

INSPECTION REPORT

PERRY BEECHES JUNIOR SCHOOL

Great Barr, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103163

Headteacher: Mr Peter Bartle

Reporting inspector: Mr John D Eadie
20191

Dates of inspection: 4th to 7th November 2002

Inspection number: 246262

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Beeches Road Great Barr Birmingham
Postcode:	B42 2PY
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr E Hoare
Date of previous inspection:	13 th - 16 th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20191	Mr J D Eadie	Registered inspector	Design and technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9079	Mrs A Moss	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3751	Mrs T Cotton	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Special educational needs Geography Religious education	
27369	Ms C Powell	Team inspector	Science Art and design Music	
25771	Mr P Sandall	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	How good are the curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28686	Mrs E Walker	Team inspector	English as an additional language English History	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number on roll aged 7 to 11	346 (above average)
Pupils entitled to free school meals	19.1% (broadly average)
Pupils whose mother tongue is not English	20.5% (high)
Pupils identified as having special educational needs	19.9% (broadly average)
Pupils with statements of their special needs	1.4% (broadly average)

Perry Beeches Junior School occupies new buildings opened in April 2002, situated on a campus with four newly built schools covering the age range from 3 to 16. The building work on the campus has caused considerable disruption to the school. This has taken up an enormous amount of the headteacher's time over the last three years as he has had to liaise with builders and others. The area is one of privately owned homes on the outskirts of Birmingham, most of which are terraced or semi-detached and some of these are rented. More than a third of the pupils are from a wide range of ethnic groups other than White British. The largest groups are Indian and Black Caribbean. Most of the pupils with special educational needs have difficulty with their reading, writing and mathematics, although there is a small minority of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Attainment of the pupils on entry to the school is generally below average. It has been well below average for some year groups according to their national test results at the end of Year 2. Three classes were taken by temporary teachers during the inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Perry Beeches Junior is a good school. The pupils are achieving well and making good progress, largely due to their keenness to learn, the happy, secure environment that exists and the good teaching. The school ensures that the pupils develop very well into very responsible young citizens. The leadership and management of the school are both good and the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils make good progress during their time in the school, and standards in English, science, art, music and religious education are above average.
- The quality of teaching is good and the pupils consequently learn well.
- The leadership and management of the school are good.
- The school makes very good provision for the pupils' personal development. The pupils consequently have very good attitudes to their school and their work. Relationships at all levels in the school are excellent.
- The school is a harmonious, culturally diverse community, in which the pupils have an excellent understanding of a very wide range of cultures.
- There are many close links with the other schools on the campus and with the local community. The pupils' learning benefits significantly from these links.

What could be improved

These areas for development should be viewed in the light of this being a good school. They are pointers to improve the already good practice.

- The teachers do not always provide appropriate work to meet the different needs of the pupils in their classes or plan sufficient opportunities for the pupils to research, experiment or learn independently.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not effective in eliminating inconsistencies in the teaching.
- There are shortcomings in the planning for some subjects.
- There is insufficient targeted support for many of those pupils with English as an additional

language and some pupils with special educational needs who do not have statements.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1997 and has made satisfactory progress since then. Standards have improved in this time and the key issues have all been addressed to some extent. For example, good quality assessment and recording procedures are used well to plan for the future learning of pupils in English and mathematics. The other two key issues have been less successfully addressed, for although the school is now gaining more higher levels in the National Curriculum tests, there are still a number of lessons when the work planned does not sufficiently challenge the more able pupils. Similarly, there are still shortcomings with the levels of support for pupils with special educational needs except for those with statements. There is a good shared commitment to continue to raise standards.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. The similar schools referred to are those with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	C	E	C	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	C	E	D	C	
Science	C	C	C	B	

The school's results have been variable over the last few years, due in some measure to the disruption caused by the building work on the campus. Despite the fall in 2001, standards have been rising in line with the national trend in the tests since 1998. Standards have improved in 2002 compared with 2001, and the statistics show that these pupils made good progress from their performance in the tests in Year 2 in 1998. Quite challenging targets were set for performance in the tests this year and these were met in English, but just missed in mathematics. Standards of work seen during the inspection were above average in English, science, art, music and religious education. In all other subjects, including mathematics, standards were average. Most pupils make good progress and achieve well during their time in the school. However, the pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language do not make such good progress, as the support available for them is insufficient.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have very good attitudes to their school and to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in and around the school. There were seven exclusions last year involving three pupils, all of these justified and supported by the parents of the pupils involved.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils are developing very well into very responsible young citizens. Relationships at all levels in the school are excellent.

Attendance	Rates of attendance are in line with the national average. Almost all pupils arrive at school punctually and lessons start on time.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good

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

Teaching is generally good, but there is some inconsistency between classes. The teaching of English and mathematics is good and the pupils consequently learn the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well. The teachers have excellent relationships with their pupils and manage their classes very well. A very good learning environment is thus created in which it is easy for the pupils to learn. The teachers have created a lively atmosphere in their classrooms by their use of displays. These stimulate the pupils well. The teachers are generally very good at using questions to encourage the pupils to think about what it is that they are learning. They are also very good at encouraging the correct use of language specific to each subject in their lessons. However, the objectives that teachers set for the pupils' learning in lessons are not always precise enough to enable teachers and pupils to measure accurately the success of learning during the lesson. The teachers use too many worksheets which do not allow the pupils to research and to record their results in their own way. This often means that the work is not always appropriate for the pupils, particularly the more able. The teachers work hard to meet the needs of all the pupils in their classes, but lack of support for some pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language means that these pupils sometimes do not learn as well as they should.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The planned curriculum is good and fully meets statutory requirements. It is broad, balanced and relevant for the pupils but there are some shortcomings in the planning for some subjects. The range and number of extra-curricular opportunities are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory provision is made for those pupils with special educational needs but the support for them is often insufficient in the afternoons. Good provision is made for pupils with statements.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Unsatisfactory provision is made for those pupils with English as an additional language. There is insufficient support to ensure that they can fully understand all that is going on in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for the pupils' personal development. This provision is excellent for their cultural development, with the wide range of cultures represented in the school being fully valued and appreciated by all.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a very caring, safe and happy environment for the pupils and has a good racial inclusion policy. Good procedures are in place to assess the pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. However, these are not always used to plan effectively for the next stage of learning for pupils of all ability levels.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The parents have very positive views of the school and are very supportive. There is an effective partnership between school and parents, many of whom give freely of their time and energy.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives good and caring leadership for the school. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. Most subject co-ordinators lead their subjects well. The school is well managed at all levels and applies the principles of 'best value' effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very well informed and knowledgeable and fulfil their responsibilities very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is good at evaluating its own performance and planning to address areas for development. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching has not been effective in eliminating inconsistencies.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and management are efficient and all specific grants are used appropriately. There are a good number of teachers but an insufficient number of support staff. Resources for many subjects are good. The new accommodation is very good and the ability to share facilities with other schools on the campus benefits pupils.

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 are expected to work hard. • The headteacher and teachers are approachable. • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible. • The teaching is good. • Their children like school. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on how their children are progressing. • Levels of homework.

As can be seen from earlier sections of this report the inspectors agree with all positive parental comments. With regard to the areas that some parents would like to see improved, the judgement of the inspection team is that:

- the parents receive good information about their children's progress at consultation meetings and there are good opportunities for informal discussions with teachers, but there are some shortcomings in the annual reports;
- levels of homework are appropriate and homework makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 Standards of work seen in the inspection in English and science are above average by the end of Year 6. In mathematics they are average. The pupils of all ability levels achieve well during their time in the school. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in standards achieved are:

- the pupils make good progress through the school;
- standards in English and science are above average;
- standards in art, music and religious education are above average;
- the pupils with statements for their special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for their learning due to the good provision made for them.

Areas for development are:

- to improve the provision for the pupils with English as an additional language so that they make better progress;
- to improve the provision for the pupils with special educational needs so that they make the progress of which they are capable;
- to improve the pupils' literacy skills and knowledge by ensuring that they are used sufficiently in other subjects.

2 Standards in the subjects of the curriculum seen in lessons and in the scrutiny of pupils' work are displayed in the following table.

Standards	At the end of Year 6
English	Above average
Mathematics	Average
Science	Above average
Art and design	Above average
Design and technology (DT)	Average
Geography	Average
History	Average
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Average
Music	Above average
Physical education (PE)	Average
Religious education (RE)	Above average

3 In the National Curriculum tests in Year 6 in 2002, standards were average in English and science and below average in mathematics when compared with all schools nationally. These results are shown in the summary report, which also shows that these pupils

achieved above average standards in English and science and average standards in mathematics when compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. This group of pupils did well considering how they performed in the tests for seven year olds in 1998. As they enter at Year 3 with below average standards this is an indicator of the good progress that the pupils make during their time in the school.

4 As can be seen in the above table, standards are above average in a number of subjects by the end of Year 6. A significant reason for this improvement is the stability and fresh impetus given to the school on moving into its new buildings. In art and design, the pupils are learning and using well a good range of skills and techniques. The school has long had a reputation for the quality of the music, and there are high expectations that this reputation will continue. Standards in this subject are largely due to the specialist teaching that a number of classes receive. In RE, there is good coverage of the local agreed syllabus and the pupils are given a good appreciation of a wide range of cultures and religions.

5 Most of the pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress in English and mathematics because of the support available for them in these lessons which are mostly in the mornings. Presently, targets for improving the pupils' literacy skills are more effective than those planned for in numeracy. Individual education plans (IEPs) in literacy enable pupils with SEN to follow small, specific steps and so improve their learning. In mathematics, targets are too broad to meet individual needs. The pupils with SEN only make satisfactory progress in the afternoons because there is insufficient support for them to enable them to make the same good progress as other pupils. There are five pupils with statements for their special educational needs, three of whom are in one class. These three pupils are supported effectively by an experienced learning support assistant (LSA) in lessons and make good progress towards the targets set for their learning. The other two pupils with statements receive support which meets the level identified in their individual education plans (IEPs).

6 Some of the pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) do not make sufficient progress. This is because pupils who are not confident with their English are not given enough support or opportunities to acquire basic vocabulary to enable them to recognise the subject terminology, particularly in subjects such as science and maths where a technical vocabulary is used.

7 With the exception of the groups noted above, most of the pupils make good progress through the school. However, this progress could be better if pupils were encouraged to use their investigative and research skills more. The school has a good draft register of pupils with particular gifts and talents and is already making some provision for these pupils, particularly in mathematics, music and PE. These pupils are making good progress relative to their abilities. Over time, boys have not attained so well in the national tests in Year 6. However, during the inspection no difference was noted between the achievement of boys and girls. Boys and girls are found working in the range of ability groups, contribute equally in lessons and both groups enjoy reading and researching information.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8 The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development remain a significant strength of the school. This is mainly due to the happy, secure environment that exists and the consistently good management of pupils by all members of staff to promote very high standards.

Strengths in this area are:

- the pupils are very keen on their work and enjoy coming to school;
- behaviour is good;
- relationships at all levels are excellent;
- the pupils respect the needs of others and value highly the diversity of cultures represented in the school;
- the pupils are becoming very responsible and mature.

There are no areas for development in this aspect.

9 The school works very hard to instil an appreciation of learning and very good attitudes and ensures that the pupils develop into very responsible young citizens. Parents report that pupils enjoy coming to school and ensure that most arrive on time each morning. When they arrive at school they are happy and look forward to their day. Pupils are polite and cheerful and they are very eager to learn. They have a very positive approach to lessons and try hard to meet the expectations of their teachers. This was seen, for example, in a Year 4 numeracy lesson where pupils showed excellent involvement and were very focused as they tried hard to recognise extended number sequences. The pupils are enthusiastic about their work and are proud to share their successes. These very good attitudes and enthusiasm for learning were seen in most lessons throughout the school. The safe, welcoming and calm atmosphere promoted by the school provides an environment that encourages the pupils to do their best and pupils respond very well to it. They develop very good habits of working and settle down quickly to tasks. Sustained levels of concentration were seen in many of the lessons observed during the inspection, for example in a Year 5 guided reading session where pupils concentrated on their reading and worked together very well, even when not directly supervised.

10 Behaviour in and around school is good, for example in assemblies and when pupils are moving around the school. Parents agree with this view: 93 per cent of those who responded to the questionnaire think behaviour is good. During lessons, when there is a change of activities, pupils move quickly and with the minimum of fuss without wasting valuable time, even though there are some narrow corridors and stairways. The rewards and sanctions systems are well established and there is a very obvious absence of oppressive behaviour, including bullying and racism. The school has created a caring and supportive ethos in which pupils get on excellently together with very positive racial harmony. There were seven exclusions last year and the inspection team judged that all of these were justified. These exclusions involved three pupils and were supported by the parents of the pupils involved.

11 There are excellent relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults. The pupils work together very well and they co-operate and collaborate when necessary. This was seen in a Year 6 music lesson when pupils worked together very well indeed, sharing sounds and ideas whilst developing composition skills. Excellent relationships were also observed in a Year 5 numeracy lesson when the pupils all joined in very enthusiastically to talk about triangles. Higher and lower ability pupils work very well together, readily sharing their knowledge and skills, and this raises the quality of learning of the whole class. There are common rules throughout the school which pupils understand and follow. The pupils are friendly and treat each other and adults with courtesy and respect. They play in a happy, friendly atmosphere. The pupils identified as having SEN are encouraged to join in with lessons and their contributions are valued. Work on a one-to-one basis is helping a small number of pupils, who lack confidence and competence when collaborating in larger groups, to interact more appropriately with others. The pupils with EAL have good attitudes to their work throughout the school. They behave very well and work well with other pupils. They work hard to overcome their lack of English vocabulary and concentrate well on the tasks they are

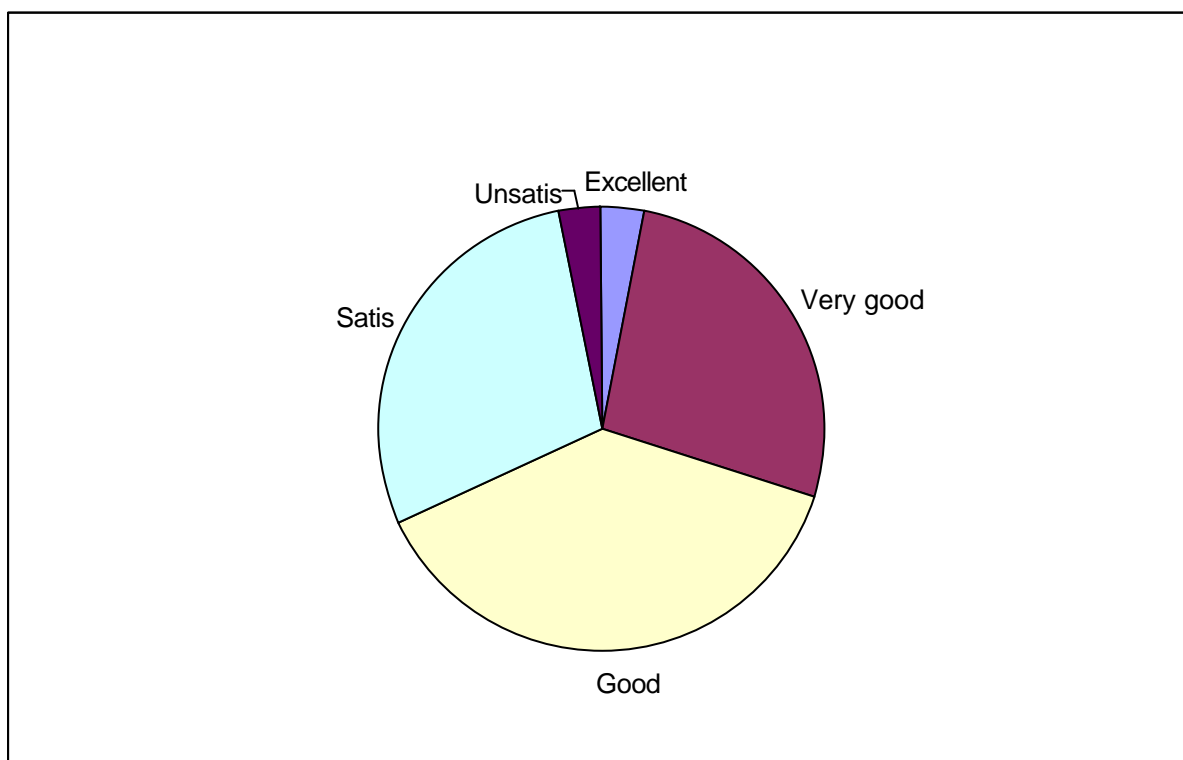
given. Teachers are using circle time¹ sessions well to help the children to understand the impact of their actions on others and respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs.

12 The pupils' personal development is excellent. They are becoming very responsible, mature and polite young citizens. They readily accept responsibility by doing tasks around the school. For example, they help to set up the hall for assemblies and willingly act as class monitors and table managers. They are also aware of and involved in the school council. They collect money for charities. There are many visitors to the school and the pupils enjoy visits to places of educational interest. Their self-esteem is regarded as important and there is an effective system of house points and rewards to promote this.

13 Attendance levels are satisfactory, being broadly in line with the national average. The school is very aware of the importance of high levels of attendance and follows appropriate procedures for registering pupils each day. There are clear mechanisms for following up any unexplained absences, and the learning mentor works very closely with the education welfare officer to follow up any persistent absenteeism and lateness.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is similar to the situation at the last inspection, although there is more very good and excellent teaching now.



Strengths in teaching and learning are:

- the excellent relationships and the teachers' management of their classes which results in a very good learning environment;
- the contribution of teachers from the secondary school;

¹ Circle time is an opportunity for pupils to discuss issues in their classes, in a less formal and non-judgmental way.

- planning is particularly good in English;
- the way that the teachers use specific vocabulary in the various subjects;
- the teachers' use of questions to encourage the pupils' thinking.

Areas for development are:

- learning objectives are sometimes not specific enough to be achievable in lessons;
- there is a lack of consistency, particularly in marking;
- worksheets used are not always accurately matched to the needs of the pupils;
- the pupils are given insufficient opportunities to learn independently.

15 The chart above clearly shows the proportion of good or better teaching that is resulting in the good learning and progress that the pupils are making. There is a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, usually the result of slow pace and poor use of a variety of methods. In these lessons the learning objectives² are not effectively addressed. In a number of lessons the learning objectives are not specific enough to be achievable during the lesson. Lesson objectives are not always understood by pupils or broken down sufficiently so that pupils understand what they are meant to achieve or how they can recognise whether they have been successful. This has a negative impact on the learning of the pupils, particularly when nothing is specifically planned for the more able pupils in the class. On occasions, these pupils are expected to complete the same work as the rest of the class before going on to something more challenging and appropriate to their needs. The setting³ arrangements for English in Years 5 and 6 and for mathematics in all year groups help to address these problems, and the needs of the more able are usually met well in these sets.

16 As can be seen from the chart above, the quality of teaching is quite variable. This is partly due to the lack of effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching. In some classes the teachers' marking is very effective in helping the pupils see what it is that they need to do next in order to improve, but this is not always the case. Specialist teaching makes a very significant contribution to the pupils' learning. For example, a teacher with special expertise in music takes a number of music lessons and the learning in these lessons is almost always very good. The very strong links with the secondary school on the campus also make a very good contribution. For example, in PE, not only do the Year 6 pupils have the benefit of using their facilities on occasions, but teachers from the secondary school teach some lessons to the pupils in the junior school. Lessons were seen during the inspection in dance and games where this was happening and these were both occasions when the pupils gained enormously from the expertise of these teachers.

17 There are a number of general strengths in the teaching and learning. The excellent relationships that exist between pupils and between pupils and adults, and the teachers' management of their classes result in a calm and orderly working environment. This helps the pupils to sustain concentration and learn well. In most lessons, the teachers use a good range of methods to engage and interest the pupils. For example, in a very good literacy lesson in Year 6, not only was the teacher enthusiastic but she used a wide range of activities during the lesson, which retained the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils.

18 The teachers use questions well to encourage the pupils to think and to put into words their thinking. This was seen in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 5 where the teacher was constantly asking the pupils to explain how they arrived at answers. The teachers use correct terminology in the various subjects of the curriculum well. This aids the learning of the pupils, particularly those with EAL, who are being exposed to the language. However, there is

² Learning objectives are the skills, knowledge and understanding that the teacher is aiming that the pupils should learn during the lesson.

³ When the pupils are arranged into teaching groups by ability, this is known as setting.

insufficient emphasis and planning for the needs of pupils who have EAL. These pupils respond well to teachers and try hard to co-operate and complete the task they are given to do. They work very well with other pupils who assist them and talk to them so that they can learn the basic vocabulary they require. There is no direct intervention or specific support available for these pupils. The teachers and support assistants are aware of the shortcomings and endeavour to assist them whenever possible. There is a lack of resources which teachers can use in order to extend and develop vocabulary for these pupils.

19 The school is quick to identify individual need and calls on the help of experts from outside the school to help assess pupils and target their learning. This is working well for pupils with statements, who are motivated by their good progress and so are keen to learn. Provision in literacy and numeracy lessons is also appropriate for the vast majority of pupils with SEN. This is because work is planned in lessons to meet the broad ability levels found in each class and most classes have extra teaching support. In lessons in the afternoon, work is not matched so well to levels of need and there is a lack of support in classes. This in turn is holding back the progress that some SEN pupils make. For instance, in an ICT lesson in Year 4, all pupils worked at the same task and, despite the teacher helping all groups, some SEN pupils still struggled.

20 The teachers generally make good use of the resources available to them. However, there are times when commercially produced worksheets are used that do not meet the needs of the pupils, or specifically address the learning objectives. When the teachers create their own worksheets, these are usually good and effective in aiding the pupils' learning. In a number of lessons the teachers spend too much time talking and guiding the pupils, rather than allowing them opportunities to investigate and research for themselves.

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

21 The school has made a conscious effort to maintain a broad curriculum while giving appropriate focus to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and has generally met this aim successfully. All pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life. Overall a good range of learning opportunities is provided for the pupils. This situation has been maintained since the last inspection.

Curriculum strengths include:

- the very close links with the community of schools on site which enrich the pupils' learning;
- the very good provision for extra-curricular activities;
- the pupils' personal, social and health education;
- the wide range of visits and visitors which broadens the pupils' understanding;
- the planned learning opportunities which contribute to good progress by most pupils.

Areas for development include:

- more focused help for pupils with EAL;
- ensuring the progress of pupils with SEN matches that of their peers;
- refining the planning of some non-core subjects to ensure they are sufficiently covered;
- developing planned opportunities for links between subjects.

22 Current and future planning for the development of English, mathematics and science is having a useful effect. The analysis of the way pupils answer questions in national tests so that planning can be adapted is improving standards in English and science, but has yet to

have an impact in mathematics. The literacy strategy is used effectively and is having a positive impact on teaching and learning; while the numeracy strategy is followed, not all teachers are using it so that it best supports the needs of their pupils. The setting in English and mathematics, especially in Year 6 where the involvement of the deputy headteacher means there are four groups, is making a significant contribution to the pupils' learning.

23 Most non-core subjects are planned into the curriculum in a way that ensures pupils cover a suitable range of experiences but in some areas, particularly DT and geography, the planning does not ensure sufficient depth of study. The transference of skills between different subjects does happen, but at present it is not planned for and is therefore fairly haphazard. The school has recognised this through the appointment of a teacher to review this area. The teaching of specific writing skills in history, or mathematical skills in geography, for example, is not sufficiently developed to make learning more relevant and the use of time more effective.

24 There is suitable provision for sex education, and the pupils are taught about the dangers of drug misuse. There is a strong commitment to the pupils' personal, social and health education, which has its own co-ordinator and budget. Time is 'blocked' at the beginning and end of each term for work in this area, and circle time forms part of the weekly timetable. While no formal records are kept, informal monitoring takes place at year group meetings, and teachers know their pupils well. It would also be difficult to overestimate the contribution made by the school's underlying ethos to the personal and social development of all its pupils and the way that all pupils are made to feel an integral part of the school.

25 The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Sports include soccer, netball and tennis coaching. There are residential visits available to the pupils in both Year 5 and Year 6. The 'Monday Club', run by parents, is open to all pupils and is very well supported. Music is a high priority, and features strongly in the life of the school; it includes a developing 'Artsite' orchestra and choir containing pupils from all the schools on site. This is just one facet of the close links between the community of schools. There are regular meetings between managers and subject leaders that encourage co-operation and continuity in the pupils' education, and pupils from the junior school also benefit from the facilities and expertise of the secondary school and its staff. The excellent level of involvement the school has with its parents and the schools on site extends to the range of visits made by the pupils and the number of visitors to the school. This is all planned to enrich their understanding in subjects such as science, history, geography and religious education.

26 Provision for the pupils with SEN is satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection, support has been extended and developed to include more in-class provision. This is evident in literacy and numeracy lessons, where staffing support is at an appropriate level, ensuring pupils make sound progress. Provision in afternoon lessons varies. It is insufficient in some lessons, and can affect the progress pupils make. This is an aspect of SEN which the school has identified and is evaluating at present.

27 The pupils who have EAL are well integrated into classes and work on the same tasks as other pupils. Occasionally they are supported by a classroom assistant but often they copy the work other pupils are doing without understanding the task or the purpose.

28 The school's provision for spiritual development is good; provision for moral and social development is very good, and the provision for cultural development is of a very high quality. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection.

29 Provision for spiritual development is good. The school draws effectively from its cultural and religious diversity and there is a shared sense of belonging and the need to care

for each other. This is echoed in the way in which pupils view their place in the wider world, suggesting, 'we are all one, like in the story of the Lion King'. Provision in RE is good, with lessons used to develop deeper reflection. Younger pupils, for example, wrote short prayers about God's care, whilst in Year 5, the pupils created a sense of peace and beauty in their drawings after studying the teachings of Guru Nanak. In other subjects across the curriculum provision is incidental rather than planned and there are missed opportunities to develop spirituality through art, poetry and music. Collective worship meets statutory requirements. In one assembly, the pupils were asked to put themselves in other people's shoes, as they considered what it is like to be blind. The pupils showed a sense of amazement, when the visiting speaker explained the tasks people who are blind learn to do everyday.

30 Provision for moral development is very good. There is a strong sense of what is right and wrong, which is endorsed through the different cultural and religious beliefs found within the school. The school sets a high priority on developing a sense of fair play and respect for each other, with adults in school providing good role models. Policies in the school on racial equality are openly discussed and pupils and parents have trust in their application. The pupils value the provision of a school council, which addresses important issues such as bullying as well as providing a 'wish list' for playground activities.

31 The provision for social development is very good. Parents believe the school helps their children to respect the feelings and beliefs of others and to work together harmoniously. The school promotes a sense of shared commitment: for example, pupils and their families share special celebrations, such as Bonfire Night, Diwali and Christmas productions. Pupils new to the school are well looked after by their classmates, with those who have EAL being helped with their acquisition of English. The school makes links with the wider community, with a 'European Week'. The contact with a school in Holland widens the pupils' social experiences and horizons. Lessons in geography and discussions with older pupils provide time to reflect on world issues, such as endangered forests. Closer to home, the development of a major road opens up discussions on land use and the need to protect plant and animal life. Assemblies are used well to celebrate effort and achievement, with reports on football and netball matches are well received. Fund-raising for a range of charities, such as the Poppy Appeal and Comic Relief, helps to make pupils aware of others less fortunate than themselves. Lessons in personal, social and health education (PSHE) provide time to focus on wider social issues, for instance, making informed decisions about drugs and alcohol. The pupils show a respect for their environment and expect to contribute as citizens to the common good.

32 Cultural provision is excellent. A strength is the way in which the school values and celebrates its cultural diversity. The cultural heritage of the local environment provides a rich foundation for lessons in geography and history. Visits to Birmingham Museum, the Botanical Gardens and places of historical interest add interest to learning, whilst links with a nearby mosque, church and temple provide an insight into different lifestyles and beliefs found within the school. The good provision for music within the school, particularly the expertise found in the school orchestra, adds to the mood and atmosphere of assemblies and special celebrations. Special talents with instruments, such as the flute and dhol drum, are shared and valued by others. The school's provision for art is good, with pupils being encouraged to create and enjoy works of art. Resources in the school reflect literature and images from different cultures, with European Week and religious celebrations adding enhancement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33 The school continues to provide a very caring and happy environment for the pupils and has a good and very effective racial inclusion policy. Parents and children appreciate

these high standards. All pupils are valued and the school's very good ethos promotes the very strong racial harmony. The school has a sound policy for Internet safety.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the school is very caring;
- the excellent procedures for eliminating oppressive behaviour;
- the very good procedures for promoting good behaviour;
- the very good procedures for encouraging attendance;
- the good procedures for assessment;
- the good individual targets for improvement set in English and mathematics.

Areas for development:

- some health and safety issues;
- procedures for assessment in non-core subjects.

34 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good and those for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are excellent. The senior management team has identified the need to ensure that there is a shared understanding by all members of the teaching and support staff of the necessity to promote consistently the guidance given in the school behaviour policies. Teaching and support staff make a significant contribution to providing a caring atmosphere and a safe and calm environment for all pupils, both in and out of lessons. Good behaviour is encouraged in ways that make sense to the children. Playtimes and lunchtimes are well supervised.

35 Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good. Although staff do not keep formal profiles on this aspect of their development, they do monitor pupils informally to support their learning needs. The programme for PSHE and citizenship is being taught regularly in the classrooms and good use is made of support workers, including the learning mentor⁴. Staff know the pupils well and respond sympathetically to each child, taking good account of personal circumstances that may affect learning in the school. There is a strong emphasis on raising all pupils' self-esteem and the pupils respond well to this. The pupils are becoming confident in their dealings with each other and with all members of staff. The teachers and support staff give very good praise and encouragement during lessons, and achievements, large and small, are celebrated. This has a positive effect on pupils' confidence and encourages them to achieve more. Circle time is being used to help pupils learn to understand about themselves and others and there are opportunities for them to take responsibility with the daily routines around the school. The school council is very popular and also gives the pupils opportunities to listen and to be heard. Staff and pupils support very well the pupils who join the school at times other than at the beginning of the school year.

36 There are satisfactory procedures in place for child protection with the headteacher named as the designated person in charge. However, the expertise in this area is not sufficiently shared with other members of staff. Staff are receiving appropriate training to enable them to keep up to date with aspects of first aid. Lines of responsibility for health and safety, however, still have not been established between the building contractors and the school. Even though very regular meetings take place between the headteacher and the contractors, there are no formal risk assessments carried out and there is no designated health and safety policy for the school.

⁴ A learning mentor is a member of staff who works with individual pupils to help them with their individual behavioural and emotional problems.

37 The procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are very good. The school has an excellent relationship with the education welfare officer who liaises with the learning mentor very efficiently. Any unexplained absences or lateness are followed up rigorously. Attendance figures are entered and checked regularly.

38 Induction procedures for children entering the school are good. Parents are pleased at how their children settle in and enjoy school. They are appreciative of the way pupils who join the school at times other than at the beginning of the school year are supported. They also like the care taken when the oldest children transfer to secondary school.

39 The previous inspection report highlighted the fact that record keeping and assessment procedures should be used to plan for future lessons. The school has addressed this issue, and documents and policies identify how these procedures should be used. In English, there are clear systems based on results and the analysis of responses to questions shows how well the pupils are achieving in specific areas. The analysis is not as detailed in mathematics. The teachers in year groups review results from tests and assessments on a regular basis. They show whether individual pupils are on course and likely to achieve their target. There is some use of targets so that pupils can recognise how they can improve their work, but this is not consistent throughout the school or related to all subjects. The teachers use the range of assessment material they gather to monitor and predict how well pupils are achieving. However, assessment procedures in lessons are not used as effectively; they are not used sufficiently to plan the next steps the pupils need in order to make consistent progress. The agreed procedures are not used consistently for subjects other than English, mathematics and science, and the pupils' progress is not so well checked in these non-core subjects. The targets set for the progress of the pupils with SEN is monitored well, with their IEPs being checked regularly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40 The school continues to work very hard at fostering good relationships with parents. Parents have very positive views and warmly praise what the school achieves. They value its caring attitudes and are satisfied that their children make good progress.

Strengths in relationships with parents are:

- the parents have very positive views of school;
- many parents work to support school.

There are no areas for development.

41 Some parents do not feel well informed about how their child is getting on. The inspection team judges that parents receive good information about their children's progress at consultation meetings and there are good opportunities for informal discussions with teachers, but there are some shortcomings in the annual reports. Particulars of the pupils' progress are not given in all subjects and they do not explain consistently what their children need to do to improve. A few parents are unhappy with the amount of work that their child has to do at home. The inspection team found that the levels of homework are appropriate and that homework makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning.

42 The inspection team agrees with the very positive views of the vast majority of parents. It judges that the school is trying very hard to work closely with all parents and is actively trying to involve even more parents in the life of the school. Parents speak very highly of the good, informal links with the headteacher and staff. They see links as a two-way process, ensuring pupils' interests are to the fore. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. Parents receive half-termly newsletters, but information on the

curriculum and topics that their children will be studying is not given out consistently across the school. There is a home-school agreement which parents are encouraged to sign and return to the school. There are regular parent-teacher consultation evenings. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are informative and meet statutory requirements.

43 The parents' involvement in the work of the school is very good and they make a very valuable contribution to the life of the school. They generously give up a large amount of their time. They are very involved, for example, in organising a wide range of activities for the successful 'Monday Club' and some parents come into school to hear the children read. The 'Friends of Perry Beeches Junior School' is a dedicated, hardworking group of people who provide valuable assistance to the school and have raised money to buy extra resources – for example, a television - and they have contributed towards the cost of the curtains for the hall. Their role is not solely fund-raising as they play an important part in providing a social network for all parents. There are five parent governors who make a valued contribution to school life.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44 The quality of leadership and management of the school is good overall. Standards in this area have been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in leadership and management are:

- the headteacher provides caring and effective leadership for the school;
- the deputy headteacher supports the leadership of the school very well;
- the school administrator gives excellent support to the management of the school;
- co-ordinators generally manage their areas of responsibility well;
- the finances of the school are very well managed and are used well;
- the governing body is knowledgeable, very supportive and effective;
- the school applies the principles of best value well;
- the accommodation is very good;
- there is a good number of teachers;
- there are good resources for most subjects.

Areas for development are:

- to improve the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation of teaching;
- the school development plan is not as useful as it could be in planning for future developments;
- some procedures are not carried out consistently;
- computers in classrooms are underused;
- there is a lack of support staff, particularly in the afternoons.

45 The leadership and management of the school are good at all levels. The headteacher gives good leadership and is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Subject co-ordinators have been given significant responsibility for managing their subjects and most subjects are managed well. There is a good shared commitment to improve and to do the best for the pupils which means that the school is well placed to move forward.

46 The governors have contributed well to the success of the school. They provide very good support and a very good range of expertise, which is used well. They are well-informed about the school and have a clear understanding of the major strengths and areas for development that the school is addressing. They play a significant role in the management of the school and in planning for future developments. The finance committee of the governing

body keeps a very careful overview of the finances of the school and is establishing good practice in planning for the future.

47 The SEN co-ordinator has recently taken over the role and is working hard, with the support of outside experts and colleagues, to audit needs within the school. Individual learning targets are planned clearly for statemented pupils and for pupils experiencing difficulties in literacy. Provision for IEPs for pupils with difficulties in numeracy, are at an early stage. The school makes appropriate arrangements for the spending of its delegated budget for special needs, ensuring the progress of these pupils. There are a limited number of classroom assistants who can offer a very small amount of support to pupils who have EAL. None has received specific training to support the language acquisition of these pupils but they are aware of their needs and assist them wherever possible.

48 The school's monitoring and evaluation of its performance are good overall. The school has analysed its performance well and identified a number of appropriate priorities for development and many good procedures have been put in place to address these. The school has put in place a good system of appraisal and performance management to help in the process of improvement. However, the monitoring and development of teaching is not as effective as it could be. Although all teachers have been observed, there is no overall timetable of visits and these observations have not been focused on raising the general standard of teaching. There have been few opportunities for the sharing of the good practice that is going on within the school.

49 The school development plan is a satisfactory document in planning for future developments. It identifies appropriate aspects for development and is clearly set out with the areas for development established by analysis within school. There are criteria so that the success of areas for development can be measured accurately. However, the document is rather voluminous and it is not easy to use as a ready aid to development. It also only covers the current year with no indication of planning for future years.

50 The governors and the headteacher make satisfactory use of all the specific grants available to them. Day-to-day management of finances is very efficient both within school and by the finance committee of the governing body. Finances are clearly linked to educational priorities both in the school development plan and in the day-to-day management of the budget. The school office is run very efficiently, releasing much of the day-to-day administration from the shoulders of the headteacher and other teachers.

51 The school is adequately staffed. The number of teachers is good for the size of the school. They are well deployed to make best use of their talents and experience. The school does not have a sufficient number of learning support assistants. Although they are a good complement to the work in the classroom, particularly in the support they give to pupils with SEN, there are insufficient to give the necessary support to pupils with EAL and to provide support for pupils with SEN in the afternoons. The accommodation is very good overall and good use is made of it. The school has spent efficiently on resources. They are good in quantity and quality giving good support to teaching and learning across the whole curriculum and across the age range of pupils in the school. In some subjects they are particularly impressive, for example in ICT they are excellent and in music and DT they are very good. Computers in the classrooms are not used as much as they could be to support the pupils' learning. They are enhanced by the ability to use some areas of the secondary school, for example the PE and DT departments.

52 The school has established very good financial procedures that are based firmly upon the principle of best value⁵. Taking into account all relevant factors, the school provides very good value for money.

⁵ Best value requires the organisation to challenge the need for spending, to get competitive prices for goods and services, to compare its performance against similar organisations and to consult its users.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53 In order to continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve the learning opportunities for pupils by ensuring that the teachers always:
 - (a) provide sufficiently challenging work for all the pupils in their classes; (paragraphs 15, 57)
 - (b) set learning objectives for lessons that are specific and achievable; (paragraphs 15, 59, 65, 69)
 - (c) consider the use of a variety of strategies to suit all levels of ability; (paragraphs 15, 65)
 - (d) ensure that when worksheets are used they address the learning objectives specifically and the particular needs of the pupils; (paragraphs 20, 59, 61, 65, 87, 93, 114)
 - (e) provide many more opportunities for the pupils to investigate, research, experiment and use their own methods of recording. (paragraphs 20, 58, 70, 72, 81, 87, 93)
- (2) Improve the consistency of teaching and the effectiveness of the monitoring of teaching and learning by:
 - (a) ensuring that there is a clear plan for monitoring so that all teachers and all subjects are monitored regularly; (paragraph 48)
 - (b) providing clear guidelines for those who monitor the teaching; (paragraph 48)
 - (c) ensuring that feedback given is focused and developmental; (paragraph 48)
 - (d) ensuring that further opportunities are provided for the sharing of good practice in the school. (paragraph 48)
- (3) Improve the curriculum coverage in some non-core subjects by refining the planning to ensure that projects and topics are covered in depth in the time available. (paragraphs 23, 81, 85, 94)
- (4) Increase levels of support for those pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs so that:
 - (a) there is sufficient support for those pupils with English as an additional language to enable them to develop their acquisition of English more effectively; (paragraphs 6, 18, 27, 47, 51, 60)
 - (b) there is appropriate support for those pupils with special educational needs for lessons in the afternoon. (paragraphs 5, 19, 26, 51)

In addition to the areas for development above, the governors should consider the following for inclusion in their action plan.

- (1) Improve the planning for cross-curricular links. (paragraphs 23, 83, 85, 93, 94, 97)
- (2) Ensure that there is an efficient system to ensure the health and safety of the pupils. (paragraph 36)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	69

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	17	24	18	2	0	0
Percentage	3	27	38	29	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	346
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	66

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	69

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	71

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	44	43	87

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	28	37
	Girls	37	33	38
	Total	65	61	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (58)	70 (67)	86 (87)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	28	39
	Girls	38	34	39
	Total	68	62	78
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (64)	71 (67)	90 (87)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	226	1	
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background	3		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9		
Mixed – White and Black African	0		
Mixed – White and Asian	2		
Mixed – any other mixed background	1		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	42	4	
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	6		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	7		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	28	2	
Black or Black British – African	1		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	7		
Chinese	0		
Any other ethnic group	8		
No ethnic group recorded	4		

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.6
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	109

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	832 384
Total expenditure	866 444
Expenditure per pupil	2 556
Balance brought forward from previous year	70 647
Balance carried forward to next year	36 587

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
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)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	346
Number of questionnaires returned	159

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	36	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	44	5	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	40	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	48	11	4	1
The teaching is good.	52	43	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	42	13	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	33	1	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	31	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	42	42	11	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	53	43	1	2	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	45	1	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	36	8	1	7

Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

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

ENGLISH

54 At the end of Year 6 the pupils' attainment is above average. The pupils work hard and make good progress in lessons due to the good teaching. Good progress has been made since the last inspection.

The strengths of the subject are:

- handwriting and spelling skills are good;
- the good use of questions and the provision to promote discussion between pupils;
- there is very good provision in the subject for lower attaining pupils in Year 6;
- the pupils make good progress.

Areas for development are:

- to refine learning objectives so that they are succinct and relevant to the pupils;
- to ensure the range of activities is appropriate for all pupils;
- to extend the range of books and enhance the library so that the pupils can develop their research skills and use it to extend their independent learning tasks.

55 The pupils achieve well in the subject; their writing skills and speaking and listening skills are good, however their reading skills are not as well developed and are satisfactory. The range of reading materials has recently been extended and updated since the move to the new building. There is now more choice both in the texts pupils read as part of their literacy lessons and in the choice of reading books where pupils choose within a colour coded scheme. The pupils spend a considerable amount of time engaged in reading activities but this is not used to the best advantage for more able pupils and pupils in Years 5 and 6. The teachers model reading very well but pupils are not given the opportunity to fully extend their reading skills because they tend to be listeners during this time, rather than developing their own response to the text. The pupils are taught phonic skills well and use them to develop both their reading and spelling skills. Additional time is given to guided reading throughout the school. This is not always used appropriately and in these instances does not extend the more able pupils in developing their independent reading skills. In some guided reading sessions, the pupils are not as eager to share reading aloud and many are not able to develop higher order reading skills more quickly by sharing their thoughts and ideas through discussion and reviewing the books they have read.

56 The pupils make good progress so that by the end of Year 6 the pupils are able to write a variety of imaginative stories, poems and factual reports. At the time of the last inspection pupils did not have sufficient opportunities to write poetry. The pupils are now appreciating the depth of poetry and are able to compose a range of poetry which is funny, descriptive and of a good quality. In Year 5, the pupils make good use of alliteration to make their poems explicit and in Year 6, when writing about the elements, they use phrases such as:-

The Sprinting Wind

In winter I moan and groan,
In summer I rest and don't worry
In autumn I make leaves scurry
The blossoms I sweep to their doom.

Pupils describe fire as 'evil hungry fire menacing and destroying' and write about the engine thrust of a racing car in terms of 'my heart awakes into action'. The pupils in Year 3 use their words with care when they consider how the 'Weeping Woman' painting by Picasso makes them feel, using phrases such as, 'It makes me feel petrified', or 'she is crying and biting her handkerchief' and 'I want to see what is the matter with her'. The pupils are using a range of verbs and adjectives they have learnt in their literacy lesson to describe their feelings. The good use of ICT adds to the impact of the writing and is used well by the teachers to extend the pupils' language skills. Their work is well presented; their handwriting and spelling skills are good. Phonics, spelling and handwriting skills are taught well so that by the time pupils are in Year 6 they use a dictionary and thesaurus with confidence and as a matter of course. Their handwriting is developing into a personal cursive style which enables their writing to flow so they produce attractive pieces of work.

57 The pupils are eager to contribute to discussions. The effective use of questions and challenges by teachers in good lessons enables pupils to think and consider the reasons for their answer. They are confident in their replies; they listen carefully to each other and consider their responses carefully. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils indicated very clearly to each other how the characters in the story of a Viking invasion would have felt. Their role-play was good and pupils watching added their thoughts and suggested alternative ways of expressing fear and sadness. For example, when questioning the character, they suggested that, "he would have shrieked not shouted" so adding to the drama and using their newly acquired knowledge about powerful verbs they had learnt earlier. In Year 6, the pupils identified very clearly with the characters who are bullied in the story. The perception in their responses and the good use of a wide range of vocabulary extended their developing literacy skills into learning other skills to help them with their personal and social education. The empathy they felt with the bully demonstrated their understanding of the text which they had shared and discussed. The teacher ensured that, by directing well judged questions and indicating that a response is expected, the pupils gained confidence and used language structures effectively. The lesson moved at a good pace and the pupils' interest was maintained. In lessons where the task is not matched to the individual pupils' ability level they do not make sufficient progress in what they are expected to achieve. The lack of extension activities precludes sufficient progress for the higher attaining pupils in some classes in Years 3 and 4. In Year 6, the pupils with SEN make very good progress because of the detailed analysis of their performance by the teacher. The lesson and tasks are matched to individual needs. The classroom support assistants work very hard and assist pupils to listen and make a positive contribution to the lesson and complete the task. These pupils share the reading task with the teacher and enjoy reading the book to each other.

58 The pupils are not given enough opportunities to expand their reading and writing skills in longer pieces of writing or in personal research within other curriculum areas. The pupils do not use the library to extend their skills and by the time they are in Year 6 they do not have sufficient understanding of how to use a library. The school library is developing but does not yet have sufficient books of a good enough quality to extend the pupils' research and independent learning skills. The pupils use the library fortnightly; older pupils recognise how to use books to find information but not the location of different types of books.

59 The pupils respond well to the comments some teachers, particularly in Years 5 and 6, make about their work and ways they can improve the quality. Marking in other years is not always consistent with the marking policy which is detailed to suggest that pupils should have a clearer understanding about the standards they are achieving. However, in some lessons pupils are not clear about what they are expected to achieve because the learning objective is too complex, worksheet tasks are incomplete and progress is not as good.

60 Pupils behave very well, listen carefully and respond positively to both teachers and classroom support assistants. Pupils who find understanding English difficult are supported very well by other pupils who help and assist them in the task. There is insufficient opportunity for pupils with EAL to be supported by an adult and therefore they have little understanding of the task they are doing.

61 The curriculum is good. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and teachers have a clear understanding of how the subject is to be taught. In some areas the use of commercial worksheets inhibits their style but the good use of frameworks to help the younger pupils with their writing assists their ideas and improves the quality of their work. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that appropriate resources are in place and supports both staff and pupils in monitoring the progress pupils make and extending the opportunities so that standards can continue to improve.

MATHEMATICS

62 Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6, although there is evidence that average attaining pupils in Years 4 and 5 are not currently doing as well. The pupils generally make good progress as they start with below average standards in Year 3. This is linked to good teaching overall. The pupils with SEN receive sufficient support, as well as some good and very good teaching, to enable them to make the same progress as their peers. Improvement since the school's previous inspection is satisfactory.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the contribution setting by ability makes to pupils' learning;
- the good quality of teaching overall;
- the pupils' good attitudes to learning and their behaviour;
- the quality of relationships and the teachers' management of pupils;
- the knowledge the teachers have of the pupils as shown by the best assessment practice;
- informed leadership is setting appropriate targets for improvement.

Areas for development are:

- more frequent challenge and opportunities for the pupils to investigate;
- targeting worksheets to support and extend the pupils' understanding;
- analysis of test results to remedy weaker areas in teaching and learning;
- the use of individual and group targets for improvement.

63 Teaching is good overall. In general, the basic skills of mathematics are well taught. The pupils are confident with number operations and use a variety of mental strategies, for example to add and subtract through 'rounding' up and down or 'counting on'. Written calculations are usually accurate, and the pupils explain their methods with good understanding. In all classes the teachers are careful to ensure that the pupils work with understanding, rather than applying 'tricks' which produce a correct answer. This is also exemplified in teaching about shapes: the teachers in Year 5 use correct mathematical language and encourage the pupils to do the same. They make good use of questions, involving all the pupils as far as possible, and ensure that the level of challenge is appropriate, based on their knowledge of what the pupils know already. As a result, pupils of all abilities in these lessons make good and sometimes very good progress.

64 Good teaching took place in Year 6 to encourage the pupils to look carefully at problems set out in words so they understand what mathematical operations they will need to perform. At the start of the lesson, about half of the average attaining pupils came up with an 'answer' when given a 'nonsense' problem which didn't contain enough information. This

indicated the need for this lesson and led to good learning taking place, as the pupils began to realise the importance of thoughtful reading. There is little evidence of mathematical skills being practised in other subjects, for example to display data or to interpret results in subjects such as science or geography. The pupils are developing graphing skills in their ICT lessons, but these skills are being learnt in isolation from the related mathematical skills.

65 The relationships that exist between the teachers and their pupils, and indeed between pupils themselves, are very positive, and make a strong contribution to the quality of teaching, in that pupils are willing and interested, answering questions, joining in discussions and settling to written tasks sensibly. Where teachers are enthusiastic and demanding, the pupils of all abilities rise to the challenge, as when lower attaining pupils in Year 4 made significant progress in their understanding of the difficult concept of negative numbers: their confidence grew visibly. Similarly, higher attaining pupils in the same year group enjoyed looking for patterns in their number work: the limited information given by the teacher made them analyse their results and come to their own very interesting conclusions. It is clear that real learning took place. At times, however, the pupils' innate politeness and good behaviour means that they make satisfactory progress in the face of some fairly pedestrian teaching. There are a number of areas for development in the teaching of mathematics: sharpening of lesson objectives so that the pupils can clearly see what progress they have made; restricting the use of worksheets to where they really make a contribution to the pupils' learning; shorter and more effective interventions by the teacher to promote learning and check understanding (rather than a long introduction followed by pupils working). Copying the learning objective for each lesson into their exercise books restricts the time for actual mathematics, especially for less able writers, and it is not clear that it adds to the understanding of most pupils, especially as teachers discuss it with their pupils as well.

66 Setting the pupils by their mathematical ability is one way in which the teachers' assessment of the pupils is paying dividends. The teachers' own records show that they have a good understanding of the progress of individual pupils, and use this to tailor their demands. This has not been extended to setting small, achievable targets for groups or individuals, so that the pupils are more closely involved in their own learning: the current target setting policy is theory rather than practice. The analysis of common errors and misunderstanding in tests to inform teaching is already planned for.

67 The co-ordinator is fairly new to the job, but has made a good start. The developments planned for the subject over the next year are appropriate and designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Her analysis of pupils' work is focused and perceptive and makes useful development points for all staff. She leads from the front, both in her enthusiasm and teaching quality. The subject is in a good position to improve further.

SCIENCE

68 By the end of Year 6, the pupils' attainment is above average. Throughout the school attainment in science is variable within classes and year groups, representing both average and above average attainment. By the end of Year 6 the pupils make good progress, due in part to the focused revision in the last two terms prior to the national tests. The pupils with SEN and EAL make satisfactory progress. Improvement since the school was previously inspected is good.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the above average standards for pupils at the end of Year 6;
- the good quality of learning;
- the good quality of teaching;
- the good subject leadership;
- the very good attitudes of the pupils in their lessons;
- the revised scheme of work and detailed action plan for improvement.

Areas for improvement are:

- investigation and experimentation does not drive the science curriculum;
- planned learning opportunities for pupils of different abilities are insufficient;
- assessment through marking is not developmental nor is it linked to any individual targets in science;
- lesson objectives are not sufficiently specific in order to focus the pupils' learning;
- library books and opportunities for personal research are insufficient.

69 The quality of teaching overall is good. The pupils show very good attitudes to their learning in science; they work very well together, share their resources and frequently share ideas and views. This was shown in the dissection of a flower, involving pupils working in pairs, sensibly naming the four main parts. The teachers display a good range of scientific knowledge and because they frequently ask good and relevant questions, the pupils remain interested throughout their lessons. There is good emphasis placed on the importance of fair testing in Year 6. The pupils are expected to do well, lessons move at a good pace and the teachers provide good indications of the amount of time needed to complete a given task. This keeps the pupils' concentration focused so that no time is lost on chatter or inappropriate behaviour. However, some lesson objectives are not sufficiently specific to focus the pupils' learning and ensure that the best progress is made.

70 The teachers provide good encouragement and support as they talk to pupils working in groups, ensuring that they understand and know what they need to do to improve. This is a good feature of most lessons. In the better lessons scientific language is used at every opportunity and pupils are challenged and encouraged to think for themselves. Some pupils draw their own conclusions from an investigation, such as 'how the number of paper clips affects the speed at which the helicopter falls.'

71 The school has identified the need to extend investigative science. The main focus areas are planning the investigative elements into the newly revised scheme of work and science training for teachers. The revised curriculum plan incorporates the stages found in the national guidance for science. This scheme plans for knowledge, skills and understanding to be built on both systematically and progressively as pupils move through the school.

72 The scrutiny of the current Year 6 books shows a consistent, planned approach between classes and within year groups. Work seen in lessons reflects aspects of the investigative aspect of science. However, in these lessons, the teacher gives too much information and pupils are not yet at a stage where they are able to plan or initiate their own investigations. For example in Year 6, the pupils do not design and draw their own graphs to record the results of an investigation. At the present time there is insufficient understanding of the investigative and experimental aspects and the way in which these underpin the whole of the science curriculum.

73 Planned work for pupils of different abilities has been identified as an area of concern by the school. At present most pupils are given the same work to complete, resulting in some less able pupils not completing their worksheets, particularly those with SEN and EAL. This,

along with the lack of support for these pupils, is the major reason for them not making the same progress as other pupils. More able pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to extend their knowledge and to repeat experiments in order to check their results. The assessment of pupils is also a focus area for improvement. Assessment through marking is not regularly used to show how the pupils can improve, nor is it linked to any individual targets in science. Planning to support 'speaking and listening' is not used sufficiently well in science. For example, there are insufficient opportunities to discuss possible outcomes of investigations in lessons.

74 Resources are adequate, but some are inappropriate to meet the needs of the new science curriculum. There are insufficient books for research purposes in the school library; however this is identified in the school's development planning for science. The planned provision for ICT in science is good but little evidence was seen of pupils' involvement during the inspection.

75 The leadership of the subject is good and, although undergoing a period of change, the co-ordinator has a clear view of the development of science. Many aspects have been identified through a thorough audit and good plans for improvement are being organised and implemented.

ART AND DESIGN

76 Attainment is above average by the end of Year 6. All pupils make good progress, culminating in the high standards seen around the school. No lessons were seen during the inspection. However, through displays and talking to pupils, it is clear that the teaching of art is good with high expectations of pupils' achievements. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the above average standards for pupils at the end of Year 6;
- the good range of skills, media and techniques used in examples displayed;
- the good displays of pupils' work;
- some good cross-curricular links;
- the good leadership.

Areas for improvement:

- portfolios of pupils' work – annotated and levelled;
- the assessment of pupils' attainment in art.

77 Progress is good. The pupils' work is valued; displays are attractive and represent a good level of creativity. In Year 3, the pupils look at the work of David Hockney and use their observational skills to create portraits of their friends in watercolour and montage. They downloaded from the computer 'clipart' examples of their friends' hobbies to complete the composition. The pupils learn the effects of adding white to primary colours and use line and tone in sketches of their friends. Year 4 pupils develop their ideas of 'fantasy' through the work of Salvador Dalí, involving printing, collage and the production of distorted images using a digital camera. In Year 5, pupils employ computer graphics in their classroom plans and make historical links through Tudor portraiture in the style of Hans Holbein. By Year 6, pupils use a mosaic technique to compose historical portraits of Greek gods and create Monet and Picasso style pictures using pastel. Clarice Cliff's work provides the stimulus for a good range of drawings and three-dimensional pieces of work, all produced to a good standard. Sketchbooks contain insufficient evidence that pupils test or practise their ideas and techniques. The teachers display a good range of subject knowledge in the skills and techniques employed by pupils.

78 The assessment of all aspects of art is identified as an area of development. Adjustments have already been made to meet these needs more appropriately in the form of termly tasks and the organisation of a levelled and annotated portfolio is under discussion. In order to support research tasks, books need to be purchased for the school library.

79 The leadership of the subject is good. Although recently appointed, the co-ordinator is anxious to build on previous good practice and has already addressed areas of the curriculum that staff identified as requiring attention in terms of the organisation of units of work in the curriculum. Resources are adequate and used well, representing good evidence of a busy and active art curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80 Standards are average by the end of Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the pupils, including those with EAL and SEN, make satisfactory progress.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the pupils' designing and making skills;
- the pupils' attitudes to the subject;
- the leadership of the subject;
- the resources available.

Areas for development are:

- to give fuller importance to the evaluation of projects completed;
- to give the pupils more independence in their designing.

81 Few lessons were seen during the inspection and they were introductory lessons as the school spends half a term teaching art, alternating with half a term of DT. Evidence of the pupils' projects completed last year has been retained and these show good skills of making and some good design work. However, pupils are not given sufficient independence in their designs. For example, the pupils in Year 3 had made some most attractive pop-up cards. Almost all pupils had completed the same design and only a few had then gone on to design their own cards. A further shortcoming of the pupils' knowledge of the process is that their evaluation of their projects is not sufficiently thorough. This is put down to a lack of time. However, the school spends sufficient time over the year on the subject. The problem is that too much time is spent on other aspects, leaving little time for effective evaluation. For example, in all the lessons seen during the inspection, too much time was spent drawing commercial examples of objects that the pupils are going to make, time which could have been usefully spent beginning their own designs.

82 The pupils have very good attitudes to the subject. In an introductory lesson on slippers, the teacher led a very good 'brainstorming' session in which the pupils were leading up to creating a design brief for their own designs. The pupils were all keenly involved in this session, and their discussions in pairs were given impetus by the teacher's very good use of a minute bleeper. Pupils say that they enjoy the subject and are proud of their end results.

83 The subject is well led, the co-ordinator having already established, in consultation with his colleagues, the shortcomings noted above. He has put in place a sound scheme of work, adapting appropriately a commercial scheme. The co-ordinator has also developed a useful system of assessment, but this is not being used consistently. There are also some good ideas for cross-curricular work, for example linking DT projects with work in literacy and art, but these are only in the ideas stage at present. Resources for the subject are very good,

and the pupils also benefit from the links with the secondary school on site. The older pupils have the opportunity to use the specialist facilities such as the food technology rooms, for example.

GEOGRAPHY

84 Only a limited number of lessons were observed in geography, and so discussions with pupils, and scrutiny of past work and planning, has helped to form judgements. By the end of Year 6, the pupils achieve average standards. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall, but in Year 3, because the geographical content of lessons is unclear, the pupils' progress is only just satisfactory.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the effective study of the local environment;
- the pupils' very good attitudes to their learning and their behaviour;
- the good quality of teaching and learning related to the study of rivers.

Areas for improvement are:

- to ensure the geographical content of lessons in topics is clear;
- to evaluate the use of worksheets in lessons;
- to plan for a wider range of communicating and recording findings in geography lessons.

85 The school makes good use of the local environment as a focus for fieldwork and to enable pupils to develop a clear understanding of place. It draws successfully from the experiences of local residents, to help provide a picture of how the school and local environment have altered over time. The pupils in Year 3 benefit from this experience, as they ask visitors questions about changes in land use and services for the area. However, in lessons related to this work, the teachers do not focus specifically enough on the geographical content. The worksheets provided are confusing, as they put a greater emphasis on identifying historical, rather than geographical changes. This in turn takes away the opportunity for pupils to communicate the knowledge and skills they have learned.

86 Discussions with pupils in Year 6, show they enjoyed their study of rivers and made good progress with their learning. Visits to the source of the River Tame and following and plotting the river's course are recalled in detail. The pupils use and understand terms such as, 'meander', 'tributary' and 'erosion' and produce well presented diagrams showing these features. They have sound knowledge of map work, including the use of keys and grids and use these skills effectively in an orienteering exercise in the Botanical Gardens. The pupils show a growing understanding of wider world issues, such as pollution and diminishing rainforests. They link these concerns with the development of a relief road close by, and how this is affecting physical and human features of the area.

87 In the limited number of lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory overall. The teachers have good questioning skills and open up discussions to all groups, including pupils with SEN and pupils with EAL. The teachers have yet to move away from a reliance on worksheets and provide a wider range of opportunities for pupils to communicate, record and write about their learning. At present, this is limiting the progress pupils make in some lessons. Assessment in geography follows the procedures in the national guidelines, and there are portfolios of work, showing achievement by different ability groups. However, as yet, teachers are not using this information to help guide planning for the next step in learning.

88 The subject co-ordinator manages the subject soundly and has had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. Evidence from monitoring has highlighted a concern, that the

time allocated in the curriculum to geography has slipped, because of pressures from the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Links with a school in Holland and a yearly 'European Week' within the school, are helping to widen pupils' learning.

HISTORY

89 At the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is average. The quality of teaching is good overall and the pupils make good progress from a below average starting point in Year 3. This is a similar picture to the one reported at the time of the last inspection.

The strengths of the subject are:

- the pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the subject;
- the good use of information from primary sources and resource material;
- the range of visits and opportunities pupils experience to support the subject.

Areas for development are

- to develop further pupils ability to interpret and use information;
- to use pupils' literacy skills to report and present their findings as personal extended pieces of writing;
- to extend the range of artefacts pupils can use to pursue lines of enquiry.

90 The pupils' skills in historical enquiry are developed through looking at and examining historical objects. Good use is made of primary sources of information, for example the use of a school prospectus from the nineteenth century. In discussions with pupils in Year 6, they have a satisfactory knowledge of past knowledge of the Egyptians and some understanding of the influence the civilisation has had on the world. They are aware of the importance of how we learn from the past and how archaeological discoveries are vital to develop their understanding of historical events. Pupils describe 'going out learning' as one of the relevant ways they learn about the past and describe how visits to the Oak House and Birmingham Museum consolidated their knowledge and understanding about Tudor monarchs and the changes that occurred when they lived. A visit to the 'Think Tank' stimulated pupils to reflect on life in World War 2 and how Birmingham changed as a result of the war.

91 The teachers use a good range of strategies to promote pupils' understanding. In Year 6 lessons, the teachers stimulated the pupils' interest at the beginning of a new topic on the Victorians by drawing attention to objects in the classroom and ensuring that they were aware they were from the past. The good use of photographs from the present back to the nineteenth century enabled pupils to recognise how fashion and families change over generations. The pupils were eager to identify particular features and match their own parents and grandparents into the time line. The very good use of the artefacts about a Board school in Birmingham promoted lively discussion between groups of pupils who were prompted to record the differences between the school at Severn Street and their own school. The teacher used positive interventions very well to extend the discussions. Higher attaining pupils used the clues to extend their knowledge about why pupils in Severn Street were segregated and attended school at different times.

92 The teachers prepare lessons carefully and planning identifies the facts or skills they want the pupils to learn. These are made clear at the beginning of the lesson and pupils are able to recognise the knowledge they are expected to acquire during the course of the lesson. Historical vocabulary is not yet understood by pupils and interpretation through using historical objects is not secure because pupils did not recognise this was part of the learning objective of the lesson. The teacher's subject knowledge is good and promotes lively discussion about the dangers and hardship when exploring the life of sailors on a Tudor ship sailing to unknown parts of the world.

93 History is taught in blocks and there is sound coverage of the syllabus. Pupils do not use their literacy skills to extend their personal writing or research about historical events. The frequent use of worksheets confirms what pupils know. However, worksheets do not extend their personal understanding or enable the pupils to use their writing and reading skills sufficiently. Pupils with SEN and EAL make limited progress because tasks are similar for all pupils. They contribute answers to the discussion but their reading skills are not adequate when the material is not appropriate to their needs.

94 Time for the subject has been constrained by other priorities in school. The subject does not contribute sufficiently to other areas of learning. There is a clear subject policy and a scheme of work. The co-ordinator is keen to develop the subject and has recently reviewed the scheme in the light of national guidance. The subject plans for each year group are monitored and discussions about recent developments have modified planning in the subject. Resources are satisfactory. Texts to support each topic are good but there are insufficient artefacts in some areas for pupils to explore and use to find out more about the past. A good range of visits and visitors together with loan collections from the museum service assist and support pupils' understanding and enjoyment of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

95 Standards are average by the end of Year 6 and the pupils are making good progress from a below average starting point in Year 3. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection, indicating satisfactory improvement. Recent progress has been interrupted by the disruption caused by the new school building. However, the tremendous improvement in resources, together with the quality of specialist teaching available to the pupils, suggests that the school is in a strong position to raise standards further.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the quality and quantity of resources;
- the quality of specialist teaching available to all pupils;
- the pupils' attitudes and interest in the subject;
- the opportunity for all teachers to observe and support their class during lessons in the computer suite.

Areas for improvement are:

- further development of staff confidence and expertise;
- the planned use of computers in the classroom;
- planning for the use of ICT in all areas of the curriculum.

96 All classes currently receive one lesson a fortnight where they are taught by the co-ordinator in the computer suite. The quality of this teaching is uniformly very good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and uses this very well to interest and motivate the pupils. Very good use is made of the interactive whiteboard as a teaching tool, and there is a computer for each pupil, meaning that they get the maximum amount of time with 'hands-on' experience. Teachers, and their pupils, benefit considerably from the joint approach in these lessons. The pupils receive more individual support, which increases their learning opportunities, and the teachers take part in high quality lessons that provide good, practical in-service training. The intention is that as teachers become more confident they will take a more central role in the teaching of skills and knowledge, knowing that expertise is available if needed. While expensive in terms of teacher time, it is cost-effective because it works well. As a result, the pupils, especially higher up the school, are confident users of ICT, independently accessing and demonstrating what they know and can do. Younger pupils are less assured, for example about half the pupils in a Year 4 class had difficulty in changing the

size and colour of fonts, even though this was a revision task. Throughout the school the pupils show interest in and enthusiasm for the subject. They behave very well, handling equipment sensibly and sharing ideas and skills with each other.

97 Although older pupils are happy to make use of the technology, there are gaps in their knowledge; for example, they have no experience of control, modelling or the use of sensors. While some of this is planned for later in the year, they have a fair amount of catching up to do. The planning of the curriculum is thorough and is based on national guidelines, although adapted by the school so that it fits in better with other areas of the curriculum. This is good practice, although there is as yet little evidence of ICT being planned into other subjects. Where it is used to support learning, for example in English and mathematics, it is effectively targeted and pupils benefit from the programs. Insufficient consideration has been given to pupils making use of ICT skills, such as producing graphs, in other subjects, thereby using them in meaningful contexts.

98 The co-ordinator is recently appointed, but is already demonstrating a good understanding of what is needed to take the subject forward. There are good and developing links with the secondary school, with which the school shares technical support. Plans are in place to develop the school's website as a tool for communicating with parents, and another teacher has responsibility for this.

MUSIC

99 By the end of Year 6, standards are above average. All pupils make good progress, with some very good progress when pupils are taught in small groups by visiting teachers, focusing on a particular instrument. In large groups it is obvious that all pupils make very good and sometimes excellent progress in their singing, shown through their sheer joy and enthusiasm. High standards have been maintained since the school was previously inspected and therefore improvement is judged to be satisfactory.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the above average standards for pupils throughout the school;
- the very good specialist teaching and the good teaching by non-specialist teachers;
- the teachers' high expectations of all pupils and the way they celebrate the pupils' achievements;
- the very good leadership and musical ethos throughout the school;
- the very good resources, tuned and untuned instruments, both in quality and quantity;
- the good literacy links – listening skills in music enhance listening skills in literacy;
- a good cultural and inclusive emphasis in the curriculum;
- the good extra-curricular musical opportunities.

Areas for improvement:

- the assessment of pupils' skills and knowledge in music are insufficient;
- insufficient planned experiences to reflect the many incidental spiritual aspects of the music curriculum.

100 Throughout the school the quality of teaching is good. The quality of the specialist teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. The pupils show very good and sometimes excellent attitudes to their learning, whatever their musical abilities might be. They share ideas in composing a piece of music and applaud accomplished pupils generously as they demonstrate their expertise. In Year 6 for example, brass players excelled with just a few weeks tuition and an Asian boy played the dhol drum, showing his skill, which is in great demand at local weddings!

101 The teachers organise their lessons well, confidently expecting the pupils to select their resources and experiment sensibly. They extend pupils' ideas in order to develop their understanding and build on the learning of previous lessons, although the recording of these assessments is new. The pupils receive good exposure to technical terms such as 'dynamics' or 'tempo'. In lessons, assemblies and in singing groups, pupils consolidate their learning and use the appropriate vocabulary in music. Throughout the year groups, pupils experience composition in a variety of ways, initially with untuned instruments and by Year 6, with tuned instruments such as flutes and trumpets.

102 The visiting teachers make a significant contribution to the standards in music and encourage all pupils to play an instrument. The school orchestra increases in number throughout the year, as pupils gain confidence. Presentations at Christmas and at the end of the summer term represent the heights of the pupils' musical year in terms of performance. These performances link work in dance, drama and music and are very worthwhile experiences for the pupils, all of whom are involved once each year. The enthusiasm shown by the whole school when singing, and the involvement of every pupil, exemplifies the love of music and ensures that everyone benefits. Other musical opportunities on the school site further enhance the provision. These include the 'Steel Pans' and the 'Artsite' orchestra and choir.

103 The pupils listen to a wide range of music. They talk about the mood created by 'The Moonlight Sonata' as peaceful, and calm. Music is used to enhance other subjects such as history and geography, for example in the Caliche' workshop involving the 'Rain Forest Composition' for pupils in Year 6. Interestingly, literacy is enhanced by the very good emphasis placed on the development of pupils' listening skills in music. The way in which all pupils are included in the provision for music is very good. This also includes the good cultural elements of music from around the world, exemplified in Asian, English folk, African and South American music.

104 The resources are very good both for tuned and untuned instruments, representing a wide variety of cultures. These are stored carefully and treated respectfully. The leadership of music is very good and a strong feature of its success. Considerable organisation, time, energy, love and expertise come together to make music a strength of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105 Standards by the end of Year 6 are average. The pupils make satisfactory progress and the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the standards achieved in dance are above average through the school;
- the links with the secondary school benefit learning significantly;
- the pupils have very good attitudes to the subject;
- the resources for the subject are good;
- the management of the subject.

An area for development is:

- to involve pupils who are not allowed to take part in the physical activities.

106 The pupils experience a wide range of opportunities in PE. Standards in dance are above average, largely due to the involvement of a teacher from the secondary school, whose expertise has been used well. She teaches some classes, and the confidence that the teachers in the school have gained from watching her teach has resulted in dance lessons being very well taught. The pupils are achieving good standards. For example, in Year 5, the pupils dance lessons were linked to their science topic of seed germination. Almost all pupils carried out very evocative moves, in particular when representing small plants being affected by pupils representing the sun or wind. All pupils, including those with EAL and SEN, are enabled to take part in these sessions due to the care and concern of their teachers to ensure that they understand what is going on.

107 Links with the secondary school give a range of benefits apart from using the expertise of their teachers. The older pupils use the secondary school facilities and make very good use of the space in the large sports hall, for example. The regular meetings between the staff of the four schools on the site also bring benefits. For example, in all subjects this term, an agenda item is to discuss how each school can help in links between literacy, numeracy and ICT in their subject. In the PE meeting, the head of PE from the secondary school had a wide variety of ideas as to how they might help.

108 The pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and behave well, even when given the freedom that lessons outside bring. This was seen in games lessons in Year 6, where the pupils were keen to practise the skills being taught in a range of team games. They followed instructions quickly and no time was wasted. The range of resources available helped the practice of these skills.

109 The subject is well managed by a co-ordinator who has clear plans for development. He has developed a good scheme of work, covering all aspects of the subject. The pupils have good opportunities for swimming, having lessons for half their time in the school. There are also good extra-curricular opportunities for team games, though none for other aspects of PE. An area for development is to involve those pupils not able to take part in lessons because of illness or injury. At present these pupils usually sit and read at the side, rather than being involved in evaluation, or using the school's digital camera, or a video recorder, to be used in later analysis. There are occasions when teachers do not wear appropriate dress, for example long tight skirts and heavy shoes in a dance lesson, or a heavy overcoat for a games lesson.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

110 The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average and their progress is good. This is because work in lessons reflects the wide range of faiths and lifestyles found within the school and is linked effectively to everyday life experiences. The school has maintained the good provision identified in the previous inspection.

The strengths identified during the present inspection are:

- the very effective learning about other faiths and beliefs;
- time to share ideas and reflect on deeper meaning in religious education lessons;
- visits and visitors, who add new knowledge and understanding to learning;
- the pupils' interest in and enjoyment of lessons;
- the good quality of teaching and learning.

Areas for improvement are:

- the use of too many worksheets in lessons;
 - a reliance on drawing to communicate abstract ideas.
- 111 In Year 3, the pupils learnt about God the father, creator and king, in a lesson enlivened by the enthusiasm and expertise of a visitor from a local church. The pupils reflected on the idea of God as creator of heaven and earth and were encouraged to respond in a personal way. The pupils were keen to hear each other's views, and this included pupils with SEN, who were encouraged to join in, through the expert help of the learning support assistant. One pupil suggested that God holds the world in his hands, whilst another explained that heaven is a place where, 'once you get up there, you have to stop, because you can't get back down again'. Effective teaching drew together the many ideas explored in this lesson in a well organised feedback session.
- 112 The study of world religions is planned clearly throughout the school. The teachers use stories from a number of faiths to help pupils understand what it means to belong to a particular group and the responsibilities of being an adult. For instance, in a lesson related to Islam, Year 4 pupils enacted in role play the story of the origins of the 'call to prayer' and then compared places of worship, such as a temple, church and mosque. Year 5 pupils listened to a story about Guru Nanak's work as the minstrel of peace, and were asked to consider their own vision of a beautiful place. The quality of the pupils' responses showed an awareness of deeper meaning. The following comment was typical, 'If you go deep into your imagination you can find beautiful things'.
- 113 Discussions with pupils show they enjoy RE lessons and their good behaviour and keenness to learn fosters a good working atmosphere in class. They value visiting other places of worship and celebrating important festivals, such as Diwali, Christmas and Eid. Pupils reflect on their own beliefs, but also respect those of others.
- 114 The quality of teaching is good. The teachers have good subject knowledge, lessons move at a good pace and are managed well. They encourage pupils to be 'experts', with regard to their own culture and beliefs and value their contributions, for instance when Sikh pupils explain the meaning of the symbols of their faith. The teachers use questioning well to open up discussions and to promote the pupils' spiritual development. However, much of this good learning is not reflected in the pupils' written work, because of the limits set by worksheets and drawing tasks in lessons.
- 115 The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has a clear overview of what is being taught and learned. Resources support the pupils' learning appropriately.