

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Small Heath, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103421

Headteacher: Mr J Twort

Reporting inspector: Mr M Newell  
10638

Dates of inspection: 31<sup>st</sup> March – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2003

Inspection number: 246294

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Nursery, infant and junior

School category: Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Coventry Road  
Small Heath  
Birmingham

Postcode: B10 0HT

Telephone number: 0121 772 2670

Fax number: 0121 7530734

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr K Lynch

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10638	Mr M Newell	Registered inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language Mathematics Information and communication technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? What could the school do to improve further?
31718	Mrs D Shieds	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30864	Mrs C Boyce	Team inspector	English Geography Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
12997	Mrs C Cheong	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Educational Inclusion Design and technology Physical education	How well does the school care for its pupils?
31822	Mrs A Newman	Team inspector	Science Art and design History	How well is the school led and managed?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in the Small Heath area of Birmingham, about two miles from the city centre. Most pupils live close to the school, although a significant minority live some distance from the school. There are currently the full-time equivalent of 233 pupils attending the school, with 125 boys and 119 girls. The school has nursery provision for 15 full time children and 22 part-time children. Approximately 45% of pupils attending the school are non-Catholics. The percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is not English is high at over 22%. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals stands at approximately 24% and this is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is 20% and this is broadly in line with the national average and the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is below the national average. Assessment data shows that the attainment levels of children soon after they start school is below and for a significant minority well below the national average with an increasing number of children attending the school whose mother tongue is not English.

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

This is a good school with very good features. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher who has played a pivotal role in the continuing improvement of the school and in creating an excellent ethos where cultural diversity is recognised and celebrated which leads to high levels of racial harmony. The quality of teaching together with the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils, form a powerful combination which ensures that all pupils achieve well. The school is successful in nurturing pupils' personal development alongside their academic development and parents are proud and appreciative of all that the school offers. Taking all factors into account, this is a school that is providing good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and good with some very good features in Year 1 to Year 6. Support staff make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to work and to school and behave well.
- Relationships across the school are very good. There is a high degree of racial harmony where all in the school show excellent respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. The ethos in school is excellent.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils whose mother tongue is not English.
- Good procedures are in place for tracking pupils' progress and for target setting.
- The school has established a very effective working partnership with parents.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. He is well supported by an effective senior management team and a dedicated teaching and non-teaching staff.

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



- Pupils' ability to solve problems and to instigate their own investigations.
- The level of attendance.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since the time of the last inspection. Following on from the last inspection in 1998, the school tackled the identified key issues in a rigorous and effective manner. Standards have improved significantly in many subjects and teaching has improved to such an extent that it is now a major strength of the school. In addition many of the strengths identified at the last inspection have been improved still further. This is a school that is constantly looking at ways to improve through its rigorous self-evaluation procedures and is determined to provide the best quality of education it can for all pupils. These factors clearly indicate that this is a school that is very well placed to continue the process of development and improvement.

### STANDARDS

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

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

The above table shows that on the basis of the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, attainment was in line with the national average in English, below the national average in mathematics and well below the national average in science. When compared to similar schools, levels of attainment are well above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. The school gained School Achievement Awards from the government in 2001 and 2002. Inspection findings show that attainment in English and mathematics is above average and at an average level in science. Pupils' number skills and their scientific knowledge are stronger than their ability to problem solve or to instigate their own investigations or explain why things happen as they do. This area has already been identified as a priority for development by the school. Attainment has been stronger in English as this has been an identified area for improvement over time. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose mother tongue is not English, make good progress and achieve well. Much of this is due to the good, and at times very good teaching and the very good attitudes of the pupils. The school sets challenging targets in literacy and numeracy and the school's trend of improvement has been in line with the national trend. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are set to rise further in 2004 and 2005 with the school on track to achieve its best ever results, particularly in the percentage of pupils on track to exceed the level expected of 11-year-olds.

Standards are at an average level in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, geography, history music and physical education. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology and history is currently good and this is ensuring that all pupils are making good progress and achieving well. Over time, progress has been satisfactory in these subjects. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose mother tongue is not English, are making satisfactory progress in geography, music and physical education and are achieving at a level commensurate with their ability.

The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 show attainment to be in line with the national average in reading and writing and below the national average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools attainment in writing is well above average, above average in reading and average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science show attainment to be at an average level. Inspection findings show attainment in English, mathematics and science to be at an average level. The good and at times very good teaching and the very positive attitudes of the pupils are helping to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of ability or ethnicity, are making good progress and achieving well. Standards in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, history and physical education are at an average level and pupils have made satisfactory progress. Teaching in design and technology and information and communication technology is currently good with all pupils currently making good progress, although progress over time has been satisfactory. Standards in geography are below average at the end of Year 2. All pupils are making satisfactory progress but their low starting point when they start school in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the world is preventing attainment from being at an appropriate level. A lack of opportunity to observe any music lessons in Year 1 to Year 2 makes a judgement on standards in music unreliable.

When children start school, assessment data shows that attainment is below and for a significant minority of pupils, well below the expected level. For an increasing number of children starting at the school, their mother tongue is not English. All children benefit from very good teaching in the Foundation Stage and as a result children get a very good start to their educational lives. Through their time in both the Nursery class and Reception class all children make very good progress and achieve very well in their communication, language, literacy and in their mathematical development. By the time that the children are ready to start in Year 1, many have attained and a number have exceeded the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals. All children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development. By the end of their time in the Reception class many children have attained the expected level in these areas of learning.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very good attitudes to work and are enthusiastic about all that the school has to offer.
Behaviour, in and out of	Very good. Pupils are very well behaved and this adds much to the quality of the learning environment. Pupils show great respect

classrooms	for the values and beliefs of others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and a great strength of the school and help to create an excellent ethos in the school with an impressive degree of racial harmony and acceptance. Pupils respond well to responsibility and carry out tasks with maturity and a very good awareness of the needs of others.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance rates are below the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teaching in Year 1 to Year 6 is good with some very good features. Examples of good teaching were observed in every class, with examples of very good teaching observed in both key stages in addition to the Foundation Stage. Only very occasionally is teaching less than satisfactory with teaching during the inspection being good or better in almost nine out of ten lessons. Teaching support staff throughout the school make a very important and significant contribution to the quality of teaching and add considerably to the quality of pupils' learning.

In the Foundation Stage children are provided with many opportunities to learn through practical, hands on learning experiences alongside the more formal teaching of early reading, writing and mathematical skills. Every opportunity is capitalised on to push on children's learning. All staff have high expectations, manage the children very well and use on-going assessment in a very effective manner to target the next steps in children's learning. Activities are always well planned and all staff work together very well to help ensure that all children make good progress, achieve well and thoroughly enjoy their learning experiences.

Reading and writing skills are generally taught well across the school. Early reading skills are effectively taught enabling pupils to tackle unfamiliar words and phrases confidently. These skills are built on well as pupils move through the school with many pupils being confident and competent readers by the time that they leave the school. Writing skills are taught well. Teaching in Year 1 to Year 6 is good overall in mathematics and science. The development of pupils' numeracy skills and their scientific knowledge is particularly strong. The school has accurately identified the need to ensure that pupils are more consistently taught how to use their mathematical and scientific knowledge and skills in a more effective manner for solving problems or initiating their own investigations and experiments. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue is never less than good and ensures that these pupils make good progress and achieve well. Teaching in information and communication technology, art and design and history is good. Teachers use their subject knowledge and general enthusiasm to capture the interest and imagination of pupils and this has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the progress that all pupils make. There are some excellent examples of the marking of pupils' work, particularly in Year 6, which tells pupils exactly what they need to do to improve or why a particular piece of work is of a good standard. This leads to advances in pupils' learning. This excellent practice needs to be disseminated across the school.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum provision for the Foundation Stage is very good. The school provides a broad curriculum in Year 1 to Year 6 which is enhanced by a good range of visits and visitors which add a further dimension to the quality of pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are supported very well and this together with good quality individual education plans ensure that pupils make similar progress to their classmates.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Pupils make good academic progress and are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum and the life of the school as a community.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and good provision for their cultural development. These factors add a great deal to pupils' personal development and to the vibrant atmosphere that surrounds the life of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. This is a very caring school where pupils' welfare and well being is given a high priority. Good procedures are in place for tracking pupils' progress with the school accurately identifying the need for more rigorous procedures for monitoring attendance.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very good. The school has a very strong working partnership with parents and provides parents with very good information. Parents play an important role in supporting their child's learning and the work of the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. He has played a most significant and important role in the continued development and improvement of the school. He has been instrumental in building up an excellent team spirit within the school. He is well supported by an effective senior management team and a dedicated and committed teaching and non-teaching staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the school and fulfil their statutory duties in a satisfactory manner. The governors play a more limited role in holding the school to account for the quality of education it provides
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has good procedures in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Good procedures are in place for analysing test and assessment data which take account of factors such as gender and ethnicity. Good target setting procedures are in place.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses its funds and access to grants well in order to finance identified educational priorities. Financial planning and the monitoring of spending are good. The individual skills of teaching and support staff are put to very good use to enhance the quality of pupils' learning. The school applies the principles of best value well when purchasing goods and services.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The school is well staffed with a good match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The quality of accommodation is good. Although the school does not have a soft surfaced playing field it has a computer suite, an attractive library, a designated technology room and a room for working with small groups of pupils. Attractive and informative displays add much to the quality of the learning environment. Resources overall are satisfactory with resources very good in design and technology and good in English, information and communication technology, art and design and history.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The fact that their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• The good quality of teaching and the good progress that children make.</li> <li>• The behaviour in school.</li> <li>• The amount of homework that is provided.</li> <li>• The approachability of the staff and the information that the school provides.</li> <li>• The close working partnership with parents.</li> <li>• The expectations that the school sets and the way the school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The manner in which the school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside of lessons.</li> </ul>	

The meeting with parents and the response to the questionnaire showed that the parents are very appreciative and proud of the quality of education that the school provides. Many parents emphasised the high level of racial harmony that exists within the school. Only a very small percentage of parents identified areas for improvement in their responses to the questionnaire. A high percentage of parents strongly agreed with many statements on the questionnaire, demonstrating the high regard in which they hold the school and its staff. Inspection findings support many of these very positive views of parents with the school judged to be a good school with very good features.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The Foundation Stage consists of two classes, the Reception class where all the children attend full time and a nursery class where about half of the class are full time and the rest attend on a half-day basis. The children's attainment when they start school is below, and for a significant percentage of children, well below average, particularly in their communication skills, their personal and social skills and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. An increasing number of children are starting at the school, whose mother tongue is not English. The overall quality of teaching throughout the Foundation Stage is very good and as a result of this, children make very good progress and achieve very well in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development and attain standards that exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development. By the end of the Foundation Stage many children have attained the Early Learning Goals in these areas of learning. Children of all abilities and children whose mother tongue is not English receive a very good start to their educational lives in the Foundation Stage and are well prepared to start work on the National Curriculum programmes of study when they start in Year 1.
2. By the end of Year 2, on the basis of the National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average in reading and writing and below the national average in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science show attainment to be at an average level. When compared to similar schools, attainment is well above average in writing, above average in reading and average in mathematics. Inspection findings show that attainment in English, mathematics and science is at an average level, although pupils' ability to problem solve and initiate their own investigations in mathematics and science are not as strong as other elements of these subjects. The quality of teaching in these subjects is good and this together with the very positive attitudes of the pupils means that all pupils including those with special educational needs and those whose mother tongue is not English, make good progress and achieve well. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls that cannot be explained by natural differences in ability.
3. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2 standards in speaking and listening are at an average level but this represents good, and at times very good, progress from the attainment levels that children start school with. Pupils are attentive listeners and are only too willing to join in discussions. Although many pupils are confident speakers, their vocabulary is more limited. Standards in reading are at an average level. Pupils read with an appropriate level of accuracy, fluency and understanding and have acquired a good range of skills to help them tackle unfamiliar words and phrases. Only a small percentage of pupils reach higher than expected levels of attainment in reading. Standards in writing are at an average level by the end of Year 2. Pupils are provided with a good range of opportunities to write for a variety of audiences and purposes.

Pupils' use of appropriate grammar and standards in spelling are at an expected level, although pupils' vocabulary lacks a little sparkle.

4. Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics and science are at an average level with all pupils making good progress. In mathematics, pupils have developed satisfactory number skills, have a secure knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes, use standard and non-standard measures with reasonable accuracy and know how to collect data. The weaker elements are in the pupils' ability to put their mathematical knowledge to effective use in problem solving activities or in interpreting data, particularly when such problems are presented in word form. In science pupils have developed a satisfactory scientific knowledge of materials, physical processes and electricity. Pupils identify and classify similarities and differences between humans, animals and plants, recognise reversible and irreversible changes in materials and have a secure understanding of what constitutes a fair test. The area that pupils are less secure in is their ability to use their knowledge base to carry out experiments and investigations independently.
5. By the end of Year 2 standards in design and technology are at an average level with the pupils' attainment in the design aspect of the subject being a particular strength. Standards in information and communication technology are at an average level overall and are improving at a good rate and are on track to be above average over the next 2 years. Teaching in design and technology and information and communication technology is currently good with some very good features and this is helping to ensure that the progress that all pupils are making is currently good, although progress over time has been at a satisfactory level. Standards in art and design, history and physical education are at an average level with all pupils making satisfactory progress over time. Progress within lessons is sometimes good when the quality of teaching is good. No music was observed in Year 1 and Year 2 during the inspection and little other evidence was available to help make a reliable and secure judgement on this area of the curriculum, although teachers' planning clearly shows that all aspects of the subject are covered in sufficient depth over the course of the year. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 in geography. All pupils are making satisfactory progress in the subject, but many children start school with a low level of knowledge and understanding of the wider world and this has an adverse impact on pupils' attainment levels by the end of Year 2.
6. By the end of Year 6, on the basis of the 2002 National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment in English is in line with the national average, below the national average in mathematics and well below the national average in science. When compared to similar schools attainment is well above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. The school gained School Achievement Awards from the government in 2001 and 2002. Inspection findings show that pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics and at an average level in science. Pupils' mathematical and scientific knowledge is stronger than their ability to problem solve, particularly when presented in word form, and to plan or instigate investigations and experiments independently. Differences in inspection findings and test results can be partially explained by the natural ability differences in the different groups of pupils. There are also other factors. The consistently good and at times very good teaching over time is having a very positive and cumulative impact on the standards that pupils are



attaining. This teaching together with the very positive attitudes of the pupils is helping to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose mother tongue is not English are making good progress in their learning and achieving well. The school has over time performed better in English than mathematics and science because attainment in English is an ongoing area for improvement. The school has already identified for next year the need to improve pupils' ability to problem solve and instigate their own investigations as a key priority area for the whole school. The school sets challenging targets in literacy and numeracy both for the number of pupils to attain the level expected of 11-year-olds (Level 4) and those expected to attain the next high level (Level 5). The school's trend of improvement in national Curriculum test results is similar to the national trend. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are set to rise further in 2004 and 2005 with the school on track to achieve its best ever results, particularly in the percentage of pupils on track to exceed the level expected of 11-year-olds.

7. Standards in speaking and listening are at an average level by the end of Year 6. Pupils are attentive listeners and show good levels of courtesy when listening to others. Pupils are often asked to justify their views and opinions and do so in a confident manner. Reading standards are above average. Many pupils leave school as accurate and confident readers. Pupils have a good knowledge of a wide range of authors with the higher attainers able to infer and deduct from texts. The area for development is for pupils to further improve their personal study and research skills, and particularly to do this in an independent manner. Standards in writing are above average. By Year 6, most pupils have developed the skills to write complex sentences, using clauses and connectives. Pupils state their case well in persuasive writing and recognise such features as the use of strong verbs, rhyme and exaggeration to create specific effects. The narrative writing of higher attaining pupils is frequently lively and interesting with adventurous vocabulary and well - chosen phrases, although other pupils' vocabulary is not always as inventive or expressive.
8. Standards in mathematics are above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils have good number skills and have a good grasp of place value. Pupils have well developed mental agility skills. Pupils have a clear understanding of decimals and fractions and a secure understanding of shape and space. They measure with a reasonable degree of accuracy and are efficient at collecting and interpreting data. The weaker element lies in their ability to put their mathematical knowledge and skills to best use in problem solving activities. In science, standards are at an average level. Pupils have developed a secure knowledge across all elements of the subject with evidence clearly indicating that pupils' scientific knowledge and awareness are increasing at a good rate. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to take part in practical and investigative activities but pupils still have some difficulty in applying their knowledge and understanding to new situations and problems or in instigating, initiating and carrying out their own investigations independently. The school has already put in place initiatives to tackle these weaknesses.
9. Standards are at an average level in information and communication technology with elements such as word processing and presenting work in different formats, being particular strengths and control and e-mail being the weaker strands. The quality of teaching is currently good and this is ensuring that all pupils are presently making good

progress and achieving well, with progress over time being satisfactory. In design and technology standards are at an average level overall with pupils finding a little more difficulty in the evaluation aspect of the subject. Although teaching and progress have been satisfactory over time, pupils are currently benefiting from good and at times very good teaching which is ensuring that within individual lessons progress and learning are often good and at times better. Standards in art and design are at an average level with all pupils currently making good progress and achieving well, with again progress over time being satisfactory, as the subject was not afforded as high a status as it currently is. Standards are at an average level in geography, history music and physical education. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose mother tongue is not English, are making satisfactory progress in these subjects and are achieving at a level commensurate with their ability.

10. The provision that is made for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The pupils have good quality individual education plans which contain challenging and achievable targets. The quality of teaching for these pupils is good and at times very good, both within class and when they are withdrawn for smaller group work. The support staff make a significant, valuable and valued contribution to how well pupils with special educational needs learn and progress. The provision that is made for higher attaining pupils is good. Work is well matched to the individual needs of the pupils and tasks are sufficiently demanding and challenging so that the learning of these pupils is consistently pushed on and not merely consolidated. The provision that is made for pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue is very good. The school does not receive a great deal of support from outside agencies, but despite this, the school ensures that the needs of these pupils are met in a very effective manner. Teaching is geared well to the needs of the pupils. Once pupils have overcome any initial language difficulties they achieve well and progress at a similar rate to their classmates. Support staff within school again make a pivotal contribution to how well pupils learn and achieve. This is a very inclusive school and enables these pupils to have full access to all aspects of the curriculum and to take a full and active role in the life of the school as a community. These factors together with the sensitive manner in which the personal and social as well as the academic needs of the pupils are met mean that they learn and make progress at a similar rate to their classmates.

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

11. Very good relationships exist between pupils and adults and amongst pupils themselves and this is a very significant strength of the school. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good and their personal development is good. These positive features help to create an atmosphere where pupils enjoy learning, enjoy one another's company and contribute much to the high levels of racial harmony that exist throughout the school. These areas have all improved since the previous inspection.
12. Pupils state unanimously that they enjoy school life. They take a very keen interest in all that the school has to offer. For instance, although the start time of the school day is 9am, a great many pupils arrive from 8.45am and quite happily go into classrooms and start the literacy or numeracy tasks that are set out for them. Others take part in the before school clubs such as information and communication technology. They show very positive attitudes to school in other ways. For example, there is no litter or

graffiti around the school site. Respect is shown for displays, which remain in pristine condition. The memorial window, where a small notice respectfully asks pupils not to touch the glass, is adhered to and obeyed by all pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons, for instance, during a music lesson pupils showed much interest in learning the song “this old man” and then performed it with great enthusiasm. Pupils listen well to their teachers therefore they know what to do next and settle quickly to their given tasks. Only very occasionally do pupils not listen well in lessons.

13. In lessons, and when moving around the school building, pupils behave very well. They try hard to live up to the school’s behaviour expectations. For example, most, even the youngest, remember to put their hand up to answer questions. There are instances when behaviour and attitudes are very good, for example as pupils walk quietly and reverently into assembly from their classrooms and then take part in the activities with much enthusiasm. They line up sensibly to come in from the playground. Pupils are polite and friendly and interested in what visitors have to say to them. They are keen to talk about their work and what they are learning. Pupils listen appreciatively and offer praise to their peers. Behaviour at lunch and break times is equally as good. Boys and girls of all ethnic backgrounds play and socialise very well together and it is noticeable that their relationships with one another are totally relaxed and friendly. Relationships throughout the school, between adults and pupils are very good; they are based on mutual trust and respect. Older pupils believe that all teachers who work in the school are approachable and this gives them the confidence to seek help should they need it.
14. There is a great level of racial harmony amongst all pupils. Pupils respect one another’s faiths and beliefs and backgrounds, and do not perceive any differences amongst themselves. In discussions with older pupils it is clear they have a good understanding of racism and hold strong moral values they say, “Its what’s on the inside that counts, not the colour of your skin.” Younger pupils are equally aware “ you have to be everybody’s friend” was quoted several times whilst talking to them. Parents praise the fact that other faiths and beliefs are treated with total respect. Parents’ confidence that the school is a harmonious community is very well founded.
15. Children in the Foundation Stage show very good enthusiasm for learning and the varied and vibrant curriculum promotes good attitudes from an early age. Children co-operate well and are able to sustain good levels of concentration. Children are encouraged to take responsibility and show independence and do so in a very effective manner in, for example, choosing activities and working without reference to adults, such as in using the white boards to write letters and numerals. Staff work very hard in promoting an understanding of what is right and wrong and as a consequence behaviour is very good. Relationships between children and with staff are very good. Pupils throughout the school with special educational needs have good attitudes to learning and generally behave and respond well to the very good levels of support from teachers, classroom assistants and classmates.
16. The provision that the school makes for the personal development of pupils overall is good and this has a positive impact on attitudes and behaviour and the values that pupils hold. There is however some scope for further development in this area. Pupils readily accept and maturely carry out an increasing range of responsibilities as they move through the school. Pupils take turns to be monitors and help, for example, in the library and the computer suite and older pupils look after younger pupils on visits to the swimming pool and in the lunch hour so that all pupils know there is someone to turn to if there is a problem. Sometimes pupils are given opportunities to generate and

follow up their own ideas and talk about how they might refine their work. However, these opportunities are not consistently planned in all subjects. Pupils are not consistently provided with enough opportunities to develop the skills of initiative, such as planning and instigating their own experiments or simply working more independently within science lessons.

17. Attendance has improved over the last three years. Nevertheless attendance rates remain below average compared to other schools nationally. Unauthorised absence is minimal. Data provided by the school, during the inspection, indicate overall rates so far this year are not as high as in previous years. At the time of the previous inspection it was noted that a few pupils were persistently late each morning. This has not improved. The below average attendance rates and lack of punctuality adversely impacts on the learning and progress of some pupils in the school.

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

18. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good with some excellent teaching. Teaching in Year 1 to Year 6 is good with some very good features. During the week of inspection good teaching was observed in every class with very good teaching observed in both key stages as well as in the Foundation Stage. Teaching observed during the inspection was good or better in almost nine out of ten lessons. Only very occasionally is teaching less than satisfactory. The support staff make a very important and significant contribution to how well pupils learn and the progress that they make. Teaching has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection and to such an extent that it is now a major strength of the school with a higher incidence of good and importantly very good teaching.
19. The overall quality of the teaching for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good, with some excellent teaching seen at the time of the inspection. Teachers' knowledge of catering for this age group and for children with special educational needs and whose mother tongue is not English are very good. All staff use very good and sometimes excellent teaching methods and this, coupled with extremely high expectations and very good relationships, enable all the children to reach their potential. Teaching assistants and parent helpers make a very valuable contribution to children's learning and the smooth running of the classrooms. Planning is good. Teachers use the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals very well to plan a range of vibrant and stimulating learning activities which allow children to learn through practical and investigative activities as well as more formal and structured tasks. Very good account is taken of the individual needs of the children. Children get a very good start to their educational lives during their time in the Foundation Stage and are well prepared to start work on the National Curriculum programmes of study when they move into Year 1.
20. The quality of teaching in English is good across the school. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy Strategy and this has had a positive impact on helping to raise standards. Lessons are well structured and what is to be learnt in lessons is often shared with pupils. The session at the end of the lesson is often used well to assess what the pupils have actually learnt and the information is then used to guide and inform future lessons. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to discuss and debate a wide range of issues and sharp and focused questioning is effective in getting pupils to expand on their answers and to justify their views and opinions. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and this is put to good use not only to help motivate and enthuse the pupils but also to reinforce and then push on and extend pupils' learning. Reading and writing skills are taught well. As a result pupils have a good range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and phrases, to skim and scan for the older pupils and to write well for a variety of audiences and purposes. There are good

examples of pupils' literacy skills being extended through other subjects or carrying out research tasks, but on occasions opportunities are missed and this prevents progress and learning from being even stronger.

21. Teaching in mathematics and science is good in Year 1 to Year 6. The National Numeracy Strategy is firmly embedded in school practice and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning, attainment and achievement. Good use is made of the session at the start of the lesson to put pupils' mental agility to the test in a series of often challenging mental arithmetic activities. Teachers have good subject knowledge which enables them to explain new concepts with a high degree of clarity to the pupils. Expectations are usually high and teaching ensures that work is accurately matched to the individual needs of all pupils. Good use is made of pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects of the curriculum such as science, geography and design and technology. Teaching is effective in developing pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills but there is a need to ensure that more activities are planned for, and teaching more focused, to enable pupils to put their knowledge to more effective use when presented with problem solving and investigative activities, particularly when presented in word form. Teaching in science is good. Lessons are well planned and in the best lessons the session at the end of the lesson is used very effectively to assess exactly what learning has taken place. Teachers have high expectations and use a variety of teaching methods and strategies to sustain pupils' interest and to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. A good emphasis is placed on the development of pupils' ability to use an appropriate scientific vocabulary and in ensuring that pupils acquire scientific knowledge across all elements of the subject at a good rate. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to take part in investigative activities and to learn through practical experiments. The areas for development however are for teaching to focus more rigorously on getting pupils to work more independently in the subject and to initiate and instigate their own investigations and experiments, as this is a weaker area of attainment for pupils.
22. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology is currently good throughout the school and this ensures that all pupils make good progress and achieve well. In addition to good quality teaching by teachers a member of the support staff teaches groups of pupils on a regular basis and the quality of this teaching is equally good and at times very good. Teaching is effective because specific skills are directly taught to the pupils and then pupils are provided with a range of good quality opportunities to put these skills to the test across many subjects of the curriculum.
23. The quality of teaching in art and design and history is good throughout the school, enabling all pupils to make good progress and achieve well. In art and design, teachers allow plentiful opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and develop their ideas. Good emphasis is placed upon encouraging pupils to make their own choices and teaching focuses well upon the direct teaching of subject-specific skills. In history, teachers have good subject knowledge and provide pupils with good opportunities to examine a variety of interesting historical sources and to extend their knowledge and understanding. Teaching in design and technology is currently good and at times very good, although over time the quality of teaching has been satisfactory. The teaching has been reorganised during the last 12 months and much of the teaching is now carried out by a support assistant, supported in lessons by teachers. The teaching now concentrates very well on the designing, making and evaluating aspects of the subject with pupils now being directly taught the necessary skills to help them raise their levels of attainment. Over time however, the evaluating aspect has not been as well taught and this accounts for this element being the weaker element in pupils' attainment. Teaching

provides the pupils with a wide range of exciting and stimulating projects which they thoroughly enjoy and take part in with high levels of enthusiasm and humour.

24. The quality of teaching in geography is satisfactory across the school, although on occasions not enough time is allocated to individual lessons. An appropriate emphasis is given to the development of pupils' geographical skills alongside the development of pupils' knowledge of the world in which they live. Although the pupils take part in some field trips the school is rightly seeking to increase the number of such trips to further help bring the subject to life and to enhance pupils' awareness of places outside of their own immediate locality. Teaching in physical education is satisfactory in Year 1 to Year 6 with teaching very good for the oldest pupils in school. When teaching is at its best it is creative, skills are directly taught, pupils are given plenty of opportunity to practise and refine their moves and high expectations are set. Just occasionally when teaching is not at a satisfactory level it is because expectations are not high enough and the management of pupils is not good enough. As a result pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Teaching in music is satisfactory in Year 3 to Year 6. Although teaching has improved in the subject since the time of the last inspection, some teachers lack a little confidence in the teaching of the subject. Teachers however do ensure that all elements of the subject are covered in sufficient depth and do much to ensure that pupils take an enthusiastic and enjoyable part in all lessons. Although no lessons were observed in Year 1 and Year 2 and there was little evidence to give an accurate and reliable judgement on standards in the subject, scrutiny of teachers' planning indicates that teaching is satisfactory.
25. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is consistently good and at times very good. Support staff play a very important and significant role in the teaching and learning of these pupils. The support that they provide is sensitive and yet challenging. They work very closely with the teachers in ensuring that the work that is provided is closely matched to the needs of the pupils. Support staff use incisive questioning to check out what pupils have learnt. They use very good management techniques in helping to ensure that pupils listen attentively, complete their work and take a full and active part in all lessons. They show good humour but are firm and fair when the occasion demands it. All these factors play a pivotal and significant role in helping pupils to make good progress and achieve well in relation to their ability. The special needs co-ordinator provides good and at times very good teaching for pupils that are withdrawn from class for small group work. The effectiveness of the teaching is based on very good relationships and demanding work that is effective in really pushing on pupils' learning. Throughout the school the quality of pupils' individual education plans is good. Targets are realistic and challenging and are reviewed on a regular basis. The manner in which teachers and support staff work together is very effective in enabling pupils to meet and then exceed the targets that are set for them. The teaching for pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue is equally effective. The school is not provided with a good level of help from outside agencies, but again teachers and support staff work together impressively to cater for the academic and social needs of these pupils. Pupils are assessed at an early stage and their needs clearly identified. Programmes of teaching and learning are put in place that enable pupils to quickly acquire communication skills and knowledge and skills across all aspects of the subject. The quality of teaching and provision is such, that pupils are quickly able to take an active part in all aspects of the curriculum and to take a full and inclusive role in the life

of the school as a community. Pupils make similar progress to their classmates as a result of the teaching and support that they receive.

26. The quality of relationships across the school is very good. Pupils respond very well to the enthusiasm and humour of their teachers. There is a high degree of racial harmony where all in the school show excellent respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. These factors all help to create a very effective learning environment. In most instances pupils are managed well and pupils respond positively. This enables teachers to teach rather than spending time on dealing with inappropriate behaviour. Pupils respond positively to verbal praise and pointers for improvement and teachers provide warranted praise or gentle criticism in equal measure. There are some very good examples, particularly but not exclusively, for the oldest pupils in school, of the marking of pupils' work being used to outline what pupils need to do to improve or highlighting why a particular piece of work is of a good standard. This very good practice is not always as consistent as it could be across the school. All parents who returned the questionnaire sent out before the inspection felt that the quality of teaching in school was good. Ninety-nine percent of parents stated that their child was making good progress. Over three quarters of parents strongly agreed with these statements. Ninety-seven percent of parents are happy with the amount of homework that is set. Inspection findings clearly show that parents' views are accurate regarding the quality of teaching in the school. Teaching is a strength of the school and is a major factor in the good progress that all pupils make and in how well all pupils achieve.

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

27. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 are good. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements is broad and relevant and is enhanced well by a good range of visits, visitors and a very good range of extra-curricular activities which all add to the quality of learning experiences for all pupils. There have been some good improvements in the curricular provision since the previous inspection, particularly in information and communication technology. The refurbished computer suite is having a positive impact on standards both in information and communication technology and across the curriculum. The introduction of good quality schemes of work based on nationally agreed guidelines have provided greater breadth and depth in most subject areas. The balance between subjects is good overall but the time given to individual history and geography lessons is sometimes too short and this impacts adversely on pupils' learning. The school has recently introduced a revised curriculum framework for teaching and learning in design and technology and evidence clearly indicates that it is of a high standard. There has however been insufficient time for it to have its biggest possible impact on further raising standards. The curriculum provision for art and design and music is satisfactory. The school has no playing fields but the school works hard to make up for this deficiency by, for example, transporting pupils to local secondary schools for athletics and games activities in physical education.
28. The teaching staff have worked hard and have been most effective in successfully implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this has had a positive effect on pupils' attainment and achievement in these areas of the curriculum. The school places high emphasis on the development of key skills of language, literacy and numeracy in much of its teaching. There have been some appropriate additional

programmes through booster classes for English and mathematics, as well as early and further literacy support classes for pupils who have lower than average levels of knowledge, skill and understanding of language. These initiatives have helped the school to raise standards of attainment in recent years. There are, however, some minor weaknesses in the provision for the development of research skills in English and in the practical, investigative and problem solving elements of mathematics and science. The school makes some good use of cross-curricular links in subjects such as mathematics in the analyses of surveys, in geography and in the use of literacy in history lessons where pupils write diaries or eyewitness accounts. This subject integration gives the curriculum interest and relevance. The improvement in the quality of the curriculum overall represents a commitment of much hard work and the determination of the school to provide the best quality of education that it can for all pupils.

29. The curriculum provided for children at the Foundation Stage is very good. Teachers provide a very wide range of lively experiences for the children that ensure prior attainment is being built on well. The curriculum correctly covers the six areas of learning recommended for this age group. Provision meets the needs of young learners and is well matched to the individual needs of children and for the needs of children who have special educational needs or whose mother tongue is not English. All of these factors help to ensure that children get off to a flying start to their educational lives and if the provision for out door play were better, provision would be excellent.
30. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Parents are involved and are encouraged to take a full and active role in their child's progress and education. Individual education plans are of a good standard and contain targets that are both challenging yet achievable and are accurately geared to the individual needs of the pupils. Provision and teaching are at their best when teachers and support staff use the plans to accurately provide tasks and activities that match the needs of individuals and the targets that are stated. Care is taken to ensure that pupils who are withdrawn from normal lessons, to receive extra help, continue to receive the correct access to the National Curriculum and do not miss lessons in other subjects as a result. The special educational needs documentation that is kept regarding pupils' progress is up to date and very well maintained. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' needs and for tracking their progress. Good procedures are in place to ensure that outside agencies are used in an effective manner where appropriate to support and enhance pupils' learning. Good support procedures are in place for pupils with a statement of special educational need. Good provision is made for the higher attaining pupils and this helps to ensure that their needs are met and that they make the progress of which they are capable. The school has also instigated a programme for identified gifted and talented pupils which, although recently set up, is seeking to ensure that the needs of these pupils are met.
31. The school does a great deal to promote an equality of opportunity for all its pupils and addresses the question of racial equality in an effective and sensitive manner. The provision that is made for pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue is very good. This enables pupils to take a full and inclusive role in all that the school has to offer both within and outside of the formal curriculum. The school is proud of its inclusive tradition. It is successful in maintaining a fully inclusive ethos and makes great efforts to ensure that all pupils, regardless of age, ability, gender or ethnicity have access to the full curriculum.
32. During the previous inspection the range and quality of the extra curricular activities made a positive contribution to the curriculum. The range of extra curricular activities



now provided is very good and many teachers and teaching assistants give freely of their time to run these activities, supported, in some cases, by external providers. There are computer clubs before and after school and also at lunchtime and chess, art and design and cookery clubs. Sporting activities take place with other local schools. Residential visits, including trips abroad broaden pupils' cultural experiences. Many activities are open to infant pupils and the school is planning to broaden the range available to these younger pupils still further. The pupils regularly and enthusiastically attend these extra opportunities for learning.

33. The provision for health education, sex education, drugs education and citizenship is very good and meets requirements. High priority is given to these aspects and they permeate many of the subjects that are taught. The programme of education is relevant and extensive and makes a significant contribution to pupils' overall personal development.
34. The school has good links with the local community and particularly good links with the parish church. This is broadly in line with the findings of the previous inspection. The sacramental preparation programme involves parents, parish and pupils, whilst the church is regularly used by the school, for instance for mass and the Christmas concert. Pupils have also designed and made two Falls for the church lectern. A good range of visitors and visits, for instance, to Drayton Manor Park, the Nature Centre and Sarehole Mill enrich pupils' curriculum experiences. Local community groups use the school, whilst the choir has entertained residents in local nursing homes. There are also links with local commerce. For example, the school won a competition to design a Saint Patrick's Day banner for the local supermarket. There are good links with local secondary schools and further education colleges from where students come to undertake their work placements. There are also good links with initial teacher training agencies. Trainee teachers regularly undertake placements in the nursery class; their help is valued and appreciated by the staff.
35. The overall provision that the school makes for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and this is a considerable strength of the school. This has been maintained since the previous inspection. As a Catholic school, the school's mission statement and aims are influenced by Gospel values and all pupils are valued and respected in a very caring and Christian community. The school is very effective however in how it embraces the beliefs of pupils from other cultures and traditions and no pupils are withdrawn from collective worship at the request of parents. Pupils know that their own beliefs and traditions are fully respected. This makes a significant contribution to the school's stated aims.
36. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. The school works hard to develop and maintain a set of values, principles and beliefs, which inform pupils' perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour. A climate exists where all pupils are valued and differences celebrated and pupils from other faiths and cultures are made to feel as important and included as everyone else. Many displays along the corridors and in classrooms provide a focus for personal reflection, such as the memorial window to a deceased parent, who had given service to the school and community and the collection of biographies of women of many races both in history and today who have shown courage and determination in adversity. The school garden and pond, set in a quiet corner of the school playground, provide a place for reflection and the garden incorporates a sensory element with its choice of sweet smelling plants and wind chimes. This developing area of the school provides very good opportunities for the

spiritual development of the pupils. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to explore values and beliefs and the way they impact on pupils' lives. They make confident contributions to discussions because teachers value what they say. Racial harmony permeates all areas of the school and pupils from all backgrounds work and play happily together.

37. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school's behaviour policy is implemented thoughtfully throughout the school, providing a clear framework for moral development. Staff provide very good role models and help pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong, the importance of a considerate style of life and of respect for others. Teachers make clear their expectation of good behaviour and pupils are given the opportunity to think through the consequences of their own and others' actions. Awards and certificates acknowledge pupils' efforts to behave well and a positive atmosphere throughout the school helps pupils to be considerate and co-operative. This makes a positive impact on the moral development of pupils.
38. Provision for social development is very good. School, classroom and playground rules are found in all areas of the school and their positive tone encourages pupils to consider others. Pupils relate very well to one other and to all staff, both in lessons and in the general life of the school. They show exceptional care for their surroundings. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue are very well integrated into school life. The very good provision that is made for extra-curricular activities and the good range of visits and visitors all add to the opportunities provided to extend and enhance pupils' social development. The school provides opportunities to develop social responsibility with its School Council, which meets regularly and gives pupils a real chance to influence what goes on in school as well as a chance to learn about democracy. The school encourages pupils to be active in the support of others. Pupils fundraise for the local hospital and hospice, as well as for worldwide relief programmes such as Cafod. Parents see such activities as valuable opportunities for their children to become more mature and extend their understanding of citizenship.
39. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good and pupils have many opportunities to learn about their own culture and that of others. For example, the school took part in an International Week, when a South African dance group visited the school and pupils learnt about a village in Mali. The school entered and won a competition run by a national supermarket on "Black History." Many posters and displays around the school celebrate the cultural diversity within the school community. Older pupils visit the local area and Alton Castle and France. In geography pupils learn about India and compare their own lives with those of children overseas. Pupils learn about famous Western artists such as Kandinsky and Van Gogh but pupils know little of the art of other cultures. Similarly there are few planned opportunities in music to use instruments from non- Western cultures and this is an area for development.

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

40. Boys and girls of all ages, religious, social and ethnic backgrounds are highly valued and welcomed into this very caring and friendly school. There are very good arrangements for the day-to-day personal and pastoral support of pupils. The secretarial

staff, classroom assistants and mid-day supervisors, as well as teachers all play a significant part in the success of this aspect of the work and life of the school. This high quality support gives pupils the confidence to seek help should they need it and enables them to develop into mature and responsible young people. Parents have full confidence in the support and guidance provided for their children. Most areas in this aspect of school life have improved well since the time of the previous inspection.

41. Procedures relating to child protection are good and arrangements are known to all staff. The designated person has detailed knowledge of local practice. Any issues or concerns are dealt with sensitively and due regard is given to the sharing of any information. There are no arrangements to cater for any children in public care should they be admitted to the school. The medical and welfare needs of pupils are very well catered for. There are sufficient staff members who are trained in first aid and able to deal with accidents or injury should they occur. Pupils are well supervised at break and lunchtime and this means that they are able to play safely together. Relationships with the adults on duty are relaxed and friendly. Transition arrangements for pupils entering the school for the first time or moving on to secondary education are good. Teachers pay good attention to health and safety during lessons. Statutory requirements are met for instance to carry out regular fire drills and test the safety equipment in the school. Risk assessments are carried out before out of school visits take place. Health and safety inspections of the school are periodically carried out, but the governors do not monitor them effectively enough.
42. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. A computerised registration system is used but the school does not make the most of this, for instance to track and analyse the reasons for absence. Arrangements to ensure pupils attend regularly and on time are generally effective, for instance parents are regularly reminded, through newsletters and individual letters of the need for them to provide a reason why their child is absent. However, the school could do more to promote regular attendance, for instance by rewarding pupils whose attendance improves or to reward the class with the highest attendance in a week, as well as by more rigorously raising parents' awareness of the need for their children to be punctual and attend regularly. In addition, although registers are appropriately completed, there is no formal closure time.
43. There are very good procedures in place to encourage pupils to behave well and to encourage tolerance and respect throughout the school and this makes a significant contribution to the ethos of the school. A key element in this are the very good relationships that exist, based on mutual respect for one another. Class and school routines are well established and because of this pupils know what is expected of them and they all try very hard to live up to the school's expectations. The arrangements are underpinned by the school's emphasis on moral and social development. Great emphasis is placed on encouraging self-discipline and on rewarding appropriate behaviour, effort and achievement. The success of the school's strategies can be seen by the good behaviour of almost every pupil. Pupils themselves confirm that behaviour is good and bullying rare.
44. Good procedures are in place for monitoring pupils' personal development. Although not all procedures are formal, they have a most positive impact on the behaviour, attitudes and social

development of all pupils. Pupils display very mature and sensible attitudes, which develop naturally as a result of the school's very strong ethos and high expectations. The headteacher writes in turn to every pupil, during the school year, about his or her progress, both academic and personal. The pupils decide for themselves if they wish to respond. Many pupils do and discussions with pupils show that they wait with great anticipation for the letter and all feel that it does a great deal to boost their self-esteem and confidence. The pupils can also gain certificates from the headteacher for adhering to school rules and for showing kindness and care to others. In addition to these initiatives all teachers and support staff know the pupils very well. The individuality of pupils is recognised and celebrated and staff use a variety of informal yet effective methods to closely monitor the personal development of all pupils and this information is then used well to report back to parents at parents' evenings and in pupils' annual progress reports.

45. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. In the last inspection, assessment was found to be satisfactory with procedures undeveloped for tracking pupils' progress. This is no longer the case and improvement has been good in this aspect of school life.
46. In Year 1 to Year 6 procedures for assessment and record keeping are good. Particularly good are the systems in place for English and mathematics, where a regular and wide variety of assessment is recorded. Assessment is well used to set targets for the classes for each term and learning goals for individual lessons. Good systems are in place for analysing test and assessment data and the results are analysed in detail as part of the system for tracking pupils. For example, the achievements of boys and girls, of different year groups and of differing cultural groups are monitored and analysed. This is enhanced by the good comparative data that the local education authority provides. The information is then used effectively to set targets and to identify any areas in need of improvement. "Profile books" are being developed, where pupils regularly record work, so building up a good picture of those pupils' progress as they move through the school. In the foundation subjects, schemes of work are based on nationally recommended documents. Teachers are starting to use some of the class assessments suggested which are proving effective but the recency of this initiative means that it has not yet had sufficient time to have the biggest possible impact in further raising standards. In some foundation subjects, such as physical education, too little assessment is carried out to be able to use it to set the next learning targets. The school is also seeking to further develop the use of portfolios of moderated work as a tool for demonstrating both to teachers and to pupils, exactly what is needed to achieve at a particular level.
47. The school's systems for assessment and record keeping for children in the Nursery class and Reception class are very good. They are working well in practice. The teachers undertake thorough initial assessments of each child as they start in the school. Throughout the year they undertake assessment carefully, often testing one child at a time, across all the areas of learning for this age group. Children regularly record work in their "profile" book that is used to check the speed of development for each child and set targets for the next step in their learning. The school implements good assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs and comply with the new Code of Practice. The information is used effectively and consistently for reviewing the appropriateness of pupils being retained on the school's special educational needs register and deciding what further help they may require. The school has devised good links with other agencies to ensure the provision outlined in pupils' statements of special educational needs is implemented. All statements and reviews are up to date and

specified provision is implemented effectively. Good procedures are in place to ensure that support is quickly and accurately targeted and provided for pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue.

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

48. Parents hold the school in very high regard. At the meeting held for parents before the start of the inspection, the parents expressed nothing but praise for all that the school provides. The response to the questionnaires was equally very positive. Parents think their children are expected to work hard and try their best. They feel able to approach the teachers if they have any concerns or problems. The inspection findings agree with these very positive comments about the school. There was no discernible dissatisfaction expressed by parents.
49. A very effective partnership has been established with parents. This means that they are able to contact the school when they have any concerns. It also enables their views to be taken into consideration if the school is planning to review its practice. These findings are an improvement on those of the previous inspection. Another example of the school's effective partnership is the very high level of support parents express for the school's aims because virtually everyone signs the home school agreement.
50. The school actively seeks to involve parents in both the life of the school and their children's education. A notable feature of the school's efforts to do this is the "INSPIRE" projects that the school runs. These events, which focus on the skills of literacy and numeracy, run throughout the year and enable all year groups to take part with their parents or other family members. They are exceptionally well attended by parents and other adults: records show that there is virtually 100% attendance at each event. Pupils and adults gained much enjoyment from the Year 3 activity making Easter cards in which acrostic poems had to be written by pupils. These projects not only have a very positive impact on the standards pupils achieve and on their self-esteem, but also engage parents and other adults in their children's learning. Parents are regularly invited into school for other events such as the "Offerings Assemblies" which are always very well attended as are parents' evenings and concerts or school productions. Although there is no parent and teacher association several parents help in class based activities, more especially for the younger pupils. Several parents are employed by the school as teaching assistants and mid-day supervisors. Others help in other ways by making costumes, or for example the new hall curtains. The school greatly values the help and support they give.
51. Parents are actively involved in the induction process when their children start in the Nursery class or the Reception class. Children visit the school prior to the start of the year and staff do all they can to ensure that they have a happy and successful start to their education. This all helps to ensure that their children settle into the routine of new school life quickly and confidently. "Teddy Twort" pays a visit to each child's home over the school year, and his adventures are written about by both children and parents alike. Letters are sent home explaining the curriculum and homework for that week. Children regularly take reading books home from the Reception class, with key words and sounds to learn. There are, however, no story sacks, toy lending library or home/school game packs that could further involve parents at this early stage in their children's learning. The school is responsive to suggestions made by parents, for instance from the start of the new school year there will be regular coffee mornings for Reception class parents so that they can get to know one another and the teachers as well as see their children at work. The school is also keen to ensure that those parents whose first language is not English are equally encouraged to come into the school. The bi-lingual teaching assistant is on hand to offer translation facilities and the school is planning several new initiatives to help these parents understand what their children are learning.

52. Parents receive very good information overall. This begins with the well-written school brochure and welcome booklets provided by the Nursery class and Reception class. The school newsletters are particularly good, with a good balance of information and advice as well as the celebration of pupils' and school achievements. Useful letters detailing practical advice, for instance about homework and what children will learn are available to parents of all children at the start of the year. These are supplemented by informal opportunities to talk to teachers at the end of the school day. If a teacher has a special message for a parent this can be sent home on a "I just wanted you to know" note. Acknowledgements of these show that they are very much appreciated by parents. Workshops, for instance, about the school's literacy programme or drugs awareness, and parents' evenings are also a regular feature of the information that is available. Much of the information provided for parents of the youngest pupils is translated into the home language and translation facilities are available if required at parents' evenings. Good procedures are also in place to ensure that parents of pupils with special educational needs are given every opportunity to take a full and active role in supporting their child's education and to attend review meetings where their child's progress is discussed and evaluated. All of this high quality information ensures that parents are kept up to date with both school life and what their children are learning. Despite this very good practice, annual reports giving details of children's progress are in need of improvement. Whilst they reflect each individual child and it is clear that teachers know the pupils well, teachers' written comments frequently lack clarity about the progress children have made over the year and their strengths and weaknesses in all subject areas.

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

53. The school is well led and managed, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. He provides the school with very good educational direction and his leadership is strong and effective. He has a very clear vision of the school's future development and is very well aware of what needs to be done to make further improvements. The headteacher has a very good understanding of how to set realistic, achievable and measurable targets for school improvement and aims to provide a high quality of education for all the pupils in the school. His leadership ensures that pupils are educated in a warm, caring and supportive environment where individual needs are identified and met, where all pupils fulfil their potential, where racial harmony pervades the life of the school and where pupils have a very good range of opportunities to develop their personal and social skills.
54. The headteacher is well supported by an experienced and committed senior management team who discharge their responsibilities effectively, meeting regularly to review and evaluate the progress being made towards meeting the targets set in the School Improvement Plan. Their discussions are also concerned with reviewing the success of the strategies they have adopted to achieve their aims and to gain a good overview of the work of the school. Effective systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. Co-ordinators have monitored lessons in some subjects and all subject co-ordinators scrutinise their colleagues' planning and examine the quality of pupils' work. Alongside this system, the headteacher also regularly conducts focused classroom observations, monitors teachers' planning and scrutinises samples of pupils' written work. He ensures that good practice is shared

through staff meetings and examples of good assessment and marking are photocopied and distributed to all staff. All teachers receive helpful feedback after monitoring. A very strong team spirit among the teaching and learning support staff ensures that pupils are well challenged and that pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is not their mother tongue are well provided with work which is suitably adapted to meet their needs and abilities. The school places a good focus upon providing learning support staff with training to ensure that pupils receive a meaningful range of learning experiences.

55. The Governing Body carries out its statutory responsibilities in an effective manner and has a satisfactory awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have an appropriate committee structure in place and are very well informed about the standards achieved by pupils when compared with all schools and with similar schools. The Governing Body discusses the progress being made towards the targets identified in the School Improvement Plan, reviews policies and takes care to ensure that the school's budget is effectively allocated to areas requiring further development, such as information and communication technology. However, the governing body plays a more limited role in overseeing standards and in monitoring the quality of education provided by the school.
56. The school has very effective strategies to appraise teachers' performance and has very good systems of performance management. There is a clear and effective link between school improvement and staff development; responsibilities are well defined and teachers and learning support staff are given very good training opportunities to develop their expertise, for instance in developing a programme for gifted and talented pupils and in the focus upon the contributions made by learning support staff in extending pupils' language skills. Teachers and support staff are highly committed to providing pupils with good quality curricular and extra-curricular experiences.
57. The School Improvement Plan is a high quality document and accurately identifies the areas that need to be tackled to help move the school forward and is clearly the vehicle to help raise standards and the quality of education that the school provides. The planning provides a detailed overview of the next steps forward toward school improvement; plans are costed and success criteria are established. There are very effective systems to identify areas which require further development and the school makes effective use of all the available data to track pupils' progress and tackle areas of difficulty. Very good use is made of the local education authority's data to compare standards and results with those in similar schools and the school's analysis of ethnicity has shown how the composition and complexion of the school is changing, with the result that areas such as provision for pupils whose mother tongue is not English are being targeted for further development and support by the special needs co-ordinator and the headteacher. Careful analysis of data enables the school to track the progress of individual pupils from the Reception class onwards, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school sets challenging and achievable targets in literacy and numeracy including the percentage of pupils on target to exceed the level expected of 11-year-olds.
58. The school has made very good progress since the time of the last inspection. In addition to tackling the identified issues in a systematic and rigorous manner, there has



been a major improvement in standards, how well pupils achieve and in the quality of teaching. Many of the strengths identified at the last inspection have been maintained and in many instances built upon. This is a school that constantly evaluates the quality of education that it provides and is constantly looking at ways to improve. There is an impressive team spirit and ethos in the school where all the staff are committed to providing the best that they can for all pupils and this clearly indicates that this is a school that is very well placed to continue to improve and strengthen.

59. The management of the Foundation Stage is very good. Very clear policies are put in to practice very well. The co-ordinator is very clear about what needs to be done next in order to improve the key stage further, particularly with regard to the growing number of children whose mother tongue is not English. All staff work together very well and all are consulted before decisions are made and put into practice. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue is very good and ensures that pupils' needs are identified at an early stage and good levels of support are targeted to where the need is greatest. Very good procedures are in place to ensure that effective liaison takes place between teaching and support staff and that access to any available outside support agencies is fully utilised for the benefit of the pupils. All these factors ensure that pupils are fully included in all that the school has to offer and that pupils progress at a similar rate to their classmates. The school also has a designated co-ordinator for gifted and talented pupils with the school increasingly ensuring that the needs of these pupils are met in an effective, stimulating and challenging manner. The governing body's policy for equal opportunities is fully implemented throughout the school and monitored closely by the senior management team. Library books and learning resources are checked carefully to ensure that they give positive messages about gender, race and culture. The school complies fully with requirements to report racist incidents, although such events are very rare. The school is rightly proud of its assertion that it is an inclusive school.
60. The quality of financial management is good. The school's budget is very efficiently managed by the administrative staff and monitored regularly by the headteacher. The Governing Body considers financial matters at their termly meetings. Identified targets in the school development plan for improvement are costed and appropriately supported. The school makes good use of specific grants to help raise standards, with additional funding being spent to help special educational needs pupils and pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue. Financial procedures are well established. The day-to-day monitoring and management of the school's expenditure are very effective, as is the day-to-day administration by the secretary and other office staff who provide a very warm and welcoming first point of contact for visitors to the school. These factors all enable the school to work and function in a very smooth, efficient and effective manner.
61. The school's financial management is good in applying the principles of best value. Challenge has been a mark for a number of years with open minds evident amongst staff and governors as to how to achieve objectives. Comparison is carried out through analysis of test results against all and similar schools. The school is effective in the manner in which it incorporates consultation into its development. Parents' views are gauged well on major school decisions. The School Council provides every opportunity for pupils' views and opinions to be taken on board. Commercially the school is a

discriminating purchaser, well aware of the need for a competitive approach. The recent auditor's report was very positive and recommendations have been fully addressed. Taking all factors into account the school is providing good value for money.

62. The school has a good number of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and the learning needs of pupils, this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Although the school has not appointed any newly qualified teachers for some time, good arrangements are in place to cover this eventuality. The accommodation is good overall and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Classrooms are in the main of a suitable size and the learning environment is enhanced by high quality displays, which celebrate pupils' work and achievements. The addition of the Early Years unit has enhanced the provision for the youngest children. Specialist rooms such as an information and communication technology suite, design and technology room and withdrawal room for specific work with pupils who have special educational needs have been created, which are helping to improve the quality of the learning environment. Internally the school is very well maintained and cleaned by a dedicated caretaker and cleaning staff. The school does not benefit from a grassed area or school field. The school has an adequate range of learning resources, which is broadly in line with the previous inspection. Those for English, information and communication technology, history and art and design are good and the resources for design and technology are very good.

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

In order to further improve the quality of education that the school provides, the Governing Body, headteacher and staff should:

### **1. improve pupils' ability to problem solve and instigate and initiate their own investigations and experiments by:**

- ensuring that opportunities are consistently provided in mathematics for pupils to tackle problem solving tasks and investigations, particularly in word format;
- providing more regular and systematic opportunities in science for pupils to carry out experiments independently and for older pupils to instigate and initiate their own investigations and experiments;
- making sure that pupils are directly taught the skills to enable them to carry out these activities in an effective and successful manner.  
*(paragraphs 2, 4, 6, 8, 21, 28, 84, 85, 91, 92, 94, 97)*

### **2. seek to improve attendance rates by:**

- making more effective use of the school's computerised registration system to track and analyse the reasons for pupils' absence;
- putting in place more effective systems which recognise and celebrate the good attendance levels of individual pupils and of classes;
- regularly and rigorously communicating to parents the need for their children to attend school regularly and punctually.  
*(paragraphs 17, 42)*

In addition the school should include the following minor issues in its Action Plan:

- seek to further improve the quality of pupils' annual reports so that they give a clear indication of pupils' achievements and specify areas for improvement;  
*(paragraph 52)*
- seek to ensure that the marking of pupils' work is carried out in a way that outlines what pupils need to do to improve or clearly explains why a piece of work is of a good standard.  
*(paragraph 56)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	11	25	5	1	0	0
Percentage	5	25	57	11	2	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 two percentage points.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	207
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		48

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	44

### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	45

### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	17	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	16
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	28	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (90)	93 (90)	93 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	28	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (93)	90 (93)	93 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	16	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	12	14
	Girls	12	9	13
	Total	25	21	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (76)	70 (64)	90 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	14
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	22	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (72)	77 (64)	87 (88)
	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***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	78	0	0
White – Irish	13	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	10	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	41	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	20	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

*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: YR-Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.7
Average class size	29.6

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	180

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2002/2003
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Total income	658564
Total expenditure	680452
Expenditure per pupil	2946
Balance brought forward from previous year	49386
Balance carried forward to next year	27498

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	233
Number of questionnaires returned	67

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	85	15	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	76	23	0	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	75	21	1	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	38	0	1	2
The teaching is good.	79	21	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	64	32	3	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	22	0	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	24	0	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	62	33	2	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	76	20	1	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	23	0	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	38	3	0	3



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

63. Very good teaching and curriculum provision help to ensure that all children including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, make good and at times very good progress and achieve well throughout their time in the Foundation Stage. Children enter the nursery class with standards of attainment that are lower than average, and for a significant minority of children, well below average, particularly in their communication skills, social skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. For an increasing number of children starting at the school, their mother tongue is not English. Through their time in both the Nursery class and the Reception class all children make very good progress and achieve very well in their communication, language, literacy and in their mathematical development. By the time that the children are ready to start in Year 1, many have attained and a number have exceeded the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in these areas of learning. All children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development. By the end of their time in the Reception class many children have attained the expected level in these areas of learning. This is better than at the time of the last inspection.
64. The Foundation Stage teachers and support staff provide a very caring and welcoming environment where all nationalities of children are made to feel special. In these two classes, about two thirds of the children are learning English as an additional language. The staff provide a very good range of planned learning experiences that form a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum for all abilities and cultures of children. The provision for children with special educational needs and the procedures for assessing and recording the progress of all children are very good. Two classes make up the Foundation Stage, the Reception class where all the children attend full time and a Nursery class where about half of the class are full time and the rest attend on a half-day basis.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

65. Teaching and learning for this area of the curriculum are very good and as a result all children make good progress and most children attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. Staff provide the children with many opportunities to extend their personal, social and emotional development. They set up activities where children flourish, gaining skills and self-confidence in living. Staff achieve this through the way they work with the children, the way they use the school systems for personal development to praise and reinforce good actions and the way that they make the curriculum exciting yet achievable. The children respond very well to this ethos. They co-operate well when playing in the “flower shop”, helped by the very good role-models that the adult team provides. Children are developing self-confidence, demonstrated in opportunities given to them to write letters in front of the class or demonstrate buying toys with real coins. They perform these activities with great excitement and are keen to take part and succeed.

66. Children are developing positive attitudes to learning, and most settle promptly to both self-chosen and teacher-chosen tasks. Most sustain concentration for a good amount of time for their age. Nearly all children demonstrate a very high level of commitment to the task and are proud to show and talk about, if sometimes briefly in the Nursery class, their activities and work. Through the high expectations of the teaching staff, children operate to a high level of independence in choosing activities and working without reference to adults, such as in using the white boards to write letters and numerals.
67. All staff work well to promote an understanding of good behaviour and what is right and wrong. They constantly praise good attitudes and encourage effort very well. As a consequence, behaviour is very good. In the Nursery class this is helped by “Billy Beaver” who goes home for the night with children who behave well. Children are beginning to establish effective relationships with adults and other children. These are well modelled for them by the teacher and learning support assistant, who treat the children with respect and have very high expectations.

### **Communication, language and literacy.**

68. Very strong teaching is having a very good impact on standards of attainment, particularly in reading and writing and in developing the communication skills for those children whose mother tongue is not English. Children, particularly those who are at an early stage of acquiring English, make very good progress over the two years in the Foundation Stage classes, so that by the time they start in Year 1, their skills in speaking and listening are in line with the Early Learning Goals while in writing they are above and in reading they are well above. Progress is particularly strong in reading and writing in the Reception class as a result of excellent teaching by the Reception class teacher.
69. Teachers are keenly aware of the need to develop the children’s language and vocabulary. As a consequence all children, including the high percentage for whom English is not their mother tongue make very good progress from a much lower than average start. All staff promote speaking and listening skills well. The children nearly always listen to one another with interest, in both large and small groups, such as at fruit time, or playing with trucks in a play “car park”. Many are very happy to start a conversation and express their thoughts, and do so with increasing fluency, although their individual skills vary greatly. Staff stress vocabulary very well and constantly repeat it, thus helping children to learn words easily. They give children many opportunities to use new vocabulary. A good example seen in the Reception class was children talking, with skilful encouragement, about what they thought a bear, who had been rescued from a rubbish tip, would say about his adventures.
70. Elementary reading and writing skills are taught very well. The teachers use a very brisk pace and very clear explanations and have very high expectations. This helps to ensure that all the children, including the high percentage of second language speakers, learn very well. In the Reception class, the teacher uses very good, lively methods to teach sounds and important words. Her very high expectations and excellent questioning skills and constant repetition all help the children to make progress at a very good rate. Children are provided with many very good opportunities to write for themselves and many do so at self-chosen task times. This, along with the very good emphasis and modelling of word building, ensures that children progress very well in their writing, although letter formation could be better.

## **Mathematical development**

71. By the end of the Foundation Stage attainment in children's mathematical development overall exceeds the Early Learning Goals. All children make very good progress in this area of learning. This is because of very high teacher expectations and very good teaching methods. Children learn to use mathematical language appropriately to describe amounts, positions and shapes. They print patterns of two-dimensional shapes in the Nursery class and, in the Reception class and they sort small toys and say which is taller. The very effective teaching provides many opportunities for children to take part in many number games and in number songs such as "5 little ducks". In the Reception class the children all count objects to ten, and the vast majority count objects well beyond 10. Daily in the Nursery class they count up to 21 and are asked to spot a particular chair with the number 21 on it when they are free to move around the room. In the daily counting session in the Reception class they very quickly count to a hundred and many are able to answer questions such as, "Which is more (or less), seven or seventy?" Many are beginning to show awareness of number operations such as "one more" or "two more" and a few answer very quickly. This is very good attainment for this age group.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

72. Teaching is good and at times very good for this area of learning. As a result all children make good progress from a low starting point and by the time that children are ready to start in Year 1, most have attained the Early Learning Goals. Children enjoy exploring their world, and staff provide many very good, worthwhile activities to help them. They learn about their immediate surroundings and attain well when they learn about the effects of wind, rain and heat through the good questioning and teaching about how to observe and take turns to comment. Teachers stress key vocabulary very well. As a result, children attain well in this part of the Early Learning Goals. They explain clearly that the weather makes people do different things such as what to wear when the sun shines, or that plants need water. In the Nursery class, children talk about going in their family car as they play with the "car park". They eagerly talk about the recent past and events in their own school lives when they look at photographs taken of themselves buying the ingredients for making pancakes in a local shop. Information and communication technology is used well to raise standards in literacy and numeracy. Staff introduce children well to the skills of using the computer effectively through the free access to computers in both rooms and, as a consequence, children are confidently developing mouse skills using a range of suitable programs. Religious education is taught well and provides children with good opportunities to learn about and value the world in which they live.

## **Physical development**

73. Good progress is made in the development of children's physical skills. The quality of teaching is good and by the end of the Foundation Stage many children have attained the Early Learning Goals in this area of the curriculum. In both classes, staff give the children many very good opportunities to handle pens and crayons, such as in drawing a self-portrait or practising writing on small whiteboards. Most hold pens correctly.

Modelling tools and malleable materials are used well to develop manipulative skills. Very good teaching with large apparatus in the hall helps develop children's mobility, co-ordination and awareness of space. Lessons are well-planned and managed so that pupils make good progress in an atmosphere of co-operation and enjoyment. Teachers also use these lessons well to develop children's understanding of vocabulary with words such as "through" and "between" being stressed. Both classrooms have small enclosed outdoor areas that are used satisfactorily. Children use a large playground space with wheeled toys weekly.

### **Creative development**

74. Attainment in creative development is in line with the Early Learning Goals. Children make good progress in developing their creative and aesthetic skills as a result of very good teaching. Staff regularly provide a very wide range of materials to explore colour and texture, to paint daffodils, print ducks and cut and colour a teddy in his rainy day clothes. With the rapidly changing adult-prepared materials, children have very many opportunities to express their ideas in music and action songs sung to a tape and through imaginative play; for example, pretending to talk into a mobile phone, be a shop keeper, or feed a baby using the milky liquid in the water tray. Children are used to music and expressing their preferences and responses. The willing participation of adults in imaginative role-play activities is most effective in coaxing the children to take on different roles and in doing so enhance children's communication skills and add much to children's enjoyment, confidence and self-esteem. Classroom displays, such as about the weather or farm animals, key words, sounds, numbers and growing bean plants, and the children's contributions to all these areas, help them to learn as well as enlivening the rooms.

### **ENGLISH**

75. In the National Curriculum tests in 2002, the school's results in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were in line with the national average. When compared to schools with similar features, attainment was above average in reading and well above average in writing. At the age of eleven, results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002 showed attainment to be in line with the national average and well above average when compared to similar schools. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Inspection findings show that standards in Year 2 are in line with national expectations and in Year 6 standards are above average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue, make good progress and achieve well. Any differences between test results and inspection findings can be explained by differences in the natural ability of different groups of pupils and by the fact that the consistently good teaching is having an increasing impact on the standards achieved. Standards are set to rise again in subsequent years. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
76. By the age of seven, pupils have made good progress and standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations. This is because of the high expectations of teachers and the many opportunities given to pupils to listen and respond. Pupils are attentive listeners who readily join in discussions and are always ready to offer their

views and opinions though their vocabulary is a little limited. By the end of Year 6, pupils have satisfactory speaking and listening skills. Throughout the key stage, pupils make good progress and have a good range of opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills across the curriculum. They listen carefully and respond appropriately in all year groups. For example in Year 3, pupils discuss the methods for making a cup of tea and in Year 4, pupils explain how the water cycle works. In Year 5, pupils discuss the reasons why people migrate to find work and pupils in Year 6 discuss and use metaphors and personification confidently and are developing a wider vocabulary. They are prepared to talk about their work and views to teachers and visitors. Pupils are often asked to justify what they have said and this ensures that pupils are thinking carefully about what they are saying.

77. Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 are at an average level. Pupils read simple texts with understanding. They respond enthusiastically to the humour in their books. They enjoy poems, such as “Morning” by Grace Nichols and identify the patterns of rhythm in the verse. Pupils read books appropriate to their abilities and the good quality of teaching encourages pupils to word build and use phonic skills to help with their reading. Most parents are active in supporting their children’s reading and they have used the home reading diaries well. This has a positive impact on pupils’ learning. Pupils distinguish between fiction and non-fiction and use the school library regularly, understanding its purpose and basic organisation. Only a small number of pupils attain standards above the expected level. Standards in reading at the end of Year 6 are above average. As pupils move through the key stage they make good progress and read with increasing fluency and expression. They have good attitudes to their reading. Pupils are introduced to a good range of authors and different genres and many opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss their reading books. Teaching ensures that pupils develop the skills that enable them to infer and deduct from texts as in a Year 5 class, where pupils were finding out about job vacancies in the Llandudno area. Most pupils skim and scan texts well. Pupils enjoy poems and in Year 6 pupils recognise how poets manipulate words through figurative language to create a specific effect. For example, they read the poem “July” and appreciate the personification within it. They know the difference between a biography and an autobiography and use dictionaries, thesauri and encyclopaedias effectively. Pupils locate information in the library and on the Internet and are developing their research skills. However, these skills are not yet sharp enough and this is an area for further development.
78. Standards of writing are at an average level by the end of Year 2. Pupils are given many interesting and relevant opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. In Year 1, pupils retell familiar stories such as Red Riding Hood using full stops and capital letters and write simple instructions for making a pancake. Pupils in Year 2 write poems, based on a poem by Grace Nichols, about dinnertime using words of two syllables at the end of each line. They begin to draft and improve their work and higher attaining pupils begin to use similes, such as “ as busy as Friday” or “ as exciting as Sunday”. They work on grammatical structures, making compound words such as “ bath – room” and “arm –chair” and begin to understand the importance of tenses in their writing. A special writing table in the classroom allows pupils to choose to write letters, poems and stories in their own time without direction. This gives good opportunities for pupils to practise their skills and develop creativity in their work. The vocabulary used by some pupils however lacks a little spark or expressiveness. Pupils

with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported well by teaching assistants and develop their writing skills effectively, while higher attaining pupils produce extended pieces of writing with sentences correctly demarcated and with speech marks.

79. By the end of Year 6, standards of writing are good. Pupils are directly taught the writing skills that enable them to write well for a variety of audiences and purposes. The importance of correct grammar, accurate spelling and how using metaphors and similes can help bring writing to life, are all emphasised and this impacts positively on how well pupils learn and achieve. By Year 6, most pupils have developed the skills to write more complex sentences, using clauses and connectives such as “moreover” and “furthermore”. They state their case for or against in persuasive writing, for example, about banning dogs from parks or amounts of homework. They work on advertisements, recognising such features as the use of strong verbs, rhyme and exaggeration to create specific effects. The narrative writing of higher attaining pupils is frequently lively and interesting with adventurous vocabulary and well - chosen phrases, although other pupils’ vocabulary is not always as inventive or expressive. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue are supported well by teaching assistants, who help them to make good progress.
80. Teaching is good overall in both key stages. Teachers establish positive relationships with pupils, which encourage them to do their best. Lessons are well structured with the aims of the lesson clearly identified and shared with pupils. In all classes, high levels of expectations of work and behaviour lead to good attitudes towards literacy and language work. Teachers use good focused questioning of pupils and their very good subject knowledge is used well to push on pupils’ learning and ensure that they achieve well. They use teaching assistants very well in class and the collaborative planning between them ensures that the needs of all pupils are provided for. The management of pupils is good and the teachers use appropriate assessments of learning and progress to inform and adjust future planning. The pace of lessons is brisk overall and maintains the pupils’ interest and enthusiasm. The direct teaching of reading and writing skills means that pupils acquire the ability to write well, to tackle unfamiliar words and phrases confidently and to begin to read and understand beyond the literal level. The school has clearly defined learning targets for pupils. Work is marked regularly, and in most classes useful advice is given to ensure that pupils know what to do next, in order to raise their standard of achievement. This is particularly true in Year 6, where the quality of marking in pupils’ books is consistently high. There are some good examples of English used across the curriculum, such as writing about the Aztecs or life in The Second World War in history and newspaper reports about a village in India in geography. However, in spite of effective teaching of the techniques of note taking and skimming and scanning texts, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to carry out independent studies and extend their thinking and research skills. The use of computers to support and enhance pupils’ learning is satisfactory. Some writing is word-processed and most pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 know how to change fonts and colours and use the format icon in order to produce a specific effect in the final presentation of their work.
81. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good. Pupils listen attentively and many contribute well to discussions. They settle to work quickly when a new activity is

introduced. Most pupils share ideas, collaborate well together and know that the adults, who work with them, value their opinions. They take pride in their work and the standards of presentation in their books are good. These positive attitudes play an important part in improving the quality of learning and raising achievement.

82. The leadership of the co-ordinator is good and she provides her colleagues with effective support. A good policy is in place and the school follows the guidelines of the National Literacy Strategy. Monitoring of standards is good and lessons are observed on a regular basis. This is supplemented by regular scrutinies of teachers' planning and pupils' work. Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress, and very effective strategies are in place for analysing test and assessment data, which take full account of factors such as gender and ethnicity. All of these initiatives are having a very positive impact on raising standards. Resources are good overall. There is a good range of literature to represent the many different genres in the English language. The library is an attractive, well-organised and managed resource with a good range of fiction and non-fiction books. A steady stream of pupils visits the library during the lunch hour and older pupils act as librarians, helping younger pupils to choose books as well as tidying up the shelves. Most of the outmoded books referred to in the previous inspection have been replaced by attractive and colourful copies of modern and classical children's literature. The good attention that the school pays to developing a love of literature in pupils and the many opportunities that the subject provides for pupils to discuss and debate issues indicate that the subject makes an important contribution to the social and cultural development of all pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

83. On the basis of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment in mathematics was below the national average and average when compared to similar schools. National Curriculum tests in 2002 for Year 6 pupils showed attainment to be below the national average and at an average level when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2 attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 make good progress and achieve well. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is above national expectations with pupils making good strides in their learning and achieving well. There are no significant differences in attainment between gender or ethnicity that cannot be explained by natural ability differences. The differences between inspection findings and test results can be partially explained by the natural differences in ability between the different groups of pupils, but this does not tell the full story. The consistently good quality of teaching, the successful and effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the very positive attitudes of the pupils combine to make an important contribution to the rise in standards and the progress that pupils make. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are set to rise further in 2004 and 2005 with the school on track to achieve its best ever results for Year 6 pupils, particularly in the percentage of pupils on track to exceed the level expected of 11-year-olds. The progress that is made by pupils with special educational needs and by pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue is similar to their classmates. Improvement in terms of standards, teaching and provision has been good since the time of the last inspection.
84. By the end of Year 2 standards are in line with national expectations. The effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has resulted in pupils' number skills improving with pupils increasing their ability in recalling number facts at speed. Pupils

recognise sequences of numbers including odd and even numbers with a small number of pupils recognising that addition and subtraction are inverse operations or that multiplication is repeated addition. Pupils accurately use mathematical names for common two-dimensional shapes with an increasing number of pupils able to name the characteristics and properties of three-dimensional shapes. The higher attaining pupils distinguish between straight and turning movements and use everyday non-standard units to measure length and mass accurately. Pupils' understanding of symmetry is satisfactory. Pupils collect simple data and record their results in lists and tables but experience a little more difficulty in interpreting the data that they have collated. When comparing weights pupils use mathematical language such as heavier or lighter than but there is more scope for improving pupils' mathematical vocabulary by expecting pupils to use a correct technical vocabulary. The good quality of teaching ensures that pupils are encouraged to explore different ways to find answers to problems that are set but pupils find more difficulty in transferring their number skills in an effective manner to written problems or investigations and are unsure when problems are presented in an unfamiliar context. This also impacts on pupils' performance in tests.

85. During their time in Year 3 to Year 6 the consistently good and at times very good teaching ensures that all pupils continue to make good progress and by the end of Year 6 attainment is above average. Pupils have well developed numeracy skills. They have a good mental recall of number facts and many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their mental arithmetic skills through a wide range of tasks that start off many lessons. Teaching ensures that pupils tackle such tasks at speed and examine different ways of arriving at the correct answer. The higher attaining pupils often come up with quick fire answers to quite complex calculations. Pupils confidently round numbers and pupils' knowledge of place value and decimal notation is good with many pupils demonstrating a satisfactory, and for a significant minority, good understanding of fractions and percentages. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of shape, space and measurement. Pupils understand that angles are measured in degrees and the higher attainers name the different types of angles. Most pupils measure or draw angles accurately and many pupils are able to calculate the perimeters and areas of regular shapes, and for the higher attainers quite complex irregular shapes. Pupils collect discrete data and record it using different formats. Pupils' ability to interpret data is at a satisfactory level, although a minority of pupils find a little difficulty in this. The area of development that the school has accurately identified is the need for pupils to more accurately and successfully solve word problems and for pupils to solve problems or carry out mathematical investigations that are presented in different formats than they are used to. Pupils find more difficulty in this area of the subject and do not always put their good number skills to effective use to problem solve. This sometimes has an adverse impact on how well some pupils achieve in National Curriculum tests when the application of such skills is a necessity. The school is well aware of this and is already addressing the issue.
86. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good. Pupils show good attitudes to the subject. They respond positively to good quality teaching. Many pupils listen attentively in introductory sessions, work together well in groups and are ready to help one another. Behaviour in lessons is usually good and at times very good. Pupils show good levels of enthusiasm and perseverance although this is less in evidence when presented with problem solving activities. However, the positive attitudes of the pupils,



their often good behaviour and the very good quality of relationships have a most positive impact on learning because teachers can spend valuable time imparting new knowledge and skills and not dealing with class management or control issues.

87. The opening activities in lessons are effective at focusing in on the main learning objectives and in directing pupils' attention appropriately. Lesson planning is of a good standard and ensures that the activities support the learning objective. Planning and teaching are effective when learning objectives are clearly stated and shared with the pupils and work is carefully planned to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. The introductory mental sessions in many lessons are generally brisk, leading to a good improvement in pupils' arithmetic skills. The time at the end of the lesson is generally used well to check what pupils have learned and in the best teaching this information is then used to guide and inform future planning. Teachers mostly move pupils on at a brisk pace whilst ensuring that they are capable of taking the next steps in learning.
88. A wide variety of methods, such as whole-class discussion, group work and individual tasks are used to suit the different activity at different parts in the lesson. Teachers have good subject knowledge and confidently and clearly explain new concepts and deal with any misconceptions in an effective manner. Teaching assistants provide very good levels of assistance for pupils with special educational needs. Their sensitive but firm questioning helps to both challenge and support the pupils with whom they are working. Equally good support is provided for pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue and this enables them to take a full and active part in all aspects of the mathematical curriculum. In examples of good and very good teaching observed at both key stages involving lessons on the revision of the language used in division calculations, converting improper fractions to proper fractions, partitioning, classifying shapes by 2 and 3 criterion or solving money problems, work took careful account of the wide range of ability levels within the class and ensured that tasks were appropriately challenging and demanding. Teaching in all these instances was brisk and focused and ensured that pupils were directly taught the necessary skills to enable them to complete the tasks well.
89. There are some very good examples of pupils' work being marked in a way that provides clear pointers for improvement. This enhances pupils' learning and this good practice needs to be disseminated to classes where it is not as prevalent. There is not an over-use of commercially produced worksheets but when worksheets are used they are not always dated and it is difficult to gauge the progress that pupils may or may not have made. The setting of homework is satisfactory overall with some good practice for the older pupils in school. Computers are used in an appropriate manner to support and enhance pupils' learning and teachers are quick to capitalise on opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as geography and design and technology and particularly well in science.
90. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a very secure grasp of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and the school has already started to address the issues of improving pupils' ability to solve problems and to further develop pupils' ability to use an accurate and appropriate mathematical vocabulary. The co-ordinator has monitored numerous lessons across the school and provides formal feedback to teachers. Any pointers for improvement then form the focus for future observations. The co-ordinator also monitors

teachers' planning and leads scrutinies of pupils' work. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment, for setting targets and for tracking pupils' progress. These procedures together with effective systems that are in place for the analysis of test and assessment data have made an important contribution to the rise in standards. Resources to support teaching and learning in the subject are good. The subject provides many opportunities for pupils to collaborate and to work together in an effective manner and this adds much to pupils' personal and social development.

## SCIENCE

91. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2002 show attainment to be in line with the national average and above average when compared to similar schools. National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils in 2002 showed attainment to be well below the national average and below average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations and that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue make good progress and achieve well. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls or by ethnicity that cannot be explained by natural ability differences. Any differences between test results and inspection findings can be explained by the differences in abilities between the groups of pupils and the good quality of teaching that is now a consistent feature across the school. The school has accurately identified the need to ensure that a greater focus is given to raising standards in scientific enquiry and investigations, particularly for younger pupils to work independently and for older pupils to instigate and initiate their own experiments. It is envisaged that as pupils become more skilled in this area of the subject a greater number of pupils will achieve level 3 and level 5 and in turn this will impact most positively on the standards that the school achieves.
92. By the end of Year 2, most pupils make good progress in developing their scientific knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and processes. In Year 1, above average and average attaining pupils are beginning to record their learning and their investigations in a systematic way. They have good levels of knowledge and understanding of the conditions needed to produce a healthy plant and they use their observation skills to sequence the different stages in the growth of a bean plant. Pupils name the five senses and correctly label diagrams of the main parts of the human body. They identify waterproof and non-waterproof materials and have a secure understanding of different sources of light. Below average attaining pupils have a less secure ability to record their learning and their spider diagrams lack sufficient detail. When asked to design an experiment to prove that plants require water for their growth, many pupils predict the outcomes successfully, but they find it difficult to apply their knowledge to plan and conduct such an investigation independently. In Year 2, pupils make good progress in their prediction skills and above average and average ability pupils are beginning to compare the results from their investigations with the predictions they had made. They identify and classify the similarities and differences between humans and animals and between animals and plants and have a sound general understanding of what constitutes a fair test. They successfully recognise reversible and irreversible changes in materials. Their labelled diagrams of electrical circuits show a secure understanding of how circuits work and they handle simple data effectively, using bar graphs to show differences in pupils' shoe sizes. Below average ability pupils have variable standards of handwriting and presentation of written work and their recording of investigations often lack adequate detail. A significant minority of pupils still find it problematical to plan, design and conduct an investigation independently.
93. Pupils continue to make good progress in their acquisition of scientific knowledge in Year 3 to Year 6. By Year 6, most pupils have satisfactory levels of knowledge and understanding and their recall skills are secure. They distinguish between healthy and

unhealthy foods and predict their effects upon teeth. Pupils use subject vocabulary well in their work on materials and forces; they use terms such as absorbent, conductor, magnetic and opaque accurately and in the correct context. Pupils of all abilities produce some good work in observing and recording the differences in the brightness of a bulb. Above average ability and many average ability pupils respond satisfactorily to the targets set for them in designing and reporting their own investigations. These pupils have a good awareness of the need for fair testing and the planning sheet which has been developed effectively consolidates their understanding of how to construct a fair test. However, pupils still have some difficulty in applying their knowledge and understanding to new situations and problems.

94. In Year 5, pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring the correct scientific vocabulary to use in their work on the solar system and on the properties of solids, liquids and gases. However, standards of presentation of written work are variable; the recording of learning in spider diagrams and in more extended writing is sometimes untidy and lacking in depth and detail. Year 6 pupils produce secure work on habitats, food webs and food chains and use the related vocabulary well in recording their learning. Good links with numeracy ensure that pupils measure and record their findings accurately and they are well challenged to develop their independent problem-solving skills in deciding whether to use line graphs, bar charts or tables to predict and to record the results of their investigations when mixing materials and observing the changes occurring. Most Year 6 pupils explain the need to ensure the reliability of their investigations by repeating tests and establishing what will be a fair test. The weaker element remaining is the pupils' ability to instigate and initiate their own investigations.
95. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good throughout the school. Pupils listen well to one another and to their teachers, and collaborate effectively to tackle problems and move their learning forward. Pupils enjoy their work in science; they ask relevant questions and are well focused when engaged in practical activities. Relationships between teachers and pupils are friendly and mutually respectful and, as they mature, pupils have a well developed sense of responsibility for their own learning and that of others.
96. Teaching in science is good overall. Lessons are thoughtfully planned and most are delivered at a brisk pace. In the best examples, teachers challenge pupils rigorously, ensuring that they reason out for themselves the possibilities posed by scientific problems. Teachers listen carefully to every pupil's contribution and suggestion. Pupils are made aware of the learning objectives at the start of every lesson and, in the best lessons, the session at the end of the lesson is very well used to evaluate the amount of learning that has taken place. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils; they use a range of teaching strategies and varied activities to help sustain pupils' concentration; they question pupils to good purpose and their good subject knowledge is effectively used to reinforce and extend learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported during lessons by learning support assistants and by teachers. Support is targeted upon developing skills and ensuring that concepts are mastered and in most lessons pupils are provided with work that is designed to match their needs and abilities. Great care is taken to ensure the understanding and involvement of pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue. Higher attaining pupils are usually well challenged with extension tasks and activities in most classes. Most teachers mark

written work very thoroughly, making informative comments and setting meaningful targets to show pupils what they need to do next in order to raise their standards of achievement. However, standards of marking are inconsistent in some year groups. Although more use is currently made of information and communication technology than in the past, this remains an area for further development to ensure that standards of presentation and spelling are improved and to encourage pupils' research and data handling skills and techniques.

97. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has reviewed the science policy and scheme of work. Pupils' progress is tracked regularly through the assessment sheets kept on each pupil, these clearly show progress and any underachievement across the curriculum. Good data analysis procedures provide accurate information on the precise areas which cause pupils difficulty. Regular monitoring and evaluation of the quality of pupils' work, teachers' planning and of the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom is undertaken by the co-ordinator who keeps useful records of the outcomes of monitoring. Evaluation procedures identify areas which require further reinforcement of skills or different teaching approaches. Assessments are well focused upon the progressive development of scientific skills. The "Profile Book" system used to assess and record pupils' levels of attainment, is an effective method of tracking progress, setting stepped, realistic targets and ensuring that pupils and their parents are fully aware of the next step forward in their learning. Teachers level the work according to National Curriculum criteria and this helps give them a common understanding of national expectations in science. The co-ordinator has made some purposeful efforts to develop pupils' ability to evaluate the quality of their own work and to set themselves targets for improvement. The co-ordinator plans a range of strategies to provide pupils with greater confidence in planning, organising and conducting their investigations independently and to encourage them to apply their knowledge and understanding to new situations and problems. Resources are adequate in quantity and quality. The opportunities that the subject provides for pupils to collaborate, discuss ideas and findings and to test out hypotheses add another dimension to pupils' learning and to their personal development.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

98. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations. The good quality of teaching across the school ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, are currently making good progress and achieving well. Progress over time has been satisfactory with inspection evidence clearly indicating that the good quality of teaching that is now a feature of the school should have a positive impact on standards. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
99. In Year 1 and Year 2 pupils explore the range of colours that can be created by mixing paint and they successfully investigate the textures that they achieve through using different materials. Year 1 pupils produce some effective bubble paintings of butterflies in pastel shades and they use lollipop sticks to help them weave with wool and ribbons, producing attractive textures and pleasing colour combinations. They develop their observational drawing skills effectively in their paintings and collages of daffodils. In

Year 2, pupils make sound progress in developing their sketching skills in their observational drawings of natural objects, such as potted plants; they show confidence in experimenting with the different marks and effects which they achieve by using their pencils. Although standards are at an average level in observational drawing a small number of pupils produce very detailed observational drawings of the cut surface of a Kiwifruit, showing a good sense of scale and perspective. Year 2 make good use of computer programs to develop designs based on Jackson Pollock's "Yellow Islands" and their work in the style of Andy Warhol is of a satisfactory standard. Computers are also well used to develop pupils' awareness of patterns and they experiment with producing attractive symmetrical designs on the computer. They increase their experience of using different media and use pastels effectively to achieve smudged effects. Pupils are not always provided with enough opportunities to evaluate their work or that of others and this is a weaker element of their attainment.

100. Pupils are currently developing their artistic skills at a good rate in Year 3 to Year 6, although over time progress has been at a satisfactory rate. Pupils use chalk, charcoal and pastels to achieve the desired effect and they also produce clay heads and plaques for the school noticeboard. By Year 6 pupils have developed their techniques in their work on collographs, using intaglio methods, to develop images of the landscape of mountains, such as Ben Nevis, Everest and Kilimanjaro. These portrayals are effective and demonstrate good quality investigations into colour combinations and textured effects. Work on the Victorians has led Year 6 pupils to investigate the use of primary colour and perspective by Victorian landscape artists; they reproduce some well crafted examples of landscape painting in this style and have been further inspired in this work by their visit to the Birmingham Art Museum. They achieve pleasing blurring and watery effects in their study of the painting of a swimming pool by David Hockney. Year 6 pupils make imaginative use of pencils to make different marks and have a secure understanding of the concept of perspective and shading. Good multi-cultural references are made in their sketches of Greek masks and Hindu and Judaic religious symbols. They make limited progress, however, in reproducing sketches in the style of Giotto and Masaccio.
101. Pupils respond well to their art lessons overall; many show pride in producing work that is of the best quality that they can achieve. Behaviour in lessons is often of a good standard and these features help to create a pleasant and effective learning environment. The older pupils make good efforts to evaluate their work and to suggest ways in which it might be improved. The vast majority of pupils concentrate well upon their tasks and work together collaboratively and amicably. Pupils' work is valued and respected and is well displayed throughout the school.
102. Teaching in art and design is good overall. Pupils are made fully aware of the learning objectives for each project and teachers allow plentiful opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and develop their ideas. Good emphasis is placed upon encouraging pupils to make their own choices, for instance in the medium they would like to work in. Teachers focus well upon the direct teaching of subject-specific skills; they share their time well with individual pupils and groups, encouraging them to achieve their full potential and experience success. Planning indicates that over the course of the year pupils are provided with many opportunities to work with a wide range of media and to produce work in both a two and three-dimensional manner. Resources are well prepared

for lessons and this together with the wide choice that they are provided with encourage an imaginative and creative response from the pupils. The good collection of artistic books and learning packs that the school has provide opportunities to examine the styles and images of other painters.

103. The subject is well led and managed. A good quality policy and new scheme of work is in place to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met and that the knowledge, skills and concepts are systematically taught and developed. The co-ordinator has established an effective system for monitoring the quality of pupils' work and the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom; this provides her with a suitable overview of progress being made across the school. Recently introduced assessment procedures, which are of a satisfactory standard, are leading to the development of a subject portfolio of levelled, annotated work to inform teachers' planning of future work and to address areas requiring further development. Pupils' good personal and social development is enhanced by the requirements of the art curriculum and they have good opportunities to study the artistic culture and traditions of Europe. However, the school recognises that greater opportunities for pupils to explore the art of non-European cultures need to be provided.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

104. The recently appointed co-ordinator is beginning to raise standards through her high expectations and very good subject knowledge, and by taking a major role in teaching throughout the school. As a consequence, attainment is better than it was at the time of the last inspection. Standards are at the nationally expected level by the end of Year 2 with the designing element being a particular strength. Standards by the end of Year 6 are at the nationally expected level with the pupils' ability to evaluate their finished product being a weaker strand of attainment. Although teaching seen during the inspection was good and often very good, teaching over time has been satisfactory overall with some good features in Year 1 and Year 2, as the recent changes to the way teaching is organised have not been in place long enough to have their greatest possible impact. The progress that all pupils are currently making, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, is good with progress over time being satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
105. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of the design process. Pupils know and understand that they need to research, draw their own ideas and plans and then try out methods. Pupils put their designs to effective use with their plans and trials for using levers and slides as part of the pages of a moving book of 'The Three Little Pigs'. As a result of this work pupils have a clear understanding of when it is better to use a lever or slide - as one said, "I wanted the pig to be running away so I used a slide". Pupils know how to design things for themselves, such as puppets, and label parts of their designs clearly and list the materials and tools that they will need to hand in order to start the making stage of the process. Pupils show a satisfactory knowledge of different methods that they can use to join different materials together but are less confident and competent in activities such as sewing, in which evidence would suggest they have had fewer opportunities to partake.

106. By the end of Year 6 standards are at an average level and this represents good improvement from the time of the last inspection. The older pupils in this key stage make variety of breads. They show a sound awareness of the different textures and aromas and what is necessary to make bread appetising and attractive from texture, appearance and taste perspectives. Pupils show satisfactory design and making skills when producing mechanical toys with cams and show satisfactory skills when using a variety of tools. Pupils show a satisfactory ability in choosing and working with a range of different media and materials. The higher attaining pupils produce work of a good standard with high degrees of originality and creativity. Pupils have made and designed money containers and produced sandwiches with a variety of fillings. Work is often of a satisfactory standard and for some pupils good. The weaker element is the pupils' ability to evaluate their work because this aspect of the curriculum has not been taught in sufficient depth over time.
107. Pupils have positive attitudes towards the work of design and technology and they behave well in lessons where they work with enthusiasm. They work productively and with good levels of concentration. Pupils are keen to do well and show a good awareness of health and safety considerations. Pupils work very well together, share resources and are always ready to lend a helping hand to a classmate that might be struggling. All these factors make an important contribution to the quality of learning and to how well pupils achieve.
108. The quality of teaching observed during the week of inspection was good and at times very good. A strength of teaching observed was the manner in which specific skills are directly taught to the pupils which results in immediate improvements in pupils' performance. In Year 1 and Year 2 teaching helps pupils to continue to improve their knowledge and understanding of materials and the design and making process. In a very good lesson in Year 1, the teacher had very good subject knowledge, clear learning aims for the lesson, strong explanations and very good questioning skills, all helping to ensure that the pupils are appropriately challenged and taught, Good teaching is also leading to pupils knowing how to use a wide range of techniques, such as for fastening together the two surfaces of a puppet. In a good lesson observed for pupils in Year 5 the teaching was clear, concise and challenging and enabled the pupils to get on with the task of making bread because they knew precisely what was required. The knowledge and enthusiasm of the teaching fired the pupils up and they could not wait to get on with the task in hand. However, teaching in this key stage has been more variable in quality over time and has improved recently with the co-ordinator, who is a teaching assistant, leading much of the teaching with support from class teachers. While standards are now in line, pupils have gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding, particularly in the evaluation aspect which indicates that over time teaching has only been at a satisfactory level. Some good examples of computers being used to support and enhance pupils' learning were in evidence and digital cameras are often used to record pupils' finished work. Some teachers capitalise well on the opportunities that the subject offers to enhance pupils' literacy and numeracy skills but this good practice is not as consistent across the school as it could be.
109. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator's own subject knowledge and expertise is very good. At the moment she has not been in post long enough to further improve standards but evidence suggests that standards should rise over the next two



years. She monitors planning and pupils' work in an effective manner. As a teaching assistant she is part of the teaching team for all lessons so she is fully able to directly monitor teaching and work on improving provision. She has a good understanding of the developmental needs of the subject and the demands of the National Curriculum. Recently, a well-structured long-term planning document has been drawn up. This ensures that in the future each class will have a termly unit of work for design and technology using the government recommended planning. This will help to ensure that in the future Year 3 to Year 6 will be taught in a more rigorous and systematic manner. Assessment practice is satisfactory. A comprehensive assessment system is in place but it is too recent to have had a significant impact on helping to raise standards. Accommodation and resources for the subject are very good and well used by staff and pupils and add much to the quality of pupils' learning experiences. The subject provides many opportunities for pupils to work together, to plan, and to make decisions and this adds to pupils' personal development.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

110. Standards in geography are below average by the end of Year 2. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, make satisfactory progress as many children start school with well below average knowledge and understanding of the world. Standards are at an average level by the end of Year 6 with all pupils making satisfactory progress. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
111. By the end of Year 2 pupils have examined different localities in the United Kingdom and world wide using the travels of Barnaby Bear and Teddy Twort. As the bears visit different places in the world, pupils gather information and compare and contrast life in these localities with their own in Birmingham. Pupils find some difficulty in recalling facts and information that they have acquired. Pupils show a satisfactory understanding of life on an island through their study of the stories of Katy Morag on the island of Struay and compare their own lives with Katy's. Discussions with pupils, however, reveal that they have only a very sketchy understanding of environmental change and how changes in physical features can affect patterns of human behaviour. The knowledge and geographical skills of pupils are not yet of sufficient depth for them to use maps and information effectively and this is an area for further development.
112. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations and these have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, make satisfactory progress through the key stage. During Year 3 and Year 4 pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of the geographical nature of the local area and where it is positioned in relation to the United Kingdom. Pupils are able to compare and contrast the geographical characteristics of where they live and compare them in a satisfactory manner to Adivasi village in India. They use atlases in a satisfactory manner to locate India and identify the main features of the region, including cities, rivers, mountain ranges and climate. By the end of Year 6 pupils read maps with a reasonable degree of accuracy and through their studies of a contrasting locality, pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of landscape, land use, the leisure facilities and routes, which make the economy as it is. Pupils show sound mapping skills and understanding

of how human activities can cause changes in places and local economies. Pupils use atlases and the Internet to find out about mountain ranges of the world and the features of mountainous regions. They have a satisfactory understanding of how weather on mountains changes through the seasons and how this affects human activities. Pupils name most continents of the world and some countries within them, although overall their knowledge of the wider world is satisfactory. There is some evidence of critical evaluation when responding to local issues, such as the ways to improve a derelict site in Birmingham.

113. Attitudes to the subject are good and pupils behave well in lessons. They have good relationships with their teachers and are confident to offer opinions and ideas in discussions about issues relating to the local area such as improving derelict land or leisure pursuits in mountainous regions. This makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
114. Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Teaching assistants are used wisely to support lower attaining pupils and pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue. The teaching ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered, although there are occasions when individual lessons are not long enough to have the biggest possible impact on the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to learn about their own locality through practical experiences and visits which help bring the subject to life and increase pupils' awareness of how changing features in the locality impact on peoples' lives. Teachers ensure that good quality displays in geography are to be found all around the corridors and these provide a stimulus and interest to pupils and are an important learning resource. There is evidence of some cross-curricular links with mathematics, for example, when pupils draw bar graphs, with art as pupils draw mountain scapes and with language as pupils discuss the economy of Llandudno. Marking in books is usually of good quality, especially in Year 6.
115. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. In addition to much informal guidance and support for teachers and the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, the co-ordinator has begun to monitor teaching and learning with lesson observations and to introduce a formal assessment of pupils' attainment with portfolios of work. Resources are satisfactory but a greater number and range of maps, especially Ordnance Survey maps, needs to be purchased, so that pupils will have the best possible opportunities to further improve their mapping skills. The subject provides good opportunities for pupils to learn about the life and cultures of people in different parts of the world and to discuss issues such as conservation and pollution, which add another dimension to pupils' cultural and moral development.

## **HISTORY**

116. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with national expectations. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue is satisfactory with good progress being made in the pupils' acquisition of historical enquiry skills. The quality of teaching is currently good

across the school and this means that within individual lessons all pupils are currently making good progress. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

117. During their time in Year 1 and Year 2 the pupils develop a secure chronological awareness; they sequence events and stories accurately and have a sound understanding that life in the past was different from their own experience. In Year 1, pupils examine examples of old toys and make satisfactory progress in comparing and contrasting them with their own toys. They are encouraged to consult information books to develop their enquiry skills and they fill out simple questionnaires with adults about their memories of their childhood. Good use is made of old "Watch with Mother" videotapes to encourage pupils' observational skills in comparing and contrasting their own childhood with the experience of people in the past. In Year 2, pupils study the Fire of London in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and many make good progress in writing extended descriptions of the fire. Good links with literacy give them the opportunity to write in the style of Pepys' diary to give their account greater interest. They show a sound ability to compare and contrast the conditions of life in Pepys' London with life in the present. Pupils make satisfactory use of computer programs to produce word-processed statements for their displays and have some opportunities to conduct some research work on the Internet. They show a sound ability to extract relevant information from secondary source material.
118. In Year 3 to Year 6 pupils build upon the knowledge, understanding and historical skills they have acquired in Year 1 and Year 2. In Year 3 and Year 4 pupils compare and contrast in a satisfactory manner life in Tudor times and Ancient Egypt with life now. Pupils have a satisfactory recall of facts from periods of history that they have studied. Pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of chronology and are developing an appropriate awareness of how people felt in events in history, such as The Blitz.
119. By Year 5 pupils have acquired a satisfactory understanding of the basic differences between Athens and Sparta and show secure comprehension skills in extracting information from secondary sources. Pupils make useful links with art in their collage work on Tudor portraits. By Year 6, pupils demonstrate a sound sense of chronology in their time line work. They make good use of opportunities to conduct independent research projects and choose to write biographies on historical figures such as Napoleon, Anne Frank, Martin Luther King and the black freedom fighter, Harriet Tubman. Year 6 pupils make good use of the Internet to access a wide range of information and most of them use this well to produce independently written biographies. Year 6 pupils also show enthusiasm for their project work on the Aztec culture of Mexico and there are some well-organised and well written projects on display outside their classroom. Many pupils have searched the Internet for further information and their project work is well presented, using word processing programs and importing colourful images to illustrate their work. Pupils make good use of opportunities to examine Aztec artefacts, such as their calendar and statues of the Aztec gods. Good focus is placed upon using this topic to encourage pupils to write for different purposes, such as note taking, play scripts and map work.
120. Pupils enjoy their learning in history in both key stages. Pupils are keen to enquire and investigate and they work together amicably and collaboratively to produce satisfactory and often good quality work. Pupils gain confidence in developing their speaking and

listening skills and they make secure progress in their information seeking and writing skills.

121. Teaching is currently good in both key stages. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make fruitful and meaningful cross-curricular links in their planning to develop historical and literacy skills. In most classes, pupils have appropriate opportunities to examine a variety of interesting historical sources and to extend their knowledge and understanding. Where teaching is at its best, pupils are well challenged to produce extended written studies and work is thoroughly marked to identify areas requiring further development. Most teachers have high expectations of their pupils and place good emphasis upon recording learning in history in a variety of styles and forms. Pupils respond well where teachers challenge them rigorously, and when provided with appropriate opportunities, older pupils develop well as independent learners. Teaching ensures that pupils have suitable opportunities to visit sites of historical interest and listen to and question visitors who come into school and relate their own memories about experiences in the past. Wall displays are colourful and suitably linked to the curriculum; these add a further dimension to pupils' knowledge and understanding. Good cross-curricular links are made and these benefit pupils in other areas of their work, such as literacy, geography and art and design and good use is made of the Internet for research purposes. The teachers capitalise well on opportunities that the subject provides to enhance pupils' personal and cultural development.
122. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has established a suitable system for monitoring teachers' planning and for observing the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom; she places a good level of emphasis upon ensuring that there is progression in pupils' learning and that pupils develop their enquiry and investigative skills. The monitoring system gives the co-ordinator an overview of the strengths and areas requiring further development. Assessment procedures have been reviewed and a more informative and satisfactory system is now in place; recording of assessment information enables teachers to plan future work in order to address weaknesses. Samples of pupils' work are being kept and a portfolio of levelled, annotated work helps provide teachers with a common understanding of expected standards in history. Resources are adequate and pupils have access to a variety of reference books, artefacts and other historical source material. The provision of more primary source material would benefit pupils' investigative and interpretative skills.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

123. Standards in information and communication technology are at the nationally expected level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, with word processing and pupils' ability to present work in different formats being particular strengths for the older pupils in school. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, are currently making good progress because of the good quality of teaching throughout the school. Progress has been satisfactory over time as teachers' subject knowledge and expertise has not been as secure as it is now. Standards are set to rise in subsequent years. Improvement has been good since the time of the last inspection.

124. Standards by the end of Year 2 are at an expected level overall with some stronger elements. Pupils know and understand well that computers respond to instructions. Pupils confidently name items of computer equipment such as screen, mouse and icons. They successfully use a keyboard to type and assemble text when writing information, with the higher attaining pupils putting together more complex sentences. Pupils confidently correct mistakes using the backspace key. Pupils perform at a good level when presenting work in different formats including text, tables and other images. For example, pupils input data and produce graphs on items such as their favourite fruit or favourite foods. Pupils use the tools on the computer well when using a program to reproduce pictures of 'The Great fire of London'. Pupils have also used computers in an effective manner to produce pictures in the style of Kandinsky and Jackson Pollock's work 'Yellow Islands'. Another strength is the manner in which pupils independently access the menu to print and where necessary save and print their work. Pupils successfully undertake simple modelling activities, exploring aspects of real and imaginary situations on the screen and with the support of teachers have used a digital camera successfully. Pupils are beginning to merge text and pictures more effectively. Pupils are less secure of the applications and uses of information and communication technology in the wider world.
125. Pupils are currently making good progress in their learning in Year 3 to Year 6. Pupils by the end of Year 6 show good skills in word processing, in editing their work and in changing the font, colour and size of text. Pupils have devised good quality multimedia presentations. Pupils are familiar with the use of the Internet and CD ROMs for research purposes and use these resources in a satisfactory manner. Pupils are confident in designing a questionnaire with the higher attaining pupils setting up multiple-choice answers. Pupils set up spreadsheets and are able to interrogate databases in a satisfactory manner and know how using specific functions on the computer can save time. Pupils are secure in their knowledge of graphical modelling and are confident users of a digital camera. Pupils have less experience of computers to control events in a predetermined manner and to sense physical data. This together with improving pupils' ability to communicate using electronic mail are areas for development and improvement rightly identified as priority areas by the subject co-ordinator.
126. The school also uses a system throughout the school called 'Global ICT'. This is a system which is primarily being used at present to reinforce, extend and enhance pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The tasks are all linked to the national literacy and numeracy strategies and the pupils access the programs at their own individual level. All classes have timetabled lessons for using this program and evidence clearly indicates that it has proved most successful in helping to improve literacy and numeracy standards across the school. The program has a built in recording, assessing and tracking element and very good reward systems, all of which help keep the pupils thoroughly interested and motivated. Many pupils use the program before school and in after school clubs. Pupils also use the program to support their learning in other subjects such as history and geography with the older pupils in school taking part in French tasks later on in the academic year. The provision is managed very well by a classroom assistant. She runs activities before and after school as well as leading much of the teaching within lessons. The quality of her teaching is often very good and leads to significant advances in pupils' learning. She has also led staff training sessions and is constantly evaluating the quality of provision as well as seeking to ensure that the

provision has the biggest possible impact on raising standards both in information and communication technology and in other subjects of the curriculum. There is little doubt that the program is an effective tool and is also very successful at motivating pupils and developing the confidence and self-esteem of pupils who experience some difficulties in acquiring basic skills. Throughout the school there are also good examples of computers being used to support and enhance pupils' learning in subjects such as science, history, geography and art and design, Occasionally some opportunities are missed and this prevents pupils' learning from being even stronger.

127. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and this has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils are attentive and show a real desire to learn new knowledge and skills. Pupils show good levels of interest, enthusiasm and productivity and are often disappointed when the lesson comes to an end. Lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and for supporting one another and pupils do this very well and this adds another dimension to their personal and social development. Behaviour in lessons is often of a good standard and this helps to create an effective learning environment.
128. The quality of teaching is good across the school. Lesson planning is good and often provides tasks for pupils of different abilities and ensures that the skills that pupils bring from home are put to effective use in challenging and demanding activities. Teachers use resources well and often use a multi-media projector to make specific teaching points which the pupils can then imitate on the computers that they are working on. Teaching is often clear and concise and tasks and expectations are explained well. Whether making pictures of 'The Great Fire of London', devising spreadsheets, making questionnaires or recording data in a variety of formats, this level of explanation ensures that pupils know exactly what is required of them, and complete tasks well. Most teachers and support staff have good and in some instances very good subject knowledge. This is put to good effect to motivate and enthuse the pupils and to deal with any misconceptions. Most teachers use a good technical vocabulary when talking to the pupils and expect the pupils to use a suitable vocabulary in their responses. Teachers often help pupils resolve any difficulties through experimentation rather than directly telling them how to resolve a problem. Examples of good teaching were observed in a number of classes. Teachers set high expectations and provide sufficient time for pupils to practise and refine their skills in meaningful activities on collating and interpreting data, merging graphics and text, carrying out research activities or interrogating databases. Teaching assistants make a very important contribution to how well pupils learn, In addition to the input into Global ICT, teaching assistants are an integral part of many lessons. Their input is sharp and incisive, supports and enhances pupils' learning in an effective manner and is very effective in the way that pupils' confidence and self-esteem is developed.
129. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the strengths in the subject and any areas for development and improvement, which include further developing staff expertise and improving learning in control technology and the use of electronic mail. The co-ordinator has observed teaching and learning, monitors pupils' work and teachers' planning and provides much informal guidance to colleagues. The pupils insert pieces of computer work into their profile books on a regular basis and this enables teachers and the co-ordinator to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. In addition the school has recently introduced

a system for assessing pupils' attainment in a more formal manner. These procedures are based on national guidelines but their recency means that they have not yet had sufficient time to impact greatly on attainment levels. The school provides good quality opportunities for extra-curricular activities in the subject which add much to pupils' skills and to their personal and social development. The subject offers very good opportunities to strengthen the partnership with parents when workshops take place for pupils and parents together. These are very well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by parents and pupils alike. The computer suite and the good number of computers and other technological equipment that the school has means that the quantity and quality of resources are good and add to the quality of pupils' learning.

## MUSIC

130. Standards in music are at an expected level by the end of Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, make satisfactory progress. No music lessons were observed in Year 1 and Year 2 and there was insufficient evidence to make a reliable and accurate judgement about standards by the end of Year 2. Teachers' planning does however indicate that all elements of the subject are taught in sufficient depth over the course of the year. Improvement since the last inspection has been good in terms of a rise in standards by the end of Year 6.
131. Teachers' planning in Year 1 and Year 2 indicates that all the elements of the music curriculum are covered, using national guidelines and a commercial scheme. During the week of the inspection, however, only one piece of music for appreciation was heard in a Key Stage 1 assembly, when pupils listened to "Don't panic!" by Euphonic Lodge. The teacher, missed opportunities to encourage pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding by asking them focused questions about how the music made them feel or what instruments were played. As a result, the music became just a calming device as pupils entered and left the school hall. Pupils sang a difficult hymn "Do not be afraid" to words on an overhead projector. They began hesitantly but on a repeat, improved their singing a little, finally producing a satisfactory performance overall. Discussions with pupils indicate that pupils have a satisfactory awareness and knowledge of different types of music. They know that different pieces of music can evoke different feelings and they can name different instruments that are played in an orchestra. They are less aware of the names of different composers.
132. By the end of Year 6 standards are at an expected level. Pupils keep a simple rhythm well and sing along tunefully and with good voice projection. They recognise simple notation and many pupils identify crotchets and quavers. Pupils have learnt to sing in two parts to the accompaniment of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and keyboards. Pupils sing in tune and with some expression, opening their mouths and projecting their voices well. Those pupils playing instruments play with satisfactory control and rhythmic accuracy. Opportunities are built into the lesson for pupils to appraise and evaluate their own and one another's performance in a satisfactory manner and they improve their work with comments such as, "keep the pace going" and "make sure you hear the singing over the instrumental parts". This enables pupils to develop a satisfactory awareness of their own contribution to a group or class performance. The school sings in church for festivals and pupils have in the past taken part in a large-scale

production of Aladdin. A peripatetic music teacher teaches the keyboard to a small number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 once a week during the lunch hour. The weaker element is pupils' awareness of the work of famous composers and pupils' ability to appraise different types of music. There is little evidence of the use of information and communication technology in the subject to capture, change and combine sounds.

133. During the inspection the quality of teaching observed was good but evidence indicates that over time the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the good teaching observed in Year 3 and Year 5 the lesson objectives are shared with the pupils. Whether learning about patterns of syllables for ostinato or developing pupils' ability to sing in parts with accompaniment, the teachers directly teach specific skills to help improve pupils' performance. Teachers use a good level of musical vocabulary and expect the pupils to do the same. Once specific skills have been taught sufficient time is then allowed for pupils to practise and refine their work which leads to improvements in pupils' music making. Good use is made of support staff in lessons. The pupils respond well in music lessons and they clearly enjoy making music. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is very good and this builds up pupils' confidence and self-esteem and as a result pupils are only too ready to perform in front of classmates. Pupils behave well in lessons, show a good level of concentration and handle instruments with care. All these factors help to create a very pleasant and effective learning environment. On the basis of inspection evidence teachers' knowledge and understanding, which was a key issue in the previous inspection have improved, with most teachers taking part in in-service training to gain confidence and learn essential musical skills. The school bases its scheme of work on national guidelines and this has helped teachers to structure their lesson planning more effectively to ensure coverage of all the elements of the music curriculum. The areas for development are to focus teaching on developing pupils' ability to appraise music, both their own, that of classmates and that of famous composers and to introduce pupils to a wider variety of music, particularly from different cultures.
134. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The issues that were identified at the last inspection have been tackled in an appropriate manner. There has been some limited monitoring of teaching, learning and provision with plans already in hand for further monitoring. The co-ordinator provides much informal guidance to colleagues. Assessment procedures are recently introduced and are of a satisfactory standard, although they have not yet had sufficient time to have any great impact on further raising standards. The quality of resources is satisfactory but with more instruments from differing cultures and a greater emphasis overall on music of other cultures the subject could make a more telling contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of pupils.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

135. Standards in physical education are at the nationally expected level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue make satisfactory progress. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.



136. By the end of Year 2 pupils show satisfactory levels of physical agility. Pupils move around showing an appropriate awareness of space and the needs of others. Pupils throw balls with a reasonable degree of accuracy and catch balls showing a satisfactory level of co-ordination. The higher attaining pupils throw and catch with confidence and accuracy and are already showing a good awareness of the skills necessary to compete competitively in small games situations. Pupils recognise what is necessary to work with a partner and what is necessary to play in competition. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of warm up and cool down activities and the importance of exercise for a healthy lifestyle.
137. By the end of Year 6 standards remain at the nationally expected level. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the importance of exercise and strenuous physical activity and the part that it can play in ensuring a fit and healthy life style. They recognise that vigorous exercise causes pulse and heart rate to increase and that warm up and cool down activities are important features of physical activity. In dance pupils show good levels of creativity, when, for example, creating their own dance in a 1970s style. They practised and improved their performances and evaluated their efforts well. They worked harmoniously with a good level of involvement and pride in their achievement, with both girls and boys striving to improve equally. Overall, by the age of eleven, pupils have developed satisfactory skills of selecting and linking actions, and using their own ideas to form short sections of linked movement. They practise this in Year 5 and Year 4 when they plan three different jumps and work well in pairs to mirror their partner's movements. By the time pupils leave the school, most pupils attain the nationally expected standard of swimming 25 metres.
138. Pupils enjoy taking part in physical education. In most instances pupils listen carefully to instructions and are keen to demonstrate and try hard to improve their performance. Pupils are ready to take on board constructive criticism to help them improve. Behaviour in lessons is generally good but just occasionally pupils' behaviour is less than satisfactory and this impacts negatively on the flow of the lesson and the progress that pupils make. On the other hand when pupils behave well it has a most positive impact on the quality of learning.
139. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of very good teaching for the oldest pupils in the school. Here the teacher manages the pupils well, directly teaches specific skills, uses exemplars of pupils' performance to enhance the learning of the whole class and ensures that sufficient time is given to practising and modifying pupils' work. Throughout the school teachers plan lessons well and over the course of the year teachers work hard to ensure that all elements of the curriculum are covered. This is a little difficult at times because the school does not have a grassed playing area, although older pupils are taken to a local high school where they have access to such facilities. Lessons always contain warm up and cool down activities and in most instances teachers' secure subject knowledge is used well to enthuse and motivate the pupils. Just occasionally, teaching is unsatisfactory. This is because the expectations of the teacher are not high enough and the management of the pupils is not good enough. This results in the lesson lacking any fluidity and pupils not making the progress of which they are capable. Such teaching is the exception rather than the norm.

140. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and provides much informal guidance to colleagues. Little opportunity has been provided for the co-ordinator to directly monitor teaching but plans are in hand for this to happen when the subject is an identified priority area. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities and the school takes part in a number of inter-school competitions for sports such as football, cross-country, cricket, athletics, netball and swimming. As well as providing opportunities for improving pupils sporting prowess, these activities add another dimension to pupils' personal and social development. A new system for assessing and recording pupils' attainment has been introduced recently but its recency means that it has not yet had sufficient time to have a great impact on standards and provision. Despite the lack of a grassed playing area resources overall are satisfactory.