pupils is average in writing in Years 2 and 6 and in reading it is average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Bearing in mind the low levels of language of many children in the nursery and the below average attainment by the end of the Foundation Stage of learning, pupils make good progress. Listening skills are well developed but speaking skills are underdeveloped and an area for further development.

83. By the end of Year 2 many pupils do not speak with sufficient clarity and fluency and ideas and responses are not organised and structured in clearly understandable sentences. Pupils rely on single words, phrases or short sentences, which are not sufficiently detailed to inform the listener. While pupils frequently understand the specific vocabulary introduced in other subjects they do not use it unless the teacher requires them to do so. There is generally a lack of understanding of the need to use Standard English in more formal situations. In their reading, many pupils are using intonation to engage the listener, this aspect being well modelled by the Year 1 and Year 2 teachers. This is aiding the good development of reading skills but is not transferring well enough to general speech patterns. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen well to their teachers and other adults and most concentrate well, for example when listening to a story or to instructions, although there are times when they sit passively for too long. They respect others' views and listen carefully to what is being said. Increasingly they recognise and respond to sound patterns, such as rhyme and alliteration and their articulation when singing is clear. Most join in group discussions and know that they must take turns when speaking. This could be encouraged more through the use of drama and role-play which is insufficiently

developed in literacy lessons and other subjects. There are missed opportunities for pupils to be challenged further to present their ideas and to read stories to others.

84. By the end of Year 6 pupils speaking skills improve, but a large proportion continue to find difficulty in expressing themselves orally with confidence. A significant proportion of pupils do not use appropriately some of the features of Standard English vocabulary and have difficulty in ordering their thoughts and expressing them coherently. The majority listen carefully to others' contributions and ask questions which are relevant and extend their understanding. However, subject specific vocabulary continues not to be used as precisely as it could be. While some teachers provide very good role models and speak with expression and clarity, others do not consistently model subject specific vocabulary with sufficient precision. Drama, role-play, debate and speaking skills in investigative work are not used extensively enough to develop speaking skills to a high enough level. When reading aloud a story or a piece of their own writing, pupils show a general reluctance to vary their pace, tone and expression to maintain the interest of the listener. When reading as a group or with the teacher the use of expression is much better because the pupils feel more confident to use these skills collectively.
85. Progress in reading in Years 1 and 2 is good. The school has made reading a priority over this past year and most pupils are reading to at least the expected level for their age. Pupils generally enjoy reading and read with accuracy. When coming across unfamiliar words they use their knowledge of phonics and syllables to help them correctly pronounce words, although a number do not have sufficient experience and knowledge to understand word meanings. Most pupils sight read familiar words and are beginning to recognise complex spelling patterns. The school uses the local authority school library service to supplement the present book stock. Pupils enjoy this range of books. Few pupils regularly visit the nearby local library or read at home. Reading areas in classrooms are designed to encourage pupils' love of books but not enough is done to encourage pupils to independently use books to locate information independently and to read for enjoyment.
86. In Years 3 to 6, pupils benefit from a wider choice of reading material and show greater enthusiasm for reading as their skills improve. They know how books are structured and have a good knowledge of the importance of author, index, glossary and synopsis. Pupils talk about authors, their style and content. Most older pupils successfully sequence and tell stories and use books to obtain information. The school has adopted shared reading for Years 1, 2 and 3 which helps to develop a partnership in helping younger pupils to read. This is to be extended to Year 4 and could be made more helpful if greater space in the reading record was available for parents to record their observations. The school library is inadequate in size and location. This will be rectified when the new school building is occupied next year. Plans show a generous area to be used as an information centre that will house the library, and funds have been set aside to replace old stock and add to the shortage in subject areas. At present, the library is cramped and does not inspire in pupils a desire to read or seek information.
87. Progress in writing throughout the school is good. There has been an increase in the proportion of pupils attaining average and higher than average levels in Year 2. Attainment is at least average in Year 6 and, while fewer pupils attain the higher Level 5 than in schools nationally, it is important to remember the proportion of pupils who join the school in this age range who speak little English on entry, have special educational needs and are admitted to the school to receive support for their emotional and behavioural needs. These pupils make rapid gains in learning through the very good support they receive.

88. The good progress made in the Foundation Stage of learning is effectively built on in Year 1. Writing exercises extend and reinforce reading skills. For example, in a good lesson in Year 1 on the use of the 'magic' e, pupils had to learn a magic spell, which created a sense of fun. This commanded their interest and their learning was enhanced. In another lesson, pupils were taught how to retell a story using correct sentence construction and punctuation. They did this well, being helped by story outlines designed specifically for pupils of different abilities within the class. The story was punctuated correctly using capital letters, full stops and commas. An excellent lesson on rhyming words, with pupils writing a story about a picture, led to very effective use of adjectives and punctuation. By the end of the lesson pupils used adjectives effectively and all experienced success. Pupils' self-evaluation of their work was accurate and encouraged them in their learning. By Year 2, pupils are increasing their vocabulary and are composing their own texts. Higher attaining pupils are writing in a variety of forms to suit different purposes, using vocabulary to interest the reader, for example; 'I jumped out of my skin' and; 'Our pipes have burst in the bathroom, can we come and stay at your place?' Pupils are correctly spelling an increasing number of words but, because speech is not as clear as it should be, there is a tendency to misspell words of more than one syllable. Handwriting and presentation are improving but, in some classes, handwriting is not being taught frequently or regularly enough.
89. From Year 3 to 6 pupils' increase their knowledge about grammatical structures, punctuation, spelling and the range of purposes of writing. By the time they are in Year 6, a majority of pupils write in a variety of styles, the best using personification in poetry, report on events using journalistic styles, draft and redraft their writing and change informal language to formal. A Year 5 pupil, writing about her experiences at school and her hopes for the future, expressed sensitivity and humour in a very mature style. She used an expressive vocabulary extremely well. Lower attaining pupils also make good progress because work is well matched to their needs. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets and this helps them make good progress.
90. Poetry is a feature of work throughout the school, especially in the junior classes. Year 3 pupils have put together an anthology on cats, each writing their own poem, which they word-processed and illustrated in ICT lessons. One pupil has written:
'Sly cat stalking through the tall grass,
Hunting for some dinner,
Slinking feet padding along
Waiting to pounce on a tasty treat'
91. This shows the pupil is developing a sense of rhythm and good observation skills in writing. Pupils write poems in a variety of forms and have studied haiku and limerick but the most successful are those which originate through close observation and use imaginative words. A Year 6 pupil wrote an extended poem on 'The Oak Tree', one verse as follows:
'It's a decade old,
Strong, heaving, big,
Like a giant on Earth,
Like a human being,
Leaping in the air'
92. There is evidence of a good range of writing. The quality is developed through grammatical exercises, although sometimes there is over practice of these and this limits the time available for extended and independent writing activities. Good quality work was achieved with older pupils in Year 6 writing a 'Quest' story modelled on the work of

Rowling's 'Harry Potter' series and Tolkein's 'Lord of the Rings'. Extracts from the two books were used as examples to construct a writing framework with attention being drawn to ways to build up tension and impact within a story and how to hold a reader in suspense. This work was thoughtfully adapted across the ability sets to ensure all pupils had the same opportunities.

93. Pupils with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language make very good progress. They are well provided for by very good quality extra tuition and resources which are available to assist their learning. Reading 'buddies', where pupils read together in pairs, additional language support, further literacy support and booster groups are all instrumental in raising standards. The use of reading recovery methods has been particularly successful. All pupils benefit from the 'setting' arrangements in Years 3 to 6, the relatively small teaching groups and the well-informed learning support assistants. There is little difference in performance between boys and girls.
94. The quality of teaching is good overall, often very good and occasionally excellent. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. The literacy strategy has been implemented well and lessons are usually well structured as a result. There is a good balance of work in the best lessons where there are high expectations, a good pace to the work and when teachers' spoken language is precise with ideas well expressed. Planning is of very good quality, especially for lower ability pupils. In the unsuccessful lesson the work did not flow naturally from one aspect to another, pace was slow and expectations not sufficiently high. Opportunities for extending speaking skills were not taken and the work was too advanced for the group with insufficient explanation of what is expected. Marking is variable, but there are many examples of pupils being shown how to further their work. Homework is used well to help pupils, especially with their spelling. Pupils are set targets and, when linked to current work, help them make further progress although this technique is not consistently applied across all classes. Praise is very well used in the best lessons, making pupils feel proud of their efforts, but teachers are also not afraid to be constructively critical of work.
95. There are four literacy co-ordinators and a co-ordinator for the library. Each literacy co-ordinator has equal status and is responsible for literacy within the Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. They report directly to the core senior management team. All are well informed and enthusiastic for the subject and make very good analysis of completed work and test results, which inform a focus for development. Future areas for improvement are guided reading, consistent use of individual reading records and the use of ICT in literacy, while current priorities are to improve standards of writing and to implement further early language support groups. These are all well chosen areas and mirror the findings of the inspection. Assessments are extensive and are clearly recorded and pupils' progress is effectively monitored. Optional standard assessment tests are taken in Years 3, 4 and 5 and further aid the mapping of progress. Governors are well informed of the literacy strategy through the literacy governor who observes teaching. The co-ordinators recognise the need to apply a consistent approach to the marking of work, develop the speaking skills of pupils, particularly through drama, but also in lessons, and to improve library stock. They also, rightly, feel that it is necessary to reappraise the strict format of the literacy strategy being followed to adjust to the particular needs of groups of pupils.

MATHEMATICS

96. Standards are improving. In last year's national tests standards in Year 2 were well below average nationally and below the average of similar schools. Standards have risen this

year and pupils aged seven now achieve similar standards to other pupils nationally. There has been a considerable improvement in most pupils' mental arithmetic skills since the last inspection when pupils' achievements were below average in Year 2. Year 6 pupils achieved average results when compared with other pupils nationally at the end of 2001 and their achievements were above those of pupils in similar schools. The present eleven-year-olds achieve similar standards and are likely to exceed the school target set for the 2002 national tests.

97. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. The handling of data, a weakness at the time of the last inspection, is now a strength throughout the school because the pupils have very good opportunities to store, interrogate and retrieve data using ICT within other subjects. In almost all cases the small classes, consisting of pupils with similar abilities, enable the work to be closely matched to the needs of the pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make very good progress throughout the school due to the excellent systems for their inclusion and support in lessons. There is no marked difference between the attainment and progress of boys and girls. The teaching is very good in the juniors but more variable in the infant classes where it is generally at least satisfactory with a very small element of both excellent and unsatisfactory teaching. Some teachers in Years 1 and 2 do not make enough use of assessments of the pupils' work to plan or adjust their teaching and much of the written work is not organised in a way that allows both teachers and pupils to see the progress made over time.
98. By the end of Year 2 more able pupils have a good understanding of place value in numbers up to 1000 and they solve problems involving addition and subtraction, multiplication and division. Most pupils understand simple fractions and add and subtract accurately within 20. All pupils recognise patterns in number, including odd and even. Some have a good recall of several multiplication tables. Less able pupils calculate mentally within 10 and understand the relationship between multiplication and division. In some lessons, however, pupils struggle when solving mental arithmetic questions. This is because the teacher does not make enough use of her knowledge of the pupils' previous work and the questions are too difficult. All pupils name common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and most use standard units to weigh and measure. Pupils store and extract information presented in lists and charts.
99. More able Year 6 pupils calculate using large numbers and negative numbers. They understand the relationships between fractions, decimals and percentages and are familiar with square and cubed roots. Almost all pupils calculate accurately and check their answers using different calculations or the calculator. Pupils' mental arithmetic and problem solving skills exceed their standards of presentation. All pupils know how to draw angles and use formulae to calculate perimeter and area. However, few pupils achieve accuracy when drafting shapes or angles. All pupils in Year 6 use a range of different strategies for storing, retrieving and extracting information. They know that, for example, temperature variations recorded using an electronic sensor, needs a continuous line graph while the percentage of money spent on different groceries is best recorded in a pie chart. These skills are applied very effectively in practical ways in other subjects. Most pupils now justify probabilities and predict outcomes, a weakness at the time of the last inspection.
100. A strength of the teaching throughout the school is the relationships between all the adults and the pupils in the lessons. All teachers respect their pupils' efforts and encourage them to do their best. As a result almost all pupils are eager to learn and take a pride in their work. Every mathematics group has targets for learning and some pupils are

set individual targets. Throughout the junior classes, pupils can see the progress they have made as they complete their exercise books. The teachers' marking is helpful, showing how well the pupils have achieved their work and giving helpful information about how they can improve. This is not the case in the infants where much of the work is completed on worksheets stored randomly in folders. Although the teachers keep records of what their pupils have covered in the lessons they are unable to evaluate the progress of individual pupils from their written work. The infant teachers' marking varies in quality. In the pupils' books it is evaluative and helps pupils improve but there is little work in books and pupils cannot easily access the worksheets they have completed. In some cases the use of worksheets is inappropriate and the pupils would achieve more if they worked practically rather than drawing or writing their work down. It is in the oral and direct teaching sessions within the lessons where Year 1 and 2 pupils make the most progress.

101. In all the lessons observed in Years 3 to 6 the teaching was at least good and most was very good. The teachers have high expectations of their pupils' ability to learn and set a challenging pace so that pupils of all abilities learn well. In the very good mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of the numeracy lessons, pupils are encouraged to explain how they calculate and to discuss the most effective way. Teachers have a good knowledge of the numeracy strategy and are secure in their understanding of the mathematics they teach. Explanations are very clear and astute; on-the-spot assessments of the pupils' understanding during the lesson are used to give additional help or to extend learning. Resources are used well. In one lesson, for example, groups of Year 3 pupils used dice to identify multiples of 2, 5, 10, 50 and 100. Her "mistake" prompted her pupils to tell her that only multiples of 2 and 5 were possible as there were no zeros on the dice. Pre-prepared sticky tabs solved the problem. Pupils in this year group have made very good progress since their national tests in 2001 because the teaching is very effective in all the sets.
102. In an excellent lesson for a lower ability Year 2 set the teacher took every opportunity to promote curiosity and extend learning. Questions like; "How many straws would you need to make five triangles?" inspired the top group to predict the number of straws and strive to use as few as possible. The lower group recorded their patterns of odd and even numbers with the digital camera. The homework was to take straws home to challenge mum and dad! The pupils' learning was rapid in this lesson and the practical challenges will be remembered for some time. In another lesson for pupils of the same age, however, the mental arithmetic session was very slow as the pupils struggled to apply their insecure knowledge of the three and four times table. The teacher gave them no help or visual prompts and failed to amend her plans to meet the pupils' needs. Although the teaching for Year 1 is generally satisfactory, some lessons lack focus and contain several different unconnected learning objectives, causing some confusion, while in others the pupils spend too long listening to the teacher. In one lesson opportunities for evaluating how well the pupils have understood the lesson were missed so the teacher did not adjust the lesson to enable the pupils to achieve as well as they should.
103. Throughout the school the learning support assistants give very good support. They question effectively and extend learning appropriately. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make very good progress because of this support and very effective planning to meet their needs. All teachers use mathematical language well and expect the pupils to do so. However, some teachers do not have high enough expectations of their pupils' use of English and too often accept one-word answers or badly structured sentences.

104. The school uses the test results and regular teacher assessments to sort the pupils into ability groups and to identify when they need to change to another group. The assessments are also used to set targets for each group and to predict the outcomes in the national tests. The tests are analysed to identify any weaknesses in the curriculum. The teachers in Years 3 to 6 meet regularly to discuss the pupils' achievements and to ensure that they are working at appropriate levels. The subject leaders monitor the pupils' work to ensure that they make appropriate progress and that the teachers' marking is helpful. This now needs to be extended to Years 1 to 2 to ensure that the work is always matched to the needs of the pupils. Although these pupils know what they are learning in each lesson, their knowledge of their progress over time is limited.

SCIENCE

105. The results of the 2001 national tests for Year 6 pupils were below the national average, although the school had improved on the previous year. Inspection evidence and the provisional results of this year's national tests indicate that most pupils in Year 6 are now achieving the national average. An increasing number of pupils are achieving the higher level. Since the last inspection there have been changes in the way the curriculum is organised which gives a higher priority to investigative activities. The effect of this has been to improve the use of and understanding of scientific terms and principles, such as fair testing. In 2001 teachers assessed Year 2 pupils as being well below the national average. Inspection evidence shows that most of the current Year 2 are working at the levels expected for their age, with about one-third achieving the higher level. The change is mainly due to a greater understanding of the national teacher assessment procedures by new teachers and the influence of the recently adopted assessment activities, which are used more regularly throughout Year 2.

106. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and are achieving levels within the expectations of Year 6 pupils. This is due to the very good support they receive in lessons and improvements in their standards of literacy and numeracy. Pupils whose first language is not English are also well supported and make very good progress.

107. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in relating science to everyday situations and in developing their vocabulary. They understand the difference in their heart rate between resting and exercising and picture sequence the changes from baby to toddler correctly. They know that a battery is a package of stored energy and it is safe to use. Pupils are taught well about materials and their uses around their homes and classrooms. Higher attaining pupils give reasons for materials being suited to their purpose by using their knowledge of properties. When they are preparing an investigation, pupils in Year 2 clearly understand what makes a test fair and say what they think will happen. This prediction is rarely recorded, as it should be, in order for pupils to discuss their findings at the end of the experiment. The quality of teaching is good overall and never less than satisfactory. Classes are well managed and, increasingly, pupils are given opportunities to write up their own work. Throughout practical sessions, pupils behave well and are usually interested in what they are doing. Where lessons are well paced and time is used well pupils remain on task and enjoy answering questions. The least effective, steady paced lessons lack an element of excitement and occasionally pupils' concentration wanders.

108. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good general knowledge of science. Their practical work is well supported by a range of methods for presenting their data, which includes ICT. They have a good understanding of the need for scientific ideas to be based on collecting evidence and draw conclusions from what they collect. This does not yet

translate to the higher-level skills of repeating observations or measurements to check and explain differences or opportunities to improve their methods. There is a high level of understanding of specific language in Years 3 to 6. Teaching in these years is good overall, and in some classes it is very good. This is significantly better than previously reported and has been achieved through effective monitoring of teaching and a more consistent understanding of how basic skills, such as mathematics, can be used in science lessons. Teachers share the lesson objectives with the pupils and try to involve them in the lesson very quickly. This is effective for creating and sustaining pupils' interest in what they are doing. In all classes, relationships between pupils and teachers are very good. This helps pupils' confidence to ask questions and try ideas without fear of ridicule from other pupils.

109. The joint leadership of the subject is providing a good sense of educational direction for science. They understand the need for using ICT and mathematics regularly and the importance of analysing results to keep progress under review. Such analysis has already led to a higher profile for investigative work and where emphasis needs to be placed to improve results. It has not yet developed into individual or small group targets, except for pupils with special needs. Marking of pupils' work is completed regularly and conscientiously, using school rewards and praise systems consistently across classes. However, because teachers do not use the national levels very often, pupils do not know at what level they are working. Assessment procedures are good, but further development to expand the current file of work samples is required to help teachers mark against national expectations. This is particularly evident in Years 1 and 2, where there is inconsistency in assessment.

ART AND DESIGN

110. Attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 meets expectations and pupils' use of a range of materials to express their ideas is good. This is especially the case with the use of fabric and thread to represent their view of the world. Observational work is progressing well with pupils' increasing understanding of the importance of tone and texture to represent movement, although this is too often from a secondary source. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection.
111. The good quality creative artwork observed in the nursery and reception class is built upon successfully in Years 1 and 2, especially in the use of collage. The pupils' drawing skills show satisfactory development but the use of paint is very limited. Some more able Year 2 pupils are showing a good understanding of perspective and how to represent this in their drawings. Sketchbooks are used but this is not consistent in each class.
112. As pupils move up the school there are examples of good quality observational drawings, but here the lack of opportunities to use paint is more evident. Year 5 pupils have produced a variety of artefacts using clay which they painted in attractive colours. Some of these objects are embellished with interesting patterns carefully executed. Paint has also been used in Year 4 during the construction and decoration of Tudor houses in connection with a history topic. The painting is of good quality. However, skills in the use of paint and clay are not being sufficiently built upon to enhance the quality of the finished article. This is largely a result of insufficient time being given to pupils to extend their expertise and to the breadth of the art curriculum being covered.
113. Some group work accomplished by Years 5 and 6 pupils is of very high quality. Of special note is the work on the 'Centenary Banners' of which three have been produced with assistance from the local Higher Education Institute. These are vibrant with an

exciting use of colour designed to represent past, present and future and have been exhibited nationally. More recently, pupils have been involved in a centenary mosaic to mark the 100-year anniversary of the founding of the school. Pupils have drawn designs, planned the mosaic and assembled it and it is now a centrepiece in the school. It is of high quality and is a suitable piece of art to celebrate the occasion. There is evidence of work in multi-cultural studies with some very good examples of Rangoli patterns and of very attractive Mendhi hand patterns. Pupils with English as an additional language make a special contribution to this work.

114. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and show increasing confidence in their manipulative skills, gaining in self-confidence when completing their work.
115. Pupils' capabilities in art are enhanced through an art club which is open to Years 5 and 6 pupils and which gives these pupils an opportunity to develop their talents.
116. Pupils enjoy their art lessons. They work with purpose and are anxious to achieve results of good quality. They concentrate well and are keen to assess their efforts on how successful they have been. They help each other when necessary, for example in a Year 1 class, when involved in weaving with fabric to represent a flower head, they helped each other with choice of colour and manipulation of the thread. Older pupils are very proud of their group artwork.
117. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good features in most lessons. Lessons are always well planned and good quality resources are provided. Teachers have a good knowledge of the National Curriculum requirements and there is a realisation that the current QCA scheme in use requires some adaptation and amendment. Draft alterations to the policy and scheme have already been made. Lessons are well organised and, as a result, pupils respond well. When sufficient time is given to pupils they create work of good quality. However, overall their knowledge of the work of other artists is limited. The use of ICT to create pictures in the style of the artist Mondrian is a welcome development and reflects the satisfactory use of ICT in the subject.
118. The two co-ordinators for art and design work well together. They recognise the need to compile portfolios of artwork and are seeking outside assistance in order to develop subject assessments. The draft self-assessment sheet for Years 5 and 6 is working well. The use of sketchbooks with older pupils is underdeveloped as are drawing and painting skills. There are missed opportunities for pupils to record in pencil and paint the changes taking place around them, such as the new building for the school. When opportunities are taken, for example the school centenary, work of good quality results.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

119. Standards are at the expected levels in Years 2 and 6. At the previous inspection standards in Year 6 were judged to be below average. Because the quality of learning opportunities and teaching have improved, standards have risen in Years 3 to 6. Now pupils have a good grasp of how to design their projects, how to make changes if things are not working out as they planned and how to judge overall success of their work. Physical skills still need practice but are broadly at the expected levels. Abilities such as accurate measuring, cutting and shaping are improving as younger pupils move through the school. Pupils who have special educational needs or who learn English as an additional language make good progress. They are given very good, sensitive support. A pupil with a hearing impairment kept up with her classmates as her teacher supported her

very well. Pupils whose home language is not English learn very well in lessons and achieve the same range of standards as other pupils.

120. Pupils in Year 2 made wheeled vehicles after a visit from an all-terrain vehicle and articulated lorry. Good links are made to pupils' cultural development, for example making sweets to celebrate Diwali. Computers are used to order the instructions to make sweets and in Year 1 fruit salads and pizzas. These activities also help pupils develop an understanding of a healthy diet. Pupils made houses and arranged them to match the descriptions of London streets destroyed by the Great Fire in 1666 and hence support their learning in history. Pupils are also skilled at using ICT to design posters and packaging for their products. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they have an assured understanding of the design process. An important aspect of pupils work in Years 3 to 6 is the amount and quality of research completed before pupils begin to design their projects, for example, pupils used the Internet to find out about the many types of bridges that exist. This was the precursor to making their own bridges using paper and tape construction methods. The same quality of research was carried out before pupils made a flat-pack shelter. This was a good exercise, which required pupils to use their mathematical knowledge of three-dimensional shapes.

121. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is frequently good. In the good quality lessons pupils are given challenging tasks and the pace of lessons is brisk. In addition, pupils are encouraged to come to their own decisions about how to complete their projects. In Year 5 pupils decided how to produce their own biscuits, in Year 6 pupils made bridges and in Year 4 learned how to use a lever for a pop-up book. In all of these lessons teachers used good questioning techniques that helped pupils understand how to use precise vocabulary to describe their projects. These lessons made a significant contribution to the development of pupils' speaking skills. Pupils who learn English as an additional language are also helped by their teachers' use of technical words. For example, the use of words such as *specification*, *suspension* and *principle*. In Year 6, pupils asked the teacher; 'How are bridges built across water when we need pillars and arches to support ours?' The teacher reminded pupils about their research on suspension bridges. This was developed as the next challenge. After the current work on strong bridges, plans challenged pupils to discover the length of the longest bridge they could build? Pupils learn well in these lessons because they are interested and enthusiastic.

122. The subject is well led. The coordinator has been in post for only a few months but has already made a positive contribution to standards.

GEOGRAPHY

123. Standards are above expected levels by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in Year 2 are similar to those reported in the previous inspection and are at the level expected for the age. These results reflect the good quality of the curriculum and improvements in the effectiveness of teaching. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 use websites and CD-ROM sources competently to research information and an increasing number of older pupils are encouraged to use ICT to present their work. Sifting and applying information is an area for development. Those pupils with special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language make very good progress. Support for these pupils is very effective, enabling them to participate fully in the lessons.

124. By the end of Year 2 pupils understand a simple plan and draw everyday objects from above. They know how important symbols are for weather reporting and how animals

such as camels are adapted to survive desert conditions. The travels of 'Barnaby Bear' have not been fully exploited as a means of teaching about far away places. Good use is made of the building site for the new school as a unique opportunity to present ideas about land use and public buildings.

125. There is some over reliance on worksheet activities, which leads to a lack of variety in the ways pupils present their work. They are insufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills to present their ideas. By the end of Year 6, pupils are sufficiently confident to present reasoned answers to questions and events but they do not always use well enough the subject specific vocabulary introduced in their lessons. They use their mathematical skills well to help them to read co-ordinates and tally results, regularly presenting their fieldwork data using computer programmes. This aspect is an important part of the local study work in Year 4 and a significant improvement in the geography curriculum since the previous inspection.
126. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Lessons have a good balance between studying places, exploring geographical features and the development of geographical skills of enquiry. The increased use of ICT during lessons is having a good impact on improving standards by giving pupils high quality opportunities to work at their own level of ability. Work on protecting the environment and the Romanian orphanage project illustrate well the good connections made between geographical developments and social responsibility. Lessons begin with the teacher sharing the lesson objective with pupils and a recall of previous work. Question and answer sessions bring pupils into the lesson quickly and very strong relationships between pupils and teachers produce eager and willing responses. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is satisfactory. There is some good teaching that captures pupils' imagination, such as the activities on the site of the new school. Although there is a strong emphasis on teaching geographical terms, not all teachers expect pupils to speak using full sentences and geographical language when developing their ideas or responding in discussions. Combined with the restrictive opportunities for recording, pupils do not make enough progress in using the geographical language which has been taught.
127. The shared leadership of the subject is having a positive effect on the improvements in standards and curriculum since the previous inspection. There is clear direction for the subject through fieldwork, both day and residential visits, which has a good impact on pupils' social development and interest in the subject. This is supported by a strong emphasis on the use of ICT. Both strands have created consistency in the effectiveness of teaching and shared interest amongst staff to improve standards. Pupils' work is marked and corrected, but marking has not yet developed to indicate what pupils need to do to or the level at which they are working.

HISTORY

128. Standards have improved considerably since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 6 and at the end of Year 2, pupils are achieving standards expected for their ages. Pupils have better opportunities to develop their skills, recording through a variety of writing styles, using ICT effectively to research information. Pupils with special educational needs use specific vocabulary correctly and as a result make very good progress in their lessons. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are well supported by classroom assistants and they make very good progress in lessons.
129. Pupils in Year 2 show they have a secure understanding of an event by sequencing a series of pictures about the Great Fire of London. They identify correctly pictures of

vehicles from the past, beyond their living memory and use terms such as *a long time ago* and *far away*. Pupils of above average ability apply techniques learned in literacy well, for example, writing letters to a friend describing the conditions during the fire of London. Since the beginning of the school year, their writing contains more factual detail and uses specific vocabulary correctly. The over reliance on worksheets by some teachers, for example in the 'Seaside Now and Then' topic, has restricted the amount of writing and talking experiences. A wide-ranging experience of history, supported by visits to places of interest, is evident in Years 3 to 6. As a result, pupils have good general knowledge. They understand the need to assess evidence, one source of which is CD-ROMs and websites. Since the previous inspection, the use of ICT in lessons has improved. This important factor has helped raise standards for all pupils. Work by Year 4 pupils on interpreting an event for bias is better than expected for their age. Links with other subjects give relevance to pupils' work. A good example is art and music in Year 3 where good opportunities to make jewellery and musical instruments from history are well developed.

130. Overall, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers plan carefully and make clear to pupils what they are going to learn and how new learning relates to work already completed. They make good use of historical artefacts and visits to raise pupils' awareness, as well as engaging pupils' interest quickly through good questioning. This supports the assessment of learning in previous lessons, enabling them to recognise their personal progress in lessons. Support staff are deployed effectively. They have a clearly defined role and make a good impact on pupils' progress. Teachers and pupils get along with each other very well and pupils have very good attitudes to their work. Older pupils are beginning to show an increasing amount of independence and have a mature and sensible manner. Pupils' work is marked regularly and conscientiously, but rarely shows pupils what they have to do to improve.

131. The joint subject leadership is working effectively. Since the previous inspection, standards have been raised from below expectations for the age of the pupils and there is a better range of curriculum opportunities for all pupils. Teachers are more confident in their use of literacy and ICT as a result of training and there is a clear plan to develop the subject. Both subject leaders have a secure knowledge of the subject to help other teachers. They have been alert to the potential of the centenary of the school and its place in the local community to promote interest in history, as well as making the local chain making industry central to its work on industry during the Victorian era.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

132. The school has made a significant improvement in many areas of the provision for ICT. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be at the expected levels in Years 2 and 6. Since then curriculum requirements have been increased. The school has done well to maintain standards at the expected levels whilst increasing the resources and the opportunities pupils have to use ICT. Inspectors now find that pupils achieve well and reach the expected levels across a wider range of aspects. This is the result of better quality teaching, plenty of very good quality resources and principally the very high quality leadership from the subject's coordinators. A significant strength of pupils' work is the use of computers and other technologies in other subjects. Pupils are skilled at using the Internet and CD-ROMs to help them research. They achieve well when constructing graphs in mathematics and when measuring the temperature of cooling water in science. Achievement in other subjects is enhanced through the application of ICT skills.

133. Pupils in all year groups have access to computers of good quality in their classrooms as well as in the computer suite. A marked success is the way in which teachers plan their use as a natural part of pupils' work. As soon as pupils enter the school they are taught how to log on to the school's system and they begin to look upon computers as a natural tool for learning. The learning opportunities teachers plan are of good quality and follow the national guidelines. The school has ensured that pupils have access to a wide range of programs which complement work in other subjects and there are many examples of pupils using ICT in English, mathematics, science and geography. Pupils who learn English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs make very good progress. Pupils whose home language is not English, are well supported. Pupils who learn quickly and those who find it difficult are given very good support to ensure that they keep up with other pupils in their classes. Pupils with special educational needs are given lots of opportunities to develop their reading and mathematics skills by using computers. This helps them make very good progress and some impressive examples of mentoring and support were seen during the inspection.
134. By the end of Year 2 pupils present their work use programs to word process and illustrate their work. Pupils select the appropriate styles to compile poetry, highlighted with illustrations, some drawn in graphic packages and others from commercial software. They use bullet points and numbers to show the order of instructions and organise information in a particular order. Pupils are skilled at using illustration programs to work in the style of famous artists; for example, Mondrian, Modigliani and Van Gogh. In Year 1 pupils achieve well when using computers to write poetry based on the work of published poets. In an excellent mathematics investigation in Year 2 pupils used a digital camera to record how they had made their triangles with straws. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they use computers to explore mathematical relationships such as how much profit a shop makes when taking wages, stock and other outgoings into account. This is valuable because it shows pupils how computers are used in the world outside school. Other work also helps to illustrate how ICT is used in the real world. Pupils use tables, charts and graphs to display information, for example, outcomes of traffic surveys were used to produce maps and plans. The one area of achievement that is lower than the expected levels is how well pupils use the keyboard and mouse. Pupils are not taught how to type effectively enough. This means that many pupils who show higher than average ability in ICT are held up because they cannot enter information quickly. Many examples of pupils typing with one finger were observed.
135. The quality of teaching observed was never less than satisfactory. Teachers are enthusiasts and use computers effectively in their own work. Marking the register, completing lesson plans and using graphic programs to enhance displays ensure computers are seen as everyday teaching tools. In turn this helps pupils see that computers are part of their learning day. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and all teachers use the full complement of programs on the school's system. Teachers and support staff have conscientiously undertaken training to improve subject knowledge. There were one or two examples of lessons when higher attaining pupils were hindered from making rapid progress because the teacher lacked confidence and depth in their own subject knowledge. However, teachers generally are very keen to offer pupils lots of opportunities to explore how computers can be used.
136. This enthusiasm for computing and technology is due to the work of the subject leaders who show excellent leadership in defining the way forward and excellent management skills in bringing about improvements. They have not been in post very long and have worked diligently and successfully to ensure that the resources, teacher expertise and plans for the subject are up-to-date and appropriate. They are ambitious for pupils

and have lots of high quality plans to improve provision and continue the work in the areas of assessment, community use and broadening the learning opportunities available to pupils and teachers. For example, their determination to provide each of the new classrooms with an interactive white board is matched by their resourcefulness in seeking the ways and means to fulfil the school's plans. They are supported very well by governor expertise and the commitment of the headteacher.

MUSIC

137. By the end of Year 6, pupils' achievements in music are at the standard expected for their age. Pupils' achievements are above average in Year 2 because some of the teaching is excellent. Throughout the school the standard of performance and composition is higher than the pupils' musical knowledge and understanding of different types of music and composers. Composition was a weakness at the time of the last inspection and has improved. The singing is of good quality throughout the school.
138. Year 2 pupils have a wide repertoire of songs that they sing with enthusiasm and sensitivity. Their teacher has high expectations and the pupils respond with accurate pitch, phrasing and rhythm. In an excellent singing practice, for example, the teacher stopped playing the piano now and then while the pupils continued to sing accurately and expressively using a wide range of actions. Pupils have real empathy with the words. In *The Quartermaster's Stores* pupils closed their eyes, singing in hushed voices "My eyes are dim, I cannot see..." In another excellent lesson, this time taught by the subject leader, pupils used a range of instruments extremely well to illustrate a story. They are knowledgeable about the sound the instruments make and the effect they can achieve as well as the names of the instruments. This lesson was extremely well planned and the teacher gave all her pupils a chance to shine, even those who found it difficult not to play when it was not their turn. Her enthusiasm, calm instruction and delight in the performance ensured that pupils' achieved very well.
139. The teaching of the older pupils is never less than satisfactory and sometimes very good. In a lesson for eight-year-olds for example, impeccable planning for a short lesson ensured that pupils explored different timbres with an introductory chant in a range of styles including sad, angry, deep, fast, "posh" and happy. This was extended with vocabulary such as *tinkling*, *hollow* and *dull*. Pupils selected instruments to reflect these words although their understanding of the sounds that could be made was limited. Older pupils compose music for the school's jubilee. The music they make is good although their methods of recording are underdeveloped. Most have some understanding of the structure of music, identifying verse and chorus and patterns of melodies. In some lessons the teachers contribute too much and do not encourage pupils to elaborate on ideas or to evaluate their performances.
140. There is a good range of additional musical activities. Twenty pupils have brass tuition provided by the Dudley Music Service. There are infant and junior choirs and the juniors are about to audition for a performance of *Oliver*. Dudley Performing Arts ensemble performs regularly to the foundation stage as well as the rest of the school. A *One Man Band* visited the nursery. The infant choir performs in the Halesowen Early Years Music festival and the juniors contribute to the Hasbury Rotary Christmas concert. Pupils perform regularly to parents and senior citizens. The curriculum is planned well, based on commercial schemes, government guidance and advice from the local education authority advisers. There are some programs to support composition in ICT and an appropriate range of instruments although some need replenishing. Teachers have adequate subject knowledge throughout the school and there are examples of excellent

subject teaching. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs, are fully included in all aspect of the subject and often shine in their music lessons. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

141. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is higher, resulting in pupils attaining standards that are above the national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress and they are fully included in all aspects of the subject. The school provides a full and balanced curriculum even though it cannot use the full extent of its small playing field at present.
142. Pupils in all year groups achieve well. In Year 1 pupils showed good skills when controlling a ball with their feet, using a hockey stick, dribbling along a slalom course and throwing bean-bags at targets with improving accuracy. Year 2 pupils analysed their travelling actions to identify ways in which they could improve their rolling, jumping and balancing skills. They moved and assembled their apparatus stations with safety and accuracy, following the maps provided by their teacher.
143. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 are making good progress in swimming. By the end of Year 4 almost all pupils achieve the national expectations and many extend their skills further into personal survival and stroke proficiency awards. In Year 5 the pupils create and refine travelling and balance sequences with a partner, improving their sequences by offering positive criticism that focused on the height, shape and speed of the movements. The pupils in Year 6 are developing their gymnastic skills further when devising an extended sequence of flight movements with both static and moving partners. Initially, they planned their ideas before putting them into action. They continually revised their ideas and discussed how they might improve their performance. For example, by ensuring that style and poise were precise. Having performed their sequence to the class, they benefited from the positive views and evaluation of the other pupils.
144. Pupils have very good attitudes to physical education. They are proud to represent their school in team competitions and talk with great enthusiasm about their achievements, for example in football and cricket. All pupils understand why they need to change their clothing and bring appropriate kit to school. Even the youngest children need little help. Pupils demonstrate they are both safe and efficient when moving large apparatus. All pupils are very conscientious in performing their warm up and cool down exercises and fully appreciate the reasons for their importance. They are also very effective in carrying out a risk assessment of the small spaces available to them for their indoor activities. This very good training begins in the nursery where the children are helped to carry out an impressive risk assessment of the small hall they use.
145. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers promote the health aspects of physical education very well. Routines at the beginning and end of each lesson are effective, especially when pupils are encouraged to lead the activities under the watchful eye of their teacher and the other pupils. Planning is detailed and the pupils are well managed. The lessons have good pace and challenge. This ensures the pupils have positive and enjoyable learning experiences.

146. The subject leaders are very effective and have a very clear view of the future direction of their subject. This is informed by the careful and detailed review they conduct. They monitor teacher planning and provide support for their colleagues. The school provides a very comprehensive range of activities, both sporting and creative, for the pupils both in school and through extensive extra-curricular activities. The school has deservedly been awarded the prestigious Activemark Gold Award for its physical education provision. The school has adequate resources but less than adequate space in which to carry out all activities, made more difficult by the building taking place at present. This difficulty will be resolved when the new building programme is complete.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

147. Attainment at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and the pupils achieve well throughout the school.

148. The pupils in Year 1 explore and share with confidence their own ideas and feelings about the damaging effect man can have on the environment. In their discussion pairs they were beginning to show a good awareness that actions have outcomes, for example, the effect of pollution on the environment. The pupils in Year 2 are making good progress in recognising the special features of holy places and artefacts such as a prayer mat and the crescent, linked to Islam. However, they need support and encouragement to use the subject language introduced in their lessons, for example, one pupil described his friend as 'a different sort of Christian.' With the teacher's good support he learned to describe his friend as a Muslim.

149. In Year 3 the feelings of others are explored and pupils describe their emotions through metaphors and by relating the signs and symbols from the story of Noah's Ark with the dove and olive branch, recognised as signs of peace. The pupils in Year 4 are embarking on a study of the creation story as seen by different religions, beginning with Genesis. Earlier in the year they showed an understanding of the qualities required of a shepherd in Jesus' time by composing an advertisement for a vacant post in Bethlehem. The pupils in Year 5 demonstrated a good recollection of the components of the Bible, for example, gospels, letters, laws, history, poetry and proverbs at the beginning of their lesson that explored the choices they have to make about their beliefs and values. They worked well together to share their ideas about the ending of the story of the little girls' lost bus fare and what ought to happen. Whilst exploring the stories of the Jewish faith, the pupils in Year 6 have gained an appropriate knowledge of the symbols they have learned about, for example, the Torah, the Ark of the Covenant, the Menorah and the Star of David.

150. Pupils' attitudes are good. They listen well and are keen to contribute to discussions sharing their ideas and responding sensitively to the ideas of others. These skills are enhanced by the skilful questioning techniques employed by the teachers. The relationships between pupils and pupils with their teachers are very good and support the purposeful learning that is occurring in religious education.

151. Teaching is good overall. Good subject knowledge enables the teachers to help pupils make relevant connections between religions, for example, in Year 4 where the teacher was able to relate the Christian and Hindu understanding of God. The relationships between the major religions are taught well and make a significant contribution to the cultural development of the pupils. Key vocabulary is identified in planning but is not consistently modelled and rehearsed with the pupils to ensure that they have the necessary subject vocabulary for each lesson. Writing skills are well promoted

with pupils experiencing a variety of writing opportunities for example, job advertisements for a shepherd, biographies of major religious personalities and describing emotions through metaphors. The Internet is used for research, for example in finding information about Islam.

152. The subject leaders have a clear vision for the future development of the subject contained in the subject action plan. Planning is monitored and the assessment procedures are well supported by the moderated portfolio of pupils' work. In Years 3 to 6 pupils play an active role in monitoring their own performance by maintaining their own record of attainment targets.