

INSPECTION REPORT

STOKE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Coventry

LEA area: Coventry

Unique reference number: 103679

Headteacher: Mr R Bonnell

Reporting inspector: Mr Andy Bond
17263

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th June 2003

Inspection number: 246309

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior with a nursery class

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Briton Road
Coventry

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr T Hobday

Date of previous inspection: 26th January 1998

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14214	Jill Smith	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development. How well the school cares for its pupils. How the school works in partnership with parents.
12172	Wendy Knight	Team inspector	English Design and technology Special educational needs Educational inclusion	
22805	Jo Greer	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
16892	Julia Elsley	Team inspector	Art and design Music The Foundation Stage English as an additional language	
21816	Beryl Thomas	Team inspector	Geography History	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stoke Primary School is a much larger than average community school with a nursery unit. The school provides education for 413 pupils aged four to eleven years (213 boys, 200 girls) and for 60 children in the nursery class, on a part-time basis. The school roll number has remained at much the same level for the last five years, which is an indication of its popularity within the area.

In general, pupils are drawn from a well below average social and economic area and start in the nursery class with standards that are well below average, especially in language, literacy, mathematical and social skills. Just over 20 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is slightly above the national average. Fifteen per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. The majority of these pupils have speech/communication or behavioural difficulties. There are two pupils with a statement of special educational need (0.3 per cent); this is below the national average. Almost half of all pupils are of white ethnic heritage and over a quarter are of Indian background. The remaining pupils are from a range of different backgrounds including Asian, Black Caribbean and mixed heritage. Just over a third of all pupils do not have English as their mother tongue, which, in national terms, is a high proportion. Twenty of these pupils are at an early stage of English acquisition. The school has a number of pupils whose families are asylum seekers. The staff are well established but the deputy headteacher recently left and a temporary replacement is now in post.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Stoke Primary School provides pupils with a sound education. Pupils generally attain standards which are below average, but which are average when compared to similar schools. They make steady progress overall. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The headteacher provides the school with sound leadership and management. Overall, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- It provides a good start for children in the nursery and reception classes.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted well throughout the school.
- There are strong community links, especially with local schools and colleges.
- Learning opportunities are enriched by educational visits and after-school clubs.

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2.
- Standards of attainment in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology and religious education.
- The design and size of classrooms in the infants and juniors.
- The systems for monitoring and evaluating school performance.
- Assessment procedures.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998. Although the school has made steady progress in raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the issues for action from the last inspection have not been completed satisfactorily. Some progress has been made on improving the accommodation and by providing ICT equipment but assessment procedures and the monitoring and evaluation of school performance are still not good enough. Most areas of the school

provision have remained fairly similar to those reported at the last inspection, although the percentage of good or better teaching has fallen slightly. Standards in design and technology and religious education have declined.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	D	C
Mathematics	E	D	E	D
Science	C	D	C	B

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

The table above sets out the results in National Curriculum tests for 2002 taken by pupils at the end of Year 6. It shows that results were average for science, below average for English and well below average for mathematics. Compared to similar schools, the results in science were above average, average in English and below average in mathematics. The standards attained by pupils currently in Year 6 are slightly improved and judged to be average for science and just below average for English and mathematics. Standards are rising steadily year by year and more pupils are reaching higher levels because of the good teaching in Years 5 and 6, the school's strategies for boosting pupils' performance and the additional help given by teachers at the neighbouring secondary school.

In 2002, standards in National Curriculum tests and tasks for pupils in Year 2 were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. Compared to similar schools, reading and writing standards were average and standards in mathematics were below average. Teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment in science judged standards to be below average. The pupils currently in Year 2 are judged to be attaining well below average standards in reading, writing and mathematics and below average standards in science. The present Year 2 classes contain a higher percentage of lower attaining pupils than the previous year group, many of whom have special educational needs, and there are also a number of pupils with English as an additional language.

Children enter the nursery classes with standards that are generally well below average, especially in their literacy, mathematical and social development. However, they make good progress and by the time they start in Year 1, most children are reaching below average standards because the good teaching in the reception and nursery classes has enhanced their learning.

Standards at the end of Year 6 have shown steady improvement in national tests over the last five years, in line with the national picture. Overall, pupils make sound progress through the school. They enter with well below average standards in the nursery and finish in Year 6 with standards which are generally just below average. However, there are periods of more rapid progress when teaching and learning are more effective. At present, pupils' progress is slower in Years 1 and 2 because the quality of teaching and learning is not strong enough. Those pupils for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to their classmates because they are well supported by education and bilingual assistants. Similarly, pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported by teachers and education assistants and make similar progress to other pupils in their class. The school has identified a small number of gifted and talented pupils. They are given opportunities to reach their full potential and make appropriate progress.

There are differences in performance between boys and girls in national tests at the end of Year 2. Girls generally attain higher standards than boys in reading and writing but in recent years there has been a distinct improvement in boys' writing. In Year 6 national tests, boys' performance in

mathematics is much better than girls. Boys of Indian background tend to be higher attaining pupils in this subject.

Standards in National Curriculum subjects are average by the end of Years 2 and 6 in history, geography, music¹ and physical education. In art and design they are above average but in ICT they are well below average and in design and technology they are very low. In religious education standards are in line with the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 but below average by Year 6. The school has set realistic targets for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics in Year 6 tests for the year 2003. These targets appear to be achievable.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about school. They enjoy taking part in activities and have developed mature attitudes by Year 6.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Sound. Pupils behave sensibly in lessons, especially considering the distractions caused by the working noise from neighbouring classrooms. However, some boys engage in boisterous play at break times.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respect the views of others and form good relationships. They undertake responsibilities around the school.
Attendance	Poor. Well below the national average but average for Coventry schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is sound overall. Almost a half of all lessons were judged to be good or better and 15 per cent very good or better. However, six per cent of lessons observed were judged to be unsatisfactory and all of these were in Years 1 and 2. Teachers in these classes, although they plan properly and cover the basic subject matter, do not always have appropriate expectations of what pupils can achieve and the pace of many lessons is too slow. This results in pupils not making enough effort and not producing sufficient work by the end of the lesson. In good, very good and excellent lessons, teachers employ interesting methods and use time and learning resources well to stimulate pupils' interest. Education assistants also make valuable contributions to pupils' learning, especially for those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Overall, teachers manage pupils well and ensure that they concentrate on their work, despite the unsuitability of classrooms and the working noise which drifts from room to room. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught properly but pupils' ICT skills are still at a low level and are in need of further development. Overall, the quality of teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory. The school ensures that the needs of all pupils are met and is sensitive about including everyone, regardless of social, ethnic and cultural background.

¹ There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in music by the end of Year 2.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Sound overall. Learning opportunities are enriched by many visits and after-school clubs and the school forges very good links with neighbouring schools. The nursery provision is good. There are weaknesses in providing the full range of activities required in design and technology, ICT and religious education, and too much time is spent on English.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Sound. Teachers and education assistants properly support pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils receive good support from well-qualified staff.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils' personal development is fostered well throughout the school. A good climate has been developed to support spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Sound overall. The school effectively promotes mutual tolerance and understanding between pupils. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.

The information provided for parents is good, although pupils' annual reports are not detailed enough.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound overall. The headteacher provides sound leadership and management but subject managers need more opportunities to monitor their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Sound. The governors are committed to supporting the school and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, some statutory requirements are not met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The monitoring of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough. Senior staff are not involved sufficiently in the analysis of school performance.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial management is good and funds are used well to support school initiatives. The school knows how to get good value from its expenditure.

The school is appropriately staffed, although at present it is operating without a permanent deputy headteacher and with some part-time and relief teachers. Learning resources are sound overall and they are used appropriately to enhance pupils' learning. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. The poorly designed classrooms are having a detrimental impact on pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children enjoy coming to school.• The approachability of the staff and headteacher.• The school expects pupils to work hard and do their best.• The school is helping children to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The right balance of work to do at home.• The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. A small percentage of parents feel that there was either too much or too little homework. Inspectors judge the provision of homework to be satisfactory. Some parents believe that the school does not promote an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors disagree and they judge extra-curricular activities to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the nursery classes on a part-time basis with well below average standards, especially in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Children's spoken language skills are at a particularly low level. They receive a good start to their education because the provision in the nursery class is good, with consistently high quality teaching taking place by a committed group of adults. Assessment procedures are particularly effective and children's needs are identified early, especially those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The information gained from assessment is transferred to planning so that tasks are well tailored to children's needs.

2. Good progress is maintained in the reception classes where children are educated on a full-time basis. Teaching and learning are largely good and children make good progress because activities are stimulating. Children grow in confidence in a secure, supportive learning environment. By the time children are ready to transfer to Year 1 they have made good progress but are still below average in most areas of learning except for physical development and some aspects of creative development. In these areas of learning their attainment is average.

3. The results of national tests and tasks in 2002 for pupils in Year 2 show that standards were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. Teachers' assessment of attainment in science revealed below average standards in science. Although the vast majority of pupils (86 per cent in reading and 76 per cent in writing) reached the broadly average level 2 or above, only a small percentage of pupils reached the above average level 3. In mathematics and science a similar picture exists, with 88 per cent reaching level 2 or above in mathematics but only 19 per cent at the higher level. In science, 72 per cent reached the average level 2 but only 22 per cent the higher level 3 grade. Compared with similar schools, reading and writing were average and mathematics below average. Over the last five years standards have been variable with no clear pattern emerging. In 1999 and 2001 they were generally above average, but well below in 2000.

4. Inspection evidence for the present Year 2 pupils, derived from observation of lessons, scrutiny of work and teachers' assessment, shows a decline in standards in reading and writing to well below average. Mathematics remains well below average and science below average. This particular group of pupils has a high percentage of lower attaining pupils, some with special educational needs and others with English as an additional language. Many pupils have underdeveloped speaking and listening skills and struggle to give well-reasoned answers to questions. Although the basic skills of reading and writing are taught soundly many pupils of average and below average ability find it difficult to build words from sounds and write for a sustained period using full stops and capital letters accurately. Most pupils have a sound grasp of shape and space in mathematics but their recall of number facts in mental arithmetic activities is slow and they tend to rely on number aids. The quality of teaching and learning is weaker in Years 1 and 2 and pupils' progress is slower than in other parts of the school and this is contributing to lower than expected standards. Teachers' expectations are generally too low and, even though classes are set into ability groups for literacy and numeracy lessons, the match of work is often inappropriate. Assessment procedures, particularly marking of pupils' work, are not effective enough to guide future planning. The pace of lessons is too slow, which means pupils do

not always produce sufficient work in the time available. There have been difficulties for the school with teaching personnel and the management of this phase, which now appear to have been addressed, but they have had a negative impact on standards. The design of classrooms also makes it difficult for teachers to undertake practical activities without disturbing neighbouring classes.

5. The results of national tests in 2002 showed that pupils at the end of Year 6 were attaining below average standards in English, well below average standards in mathematics and average standards in science. Compared with schools in a similar context, results were average for English, below average for mathematics and above average for science. Results have been improving at the same rate as the national average, and even slightly faster in English since the time of the last inspection in 1998. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well established in the school and provide a sound curriculum platform. The quality of teaching is good in Years 5 and 6 and this has a positive impact on pupils' progress rates and attainment levels. The booster classes in school and at the local secondary school also help pupils to gain that extra impetus to reach a slightly higher National Curriculum level. In science, the focus has been on increasing pupils' knowledge to equip them for the national tests and this has benefited pupils because 88 per cent reached the average level 4 or above. However, the investigation elements of science, involving practical activities, are not given the same exposure in school and as a result pupils are weaker in this area.

6. The pupils currently in Year 6 are judged to be attaining just below average standards in English and mathematics and average standards in science. There is a slight improvement in mathematics. Writing is still a weakness and this has rightly been identified by the school as an area for improvement. Many pupils lack the exciting vocabulary that is needed to illuminate their work and the quality of handwriting is also below average. In mathematics, pupils in Year 6 have developed sound skills in number activities but find it more difficult to solve problems. They find it difficult to derive information from graphs and tables.

7. There are differences in performance between boys and girls and between different ethnic groups. Girls tend to do better than boys in reading and writing, as reflected nationally. There have been improvements in the standard of boys' writing in recent years, especially by the end of Year 2. In mathematics, boys do better than girls throughout the school. Boys of Indian descent represent a greater proportion of higher attaining pupils in the upper mathematics sets, whilst girls of white ethnic background represent a greater proportion of lower attaining pupils. Girls tend to be more passive in lessons, though teachers work hard to retain their interest and involve them in lessons.

8. The school sets appropriate targets for national test results in English and mathematics based on their own assessments of pupils' performance. They are generally realistic, although improved assessment procedures would provide the school with more accurate predictions.

9. Pupils' progress throughout the school closely correlates to the quality of teaching. They make good progress in nursery and reception classes, making a good start to school. However, the momentum slows in Years 1 and 2 because teaching is weaker and progress slows right down. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' progress begins to recover because teaching is at least sound, then progress is accelerated generally in Years 5 and 6 where teaching is stronger and booster classes are used effectively to improve standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Progress is judged to be sound overall but the school does add value to pupils' attainment, as even though few pupils reach higher levels in English and mathematics, most are achieving appropriate levels for schools of similar

contexts. The vast majority of pupils have mature attitudes and have generally gained appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding to equip them for secondary school.

10. Although co-ordinators are committed to leading their subject areas and generally have appropriate expertise they do not have sufficient opportunity to monitor their subject and analyse the performance of pupils. Furnished with the appropriate information they could make a greater impact on raising standards by fashioning realistic action plans to address identified weaknesses.

11. Pupils with special educational needs make regular progress across the school like their peers, although less satisfactory progress currently in the infants. Where they receive appropriate additional support they improve their skills and knowledge, although not always their understanding. Adults support them well within lessons, but where work is not well matched to their prior attainment, such as when texts are too difficult, their progress is hindered.

12. In lessons, the pupils with English as an additional language are well supported by the teaching assistants and bilingual staff to ensure that they make similar progress to their classmates. The children make small steps which are clear, attainable and measurable in the nursery and the reception classes. However, as pupils move through the school a greater focus on spoken English skills would enhance and ensure more accuracy in the correct use of grammar. By the time they leave the school a substantial number of pupils with English as an additional language are out-performing some of their peers, particularly boys in mathematics.

13. The school has identified a small number of pupils as gifted and talented. Teachers make adequate provision for these pupils by providing individual tasks and setting more challenging work, as in the case of a boy in Year 4, or through extra-curricular provision. In this way pupils have the opportunity to fulfil their true potential.

14. Pupils make good progress in art and design and standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6 because there is a good curriculum scheme in place and the subject is taught regularly and enthusiastically by teachers. The subject is enjoyed by pupils and has a high profile in school display. In music, physical education, history and geography, standards are average and pupils make sound progress throughout the school. In ICT standards are well below average, and in design and technology standards are very low at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils throughout the school are making insufficient progress. Pupils are given more opportunities to use computer equipment than previously but the full curriculum range is not yet available and pupils' skills are at a low level. There are few opportunities to experience ICT in other subject areas. The employment of an education assistant specially to teach ICT is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. In design and technology the school does not have a suitable scheme in place which meets statutory requirements and there appears to be a real lack of understanding of the processes involved by the staff. As a result much of the work produced in design and technology is really art and design. The subject has a low profile in the school and standards have declined since the last inspection.

15. In religious education, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and pupils make sound progress, but they are below expectations at the end of Year 6 and insufficient progress is made. There is inadequate coverage of the Coventry Agreed Syllabus, especially Christianity in the upper junior years.

16. The school has concentrated on raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and this has been generally achieved successfully by the end of

Year 6, but standards in other subjects, notably religious education and design and technology, have declined because they have not received sufficient attention since the last inspection.

Areas for development

- Develop a consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work which indicates to pupils what they need to do next to improve.
- Ensure that the co-ordinators monitor teaching and learning in their subjects and analyse data in order to plan precisely how improvements in standards can be made.
- Ensure that all the elements of ICT are taught, as prescribed in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.
- Develop pupils' ICT skills across all subjects so that pupils use it as a tool to enhance their learning.
- Improve standards in design and technology and religious education.
- Ensure that planned work for pupils with special educational needs is based on identified individual education plan targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. The previous inspection found that pupils' attitudes to school were usually positive and that their behaviour was satisfactory; this continues to be the case. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they look forward to taking part in the various activities provided. Their attitude towards school is positive and their enthusiasm is particularly evident in the nursery and reception classes and in Years 3 to 6. Pupils cope well with the shortcomings of the accommodation and they try very hard to overcome the working noise and frequent distractions emanating from the adjacent class. A small number of boys find it difficult to keep their hands and feet to themselves and, during breaks they play aggressive games such as play-fighting, kicking out at each other and throwing half-hearted punches. Although most of the pupils appear accustomed to this, their boisterous behaviour occasionally results in injury. Pupils take this in their stride and carry on playing. Relationships between pupils and with their teachers are good. Pupils of all ages and ethnic heritage mix freely; they are confident and out-going. The result is a friendly and very harmonious community. There have been no exclusions during the current, or preceding, school years. Attendance has deteriorated since the previous inspection and has been well below the national average for the last two years. However, compared to local Coventry primary schools it is average. Punctuality has improved and pupils usually arrive in good time for the start of the school day.

18. Children entering the nursery class clearly enjoy the time they spend at school. Through initiatives such as the 'Stay and Play', parents are encouraged to spend time with their children in the classroom setting. They have a lot of fun together and this reassurance helps these young children to settle down and relax. Their enthusiasm helps to create a lively and vibrant atmosphere and they make good progress in their learning. Older pupils, especially those in Years 3 to 6, are also positive about school and they speak highly of their teachers. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed mature attitudes and most have well-balanced views.

19. Because pupils with special educational needs are actively included in all activities and staff value their contributions, they are usually confident to take part. As the result of attention to their particular strengths and difficulties, most pupils have reasonable self-esteem despite their problems. The pupils with English as an additional language show positive attitudes to learning because of the good support they receive from the staff. They listen well and respond to questions, and this raises their self-esteem and confidence in front of their peers. They take pride in their achievements.

20. Most of the teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and, as a result, they usually behave sensibly and responsibly during lessons. They are attentive and listen well to the teacher. Behaviour at playtimes is generally satisfactory except for the boisterous behaviour of some boys. Pupils who want to play more quietly retreat to the edges of the playground. Pupils say that although bullying does occasionally occur, once they inform a member of staff, the situation is usually quickly and effectively resolved.

21. Although the school does not specifically plan the way in which it promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development during lessons, these strands form an integral part of school life. Pupils respond well to this provision and, as a result, pupils' personal development is good. Over time, pupils form their own set of values, principles and beliefs. As they get older, pupils are increasingly able to distinguish right from wrong and, although a few cannot control their behaviour, the majority are able to make reasoned and responsible moral decisions. Pupils work constructively in groups and amicably share opinions and learning resources. Pupils learn about cultures other than their own and are open to new ideas.

22. Pupils undertake a wide range of responsibilities and they relish being able to help. For example, some pupils in Year 6 have trained as peer mediators and they provide help and support to those who feel lonely or unhappy. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 can also undertake residential visits to, for example, outdoor residential activity centres. They are able to experience activities such as canoeing and kayaking and visit a disused slate mine. These experiences, complemented by a wide range of shorter visits, help pupils to grow in confidence and to become more aware of the many opportunities available within the wider world.

23. Attendance is well below the national average. However, when compared to Coventry primary schools, it is average. The school is very aware of low attendance levels and regularly reminds parents of the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality. When pupils are absent, it is usually because they have been ill or have been taken on a holiday in term time. The latter causes one in seven of all absences and these pupils therefore miss out on the work that is undertaken by the rest of the class and this slows their progress in learning.

Areas for development

- Modify the behaviour of a small minority of boys.
- Improve attendance levels.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

24. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is judged to be sound with almost a half of all lessons being good or better but six per cent recorded as unsatisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, that is the nursery and reception classes, teaching is good, with over two thirds of the lessons observed being good. There was some excellent teaching observed in the nursery. In the infants, although the majority of lessons were satisfactory, teaching overall was judged to be unsatisfactory because in almost a quarter of the lessons observed pupils did not make sufficient progress in their learning. In these lessons the pace was generally too slow and the match of work was not always appropriate for pupils' levels of ability. This resulted in too little being achieved in the time available and in pupils not being sufficiently committed to the tasks set. In the juniors, teaching is sound overall but in Years 5 and 6 it is good and this increases the rate of pupils' learning. Teachers ensure that all pupils are included properly in lessons; even when pupils are withdrawn for extra tuition their curriculum entitlement is not adversely affected. The quality

of teaching has remained fairly similar to that reported at the last inspection, although the percentage of good or better teaching has fallen slightly.

25. There are factors which are severely hampering the quality of teaching and learning in the school. The design of most classrooms is poor and there is too little space, especially for older pupils. The 'open plan' arrangements in each year group means that the working noise from lessons spills over into the neighbouring room. Teachers manage the situation well by planning and timing lessons together so that disruption from the noise of practical activities or movement in the room is minimised. In Year 1, for instance, both classes changed for physical education at the same time, even though one class was not due to begin their lesson immediately. When it became time for their lesson later in the afternoon, they did not interrupt the neighbouring class by collecting equipment or by making undue noise. A good example of class management was also observed in Year 4, when the teacher asked pupils to speak in a 'stage whisper' when replying to questions in a mathematics lesson in order to avoid disturbing an adjacent class. Nevertheless, it limits the scope of teachers to undertake more exciting and stimulating activities in their rooms through lack of space or fear of disturbing the pupils in the neighbouring class.

26. In Years 1 and 2, where the teaching is weaker, there have been problems with personnel and the transition between reception and Year 1 classes has not been smoothly accomplished, so much so that it is a priority of the School Development Plan. Changes in approach and management in the infants have slowed down pupils' progress and the legacy is now being felt in test results at the end of Year 2. However, these difficulties appear to have been resolved and two new staff are to be appointed soon, one of whom will be a permanent co-ordinator.

27. Teaching and learning in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are sound overall with some examples of good and very good teaching in Years 3 to 6, but in Years 1 and 2 it is unsatisfactory, based on the sample of lessons observed during the inspection and on the scrutiny of pupils' work. In history teaching is good. In art and design teaching is generally effective, and in music in the juniors it is sound. In other subjects there is insufficient evidence available to form a valid judgement. The previous inspection report classified teaching as good overall but the percentage of good or better teaching was 16 per cent better than at present. The quality of teaching has therefore declined slightly.

28. Teachers in the nursery and reception classes show a very good, caring and sensitive approach and provide good quality teaching. They have well-established routines that provide children with a good learning structure. There is some imaginative teaching that stimulates children's interest and makes them eager to learn; counting and eating popcorn to demonstrate subtraction is a good example of this approach in the reception class. Teachers provide children with good opportunities to foster their physical development in the outdoor learning environment. The adults in nursery and reception work well as a team and assess children's progress very well. This forms a good foundation for the next stage of planning.

29. In general, teachers have a sound grasp of the subjects that they teach, with the exception of design and technology, and pupils are equipped with the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding of the various subjects as they progress through the school. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is also sound and the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are properly embedded into the school curriculum. However, there is room for improvement in teaching the skills of ICT across the whole curriculum range.

30. Most pupils are committed to their work and try hard, though this is less pronounced in infant classes. Teachers plan their work properly and liaise well with their colleagues in the same year group. In English and mathematics, pupils are grouped by ability in each year, thus enabling work to be more closely matched to attainment levels. However, more could be done to match tasks more tightly, especially when non-core subjects² are being taught, in order to enable better progress to be made. Some teachers are too reliant on worksheets which provide one task for the whole class regardless of ability levels.

31. In the juniors, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are suitably high but in infant classes teachers do not provide sufficient challenge and not enough is accomplished by pupils in too many lessons; for instance, some Year 1 pupils were given colouring-in tasks to illustrate alternate patterns. The time could have been spent more productively in genuine mathematical tasks. On other occasions the tasks set are too difficult and pupils' interest wanes because they are beyond their capabilities.

32. Most teachers have good classroom management skills and form good relationships with the pupils in the class. This is particularly the case in Years 5 and 6 where praise is given for good behaviour and response to teachers' questions. In a Year 5 class, for instance, the teacher insisted that pupils sat up straight to read aloud and raised their hands to indicate that they were ready to answer questions. During the part of the lesson when pupils were completing tasks she moved around the room, prompting pupils and ensuring that they remained focused on their work. In Years 1 and 2, pupils tend to be slower to settle to their work and daily management routines are not so well enforced. This has the effect of slowing lessons whilst minor problems are dealt with by the teacher, particularly at the start of lessons.

33. Education support staff are used effectively in lessons and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, especially for those pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. They usually sit with pupils during the introductory session and quietly encourage them to make a contribution. When pupils move on to tasks it is often the practice for the education assistant to work with a small group in the shared area, giving them individual attention before returning for a joint plenary³ session at the end. Teachers usually provide education assistants with a brief oral outline of their role in the lesson. On some occasions there is also feedback on how well their particular group has progressed.

34. The overall quality of teaching of the pupils with English as an additional language is good. For example, in the nursery and reception classes each step is carefully managed to show that the children's contribution is valued and can improve. The staff ask questions, explain carefully using English spoken slowly and clearly, as well as the mother tongue language to reinforce the lesson objective and the use of subject-specific language. Another very good example observed was the use of Punjabi and English in storytelling. This helped to stimulate the children's interest in books and supported both their listening skills and their understanding of the story line.

35. Teachers are aware of the differing needs of pupils of pupils with special educational needs in their classes. They value their contributions and usually provide appropriate and timely support. However, precise planning based on their identified needs (individual education plan targets) is not so good and pupils sometimes struggle with tasks even though the main objective for the lesson is achievable. When the same work is set for all the

² Non-core subjects – art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education, and religious education.

³ Plenary – the concluding part of a lesson when teachers usually consolidate the learning objective.

class, pupils with special educational needs are sometimes unable to complete it satisfactorily in the time available.

36. Although teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously to check their progress it does not have a worthwhile impact on pupils' understanding of what they need to do next to improve their work. Teachers make occasional comments praising the quality of work or correcting spellings but marking is not diagnostic enough and does not convey to pupils clearly how they can improve. Homework is set to a regular pattern throughout the school and deadlines are set for completion. It makes a useful contribution to pupils' learning and consolidates the work completed in school.

Areas for development

Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 by ensuring that:

- Teachers match their work more appropriately in lessons to pupils' level of ability;
- Raise teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving;
- Increase the pace of lessons so that pupils make more effort and produce a greater volume of work in the time allotted;
- Throughout the school develop a consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work which indicates to pupils what they need to do next to improve.

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

37. The curriculum has many strengths but also some weaknesses. Curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and they make good progress. Support for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good so they make similar progress to their classmates. Appropriate provision is also made for pupils with special educational needs through withdrawal and by providing additional adult support. Overall curriculum provision is satisfactory. However, requirements for collective worship are not being fully met because an act of worship is not timetabled on Wednesday and is left to teachers' discretion. The curriculum is sufficiently broad to include all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. There are weaknesses within some of these subjects, notably investigative skills in science, ICT and religious education, and in design and technology, which does not meet statutory requirements. However, there are strengths in geography, history, physical education and art and design, where the learning opportunities are rich, broad and stimulating. Healthy living, a drugs awareness programme, and sex and relationships education are included in the curriculum.

38. The curriculum is not properly balanced because more time is allocated to literacy and other aspects of English than in most schools. This leaves less time for science and the non-core subjects. Individual subjects are planned separately with insufficient recognition of opportunities for links between them. ICT is at a very early stage of development so that pupils are unable to use it well enough as a tool for learning. The school follows the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, ensuring that the basic skills are taught soundly throughout the school.

39. The curriculum for the youngest children is carefully planned in the nursery to ensure thorough coverage of all the areas of learning within the Foundation Curriculum, in both the indoor and outdoor learning environment. This provision has improved since the last inspection. The children's learning is heightened within each area of learning by the very good use of structured play activities. However, the reception classes would benefit from reviewing their planned use of time by following the very good model used in the nursery setting.

40. A very wide range of activities, more than in most schools, enriches the curriculum during the school day and outside it. There are many club activities including a lunchtime computer club, and opportunities for different sports, the performing arts and art activities; cycle proficiency is also taught. There are a variety of classes to help borderline pupils achieve higher levels in English and mathematics, both during the week and through special holiday classes. All pupils make visits to places of interest to support their studies; a few examples are to Kenilworth, the local museum, the zoo and Coventry Cathedral. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in residential visits to outdoor pursuits centres. Year 4 pupils exchange letters with a rural school; they visit one another to compare their very different localities. The school makes very good use of local industry partnership projects, such as with Massey-Ferguson, Jaguar and Marconi; this helps pupils see the relevance of their learning. Pupils also take part in local schools' music events.

41. The school provides equal opportunities for all its pupils, and is careful to ensure pupils do not miss the same parts of the curriculum if they take specialist lessons for music or for their special educational needs. All pupils are valued for themselves, and every effort is made to ensure they can take part in whatever is offered. When pupils are reluctant to participate, adults are often thoughtful about finding ways to persuade them to join in so that they do not regret later that they did not do so. The different ethnic backgrounds and languages of the pupils are valued, with, for example, important notices displayed in Punjabi and the opportunity for junior pupils to learn the language. Appropriate provision is made for pupils with special educational needs through withdrawal and by providing additional adult support. Gifted and talented pupils also receive appropriate learning opportunities. All pupils with English as an additional language have full entitlement to the curriculum. They are well supported by education assistants and bilingual staff. However, as pupils move through the school a greater focus on spoken English skills would enhance and ensure more accuracy in the correct use of grammar.

42. There are very strong links with the local secondary school. Year 6 pupils visit regularly during their final primary year. They are taught by their own and the secondary teachers. Almost all pupils participate in a programme of holiday classes at the secondary school taught by teachers from both schools. Thus transition between schools is very easy and pupils settle quickly into Year 7.

Areas for development

- Ensure the school fully meets statutory requirements, especially for daily collective worship.
- Ensure that all aspects of each subject are being taught and meet statutory requirements.
- Reconsider how the school day is divided and how much time is allocated to different subjects.
- Recognise opportunities for links between subjects, especially for using ICT, and include these in each subject's scheme of work.

Provision for pupils' personal development

43. The provision for pupils' personal development is good, as it was at the last inspection. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually. The school has developed a climate, through its clear set of values, principles and beliefs, within which all the pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected. The planned acts of worship give opportunities for pupils to explore their own and others' values and beliefs and the way that they impact on people's lives. Time is given for pupils to reflect, for instance, to think about what makes them special and how to respond to the challenges they face.

Pupils feel special in school when their achievements are celebrated and they clap spontaneously to congratulate each other and their teachers. For the pupils who abseiled, canoed, kayaked, or went down a mine for the first time this personal moment of achievement was awesome. However, during the week of the inspection the year group assemblies in the classroom scheduled for Wednesday did not take place.

44. The visits the pupils make to the Cathedral and museum give great pleasure as pupils begin to appreciate the achievements of, and gain an insight into, the lives of the people in the past in Coventry. The Cathedral is seen as a special place where “the angel and the devil were made out of brilliant stones”. The baptistery window “was so beautiful”, “it was amazing” whilst the Chapel of Unity and the Chapel of Gethsemane were seen as “calm and peaceful”. Opportunities are given for pupils to consider how they would feel if they had been living in Coventry at the time of the Blitz and recognise that Henry VIII’s beliefs and his divorce led to a major event and change to the beliefs of Christians in England.

45. The school makes good provision for pupils’ moral development. From nursery, the pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong and to understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Much of this occurs through the daily work of the school. There are times, however, when some pupils forget to be on their best behaviour during the lunch break. Certainly the pupils know how to behave when taken out of school on the numerous visits, particularly if working as a team member in one of the activities at Dol-y-Moch, an outdoor pursuits centre in North Wales. In lessons pupils are sometimes asked to discuss moral issues, such as in geography in their study of the rainforests or in literacy if the chosen text is suitable. Visiting theatre groups encourage pupils to think about the world in which they live and address issues like bullying.

46. Provision for pupils’ social development is good. The extensive range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities helps pupils develop skills in co-operating, communicating, negotiating, persuading others and recognising each other’s skills. Several pupils said in discussion with an inspector that what they enjoyed most about school were the days out and the residential experiences. Relationships are good in the school. Pupils have some opportunities to take responsibility for class or whole-school routines and influence the work of the school through the school council or with the help of visitors. For instance, an artist in residence helped pupils to work out safer routes to school, and gave advice to Year 5 pupils on designing a bike shed. The school supports a number of charities locally and nationally including NSPCC, Red Nose Day, Water Aid, Remembrance Day and the British Heart Foundation.

47. Provision for the pupils’ cultural development is good. The school fully accepts its responsibility in promoting racial equality by successfully increasing elements of cultural diversity in its curriculum. Pupils learn about their own and other cultural traditions. However, the study of their own and other cultural beliefs is not as well developed. Lessons in literacy, geography, history, music and art and design have exposed pupils to a range of cultural and multi-cultural experiences. Displays around the school, particularly those connected to Coventry Cathedral and referring to local studies, make pupils aware of their local cultural heritage. Visiting speakers, artists, musicians and dancers enhance this programme well. Work on display shows: a Guatemala Rainbow; weaving in the style and colours of the Guatemala people; Mexican and South American *Gods Eyes*; and, weaving round two sticks in the form of a cross – given on birthdays, the number of colours used representing the age of the person. There are examples of Anglo-Saxon jewellery, and work of different artists from around the world who have inspired the work of British painters.

Area for development

- Continue to promote good behaviour at lunchtime.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. The previous inspection found that members of staff gave a high priority to pupils' welfare and that they provided a good standard of care during the school day. The standard of care now provided is satisfactory. While pupils say that they feel well looked after, inspectors brought a small number of health and safety concerns to the attention of the headteacher. For example, an impromptu fire drill took place during the inspection and the time taken to evacuate the building was too long. In order to support pupils who are experiencing particular difficulty, the school has appointed a home/school mentor. She works very closely with parents and individual pupils in order to resolve any issues that may be preventing them from attending school or learning effectively. Child protection procedures are satisfactory and members of staff are aware of their responsibilities. However, some staff have not received recent training. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and attendance are satisfactory.

49. Children joining the nursery and reception classes receive a warm welcome and they are gradually and sensitively introduced to school routines. These children settle in quickly and they are well looked after during the school day. This helps them to get off to a good start from the moment they arrive.

50. Pupils with special educational needs are well cared for and the premises allow access for pupils with physical disabilities. External agencies are used whenever appropriate and support is arranged, sometimes on a short-term programme, to improve progress. Personal guidance is available through class teachers and learning support assistants so that pupils feeling stressed or upset are confident they will be dealt with appropriately and sensitively. Pupils with emotional or behavioural problems are given appropriate support to enable them to improve.

51. The pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress because the school places a good emphasis on settling in the children to the school routines when they first arrive at the school. Careful attention is given to raising self-esteem and increasing belief in themselves as successful English speakers.

52. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are satisfactory although the school could do more to provide incentives for good behaviour. The school has a clear code of conduct and teachers are encouraged to resolve conflict peacefully. Pupils like this 'no blame' approach and think the system is effective and very fair. Pupils say that those who misbehave are managed firmly but fairly and that the procedures for eliminating bullying and other oppressive behaviour are usually effective. Some teachers and mid-day supervisors, however, are too tolerant with pupils who are rough or inconsiderate during playtime and the playground can be an unpleasant place for timid pupils. Although some pupils make the occasional racist comment, these incidents are very rare and are dealt with in a constructive manner that ensures that they do not usually recur. The school has a policy for racial equality and this is implemented effectively to prevent racist behaviour. Overall, the level of racial harmony in school is very good. This is a testament to the successful way in which the school promotes mutual tolerance and understanding between pupils who represent a wide range of cultures and religious beliefs. Appropriate steps are also taken by teachers to ensure that pupils are protected from offensive material on the Internet.

53. The school is keen to recognise and celebrate pupils' academic success and teachers are quick to praise pupils' efforts and achievements. Although procedures for the monitoring of pupils' personal development are largely informal, they are satisfactory. Relationships between pupils and members of staff are good and teachers are sensitive to

pupils' 'ups and downs'. This helps to ensure that any emerging personal or academic problems are identified and addressed at an early stage. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers compile a profile for each child and this forms a cumulative record of his or her personal development. Elsewhere in the school, pupils have his or her own record of achievement and these include the day-to-day records of each individual's attendance, behaviour, personal and academic targets. Over time, these effectively form a cumulative record of each pupil's personal development.

54. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. The school regularly emphasises the importance of prompt and regular attendance and the mentor follows up each unexplained absence in Year 6 with a phone call on the first day. The school discourages parents from booking holidays during the term, although these continue to account for around one absence in every seven.

Areas for development

- Make fire drill procedures more efficient.
- Develop procedures for encouraging boisterous pupils to behave with more self-control at playtime.
- Improve procedures for promoting good attendance.

Assessment

55. Arrangements for assessment are unsatisfactory, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Some potentially sound procedures and practices have been introduced, but they have not been fully implemented throughout the school, even in the core subjects, and there is a long way to go in establishing fully secure arrangements in other subject areas. The Foundation Stage is an exception. In the nursery and reception classes the children's development is carefully assessed and the resulting information contributes to teachers' planning.

56. In English, a sample of each pupil's writing is now assessed and allocated a National Curriculum level at the end of each term. Although this is a positive step, staff are not yet working together closely enough to secure a common understanding of achievement at each level. The assessment of reading skills is unsatisfactory in some classes, as is shown when the pupils are given reading books that are too easy or too difficult for them. In mathematics, a potentially effective system of assessing key elements of learning has been introduced in Years 2 and 6, but this is not yet implemented right through the school. The position is similar in science, geography and history, where assessment at the end of topics has been introduced in some classes. In other subjects, for example religious education, there is no formal assessment at all.

57. Some progress has been made in analysing the results of end-of-year tests in the junior classes, and software for tracking progress and identifying under-achieving pupils has been introduced recently. This is at an early stage of development. Overall, implementation of the school's developing procedures for assessment is patchy and there are few clear links with planning. The school has only just made a start on target setting, with the introduction of individual targets for writing in some classes.

58. Pupils' special educational needs are rightly identified through the usual assessment procedures, or when teachers have concerns. Suitable individual education plans are written, and additional support is planned in accordance with the targets set out.

59. The assessments for pupils with English as an additional language are regularly reviewed on a six-monthly basis and their work is monitored. However, it would benefit the pupils more if teachers' planning provided bilingual assistants with clearer guidance.

Specific targets set for improvement in their oracy and subject-specific language skills would also be helpful.

Areas for development

- Ensure that assessment procedures, especially in English, mathematics and science, are implemented consistently throughout the school and contribute to target-setting for individuals and groups of pupils.
- Develop a secure shared understanding of the criteria for achievement at each National Curriculum level.
- Set specific targets for pupils with English as an additional language for improvement in their language skills.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

60. The previous inspection found that parents' views of the school were positive and that the partnership between home and school was effective. This positive picture has been maintained over the intervening five years. Although only around one fifth of the pre-inspection questionnaires were returned, parents indicate that they are pleased with many areas of the school's work. Their positive views are reflected by the comments made at the pre-inspection meeting. Parents say that their children enjoy coming to school and they find the staff and headteacher approachable. They believe that the school expects pupils to work hard and do their best. Overall, parents say that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Inspectors agree with the various areas of strength identified. Around one in five of those who expressed an opinion, however, were concerned with two areas; the amount of homework set and the range of extra-curricular activities. Inspectors disagree. Arrangements for homework are fairly typical and the range of extra-curricular activities is much better than is normally found in primary schools.

61. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning at home and at school. They enjoy coming along to assemblies and concerts and almost everyone attends their child's consultation evening. In addition, parents ensure that their children take part in the booster classes that are held before the national tests in Year 6. Few, however, are willing to become directly involved with their child's work and many are reluctant to, for example, hear them read at home. In order to encourage parents to become more involved, a home/school learning mentor has been appointed. She runs several initiatives that are geared towards providing parents with informal opportunities to come into school. One example is the weekly positive parenting group. Parents can meet each other and air any particular concerns, such as managing their child's behaviour at home or aspects of personal safety. In addition, the nursery runs a 'Stay and Play' hour. Parents appreciate being able to spend time with their children in the school setting and the opportunity also enables parents and staff to get to know each other. A weekly toddler group also gives parents of pre-school children the opportunity to get to know each other and to learn about what their children will be doing once they start school.

62. The co-ordinator for English as an additional language ensures that parents are fully involved in their children's learning. Bilingual assistants play a very important role in supporting parents, pupils and staff where translations are needed. Parents are appropriately involved in deciding programmes for their children if they have special educational needs. They attend parents' evenings for an update on progress, and also formal reviews. There is also a statement on each individual education plan to give parents a clear agenda for helping pupils at home.

63. Newsletters and class bulletins keep parents well informed about day-to-day school life and the work that their child is undertaking. Pupils' annual reports, however, do not

provide a sufficiently clear picture as to whether or not their child is making the expected progress and comments are often limited to their child's attitude towards the subject. In addition, there is an omission from the governors' annual report to parents.

64. Although parents are discouraged from taking holiday in term time, a significant number of parents continue to do so. These absences interrupt their children's education and limit the progress they make. This could place them at a disadvantage in the future.

Areas for development

- Improve the quality of pupils' annual reports.
- Address the omissions from the governors' annual report to parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

65. The headteacher provides the school with sound leadership and management. He has the confidence and respect of the school community and, with the support of the staff, he has ensured that standards have continued to rise over the last five years in the core subjects. He has maintained staff morale, with the valuable support of the acting deputy headteacher, even though there have been difficulties with staffing and ongoing problems with the accommodation. There are sound strategic management systems in place, and financial and other resources are well directed towards school improvement. Community links have been strengthened since the last inspection. However, there are weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching and learning, and in evaluation of school performance. Insufficient progress has been made in these key areas since the last inspection.

66. The school has clear aims and values which are well reflected in the life of the school. It sets a high priority on educating pupils so that they can be integrated into society and provides an exciting learning environment through a well-developed range of enrichment activities, both during and after school hours. The school endeavours to 'develop enquiring minds'. Pupils in Year 6 certainly feel that they have had opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities that has stimulated their interest and are positive about the education they have received at the school. Equality of opportunity is a strong feature of school life and there are good systems for tackling sexist and racial behaviour. Pupils are treated fairly and given the chance to participate fully in all activities.

67. In the main, subject co-ordinators have the expertise to lead their subjects effectively but there have been changes to the leadership of some subject areas and there has been insufficient time for co-ordinators to develop their new role properly. The headteacher is also leading, on a temporary basis, two subjects because of staff changes. However, there are weaknesses in the co-ordination of subjects because leaders have too few opportunities to monitor their subjects thoroughly. Some monitoring of teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' work is undertaken by subject co-ordinators, especially in English, mathematics and science, but monitoring of teaching and learning through direct observation in the classroom is not an embedded practice of the school. Action plans are produced on an annual basis by co-ordinators which are integrated into the School Development Plan. Although this is a sound document with relevant priorities for overall school improvement, the action plans lack real insight because they are not based on first-hand evidence of classroom practice.

68. Although the school receives a good quality of useful statistical information on test results and national and local comparison from the local education authority, this information is not shared effectively enough with subject co-ordinators in order to set new priorities. Careful analysis of this information would be helpful in pinpointing key areas for future school improvement and allow co-ordinators to channel their energy more precisely.

69. The organisation and administration of the special educational needs Code of Practice are sound, and teachers are given appropriate guidance in setting targets for pupils. Staff have been given training in understanding how special educational needs are to be addressed, and, where appropriate, specific training on particular conditions or difficulties. The governing body makes good financial provision for the pupils with English as an additional language and it is used to good effect. There is a high level of commitment by support staff and the co-ordinator to ensure that all pupils are well cared for and supported in their learning when first starting school. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has produced a draft policy and action plan for governors to approve. It clearly outlines appropriate developments in order for the school to improve on its existing practice, the most significant one being to provide in-service training for class teachers on English as an additional language.

70. Governors are fully committed to supporting the work of the school. They have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and describe, in broad terms, what needs to be achieved in the future. They are concerned about the unsuitability of the accommodation in the teaching areas and know that although ICT provision has improved, the school has some way to go before standards are at nationally expected levels. They gain information about the school often through informal visits, with one committed governor joining Year 6 pupils on the residential visit to Dol-y-Moch. But there are few formal structures for first-hand evaluation other than the usual committee structures and the occasional presentation to the governors by a teacher. The governors are properly involved in development planning and provide appropriate examples of how they have influenced decisions on setting priorities for the school. However, the governors do not fulfil all statutory requirements. There is an omission from the governors' annual report to parents relating to school security and some curricular requirements are not fulfilled in ICT, design and technology and religious education.

71. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning take place periodically but there is no formal structure and this makes this area of management unsatisfactory. Local education authority advisers and literacy and numeracy consultants have visited the school and monitored the quality of teaching and learning, and give staff advice on how to improve their performance. The headteacher has also visited classrooms both formally and informally, gaining an insight into the quality of teachers' work in the classroom and providing staff with constructive feedback. The system is not rigorous enough to make a long-term positive impact on teachers' performance. However, systems for teachers' appraisal and performance management are properly in place and teachers are given objectives which are reviewed annually.

72. The school priorities of raising standards in writing and ICT and of developing the links between the reception classes and Year 1 are appropriate, although more attention could be given to improving standards in mathematics, given they are well below average national standards. There have been personnel problems in the infant department which have had a negative impact on standards and relationships. The headteacher, with the support of the local education authority adviser, has tactfully tried a number of strategies to overcome these difficulties. The situation now appears to be resolved and it is planned to appoint two new teachers, including a deputy headteacher, in the near future. There is a good working relationship between teachers in the same year group. They plan their work together for the whole year group and synchronise their teaching delivery to avoid undue noise from practical activities disturbing their colleagues' lessons. Overall, the school's shared commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed are satisfactory. The systems for inducting new staff, particularly newly qualified teachers, are good. The full entitlement for training, release time, monitoring and support is well provided, enabling new staff to be

fully integrated into the profession. Student teachers and relief staff are also given good support by colleagues, and clear guidance is provided through a school handbook.

73. Financial planning is good and the school knows how to get good value from its expenditure. School initiatives are well supported by finance and resources. The school day-to-day administrative and financial procedures are organised effectively. The most recent audit report is complimentary about the school's efficient financial procedures. The very small number of recommendations for improvement have been addressed. Grants for specific purposes, such as financial allocations for pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, are effectively used for raising pupils' standards. New technology is used by office staff and there are good systems for internal communication. However, pupils' use of new technology, although improving, is still at a low level.

74. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is sound overall and the quality of support staff is generally good. A number of education assistants have expertise in a range of different languages and this is used effectively to support pupils at an early stage of the acquisition of English. Overall, learning resources are satisfactory and are used appropriately to enhance pupils' learning. Although there are good outdoor facilities and specialist indoor rooms for music, library and community use, overall the accommodation is unsatisfactory and poorly designed for teaching and learning. Alterations have been made since the last inspection, which have helped to minimise the noise from pupils working in the shared areas. However, there is too little space in classes for pupils to move around the room and experience practical activities; this limits the opportunities in areas such as investigation in mathematics and science, and making in art and design and design and technology lessons. Teachers have to be acutely aware of noise levels in their classrooms so that it does not disrupt a neighbouring class. It is to the great credit of teachers that they manage this so well but they tend to avoid activities that might prove to be lively and involve movement and this restricts their teaching strategies and pupils' learning experiences. Representatives from the local education authority have signalled their intention to support the school in seeking ways to modify the internal design of the building, in order to create a better learning environment. Outdoor facilities have improved since the last inspection. The school is securely fenced, which has meant a decline in vandalism, and large play equipment has been installed on the school field.

75. The school is judged to give satisfactory value for money. Expenditure per pupil is above the national average. The quality of curriculum provision and teaching is sound. Social and economic factors and children's attainment on entry to school are well below average and pupils' progress is judged to be satisfactory overall.

Areas for development

- Establish a rigorous whole-school system of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and the evaluation of school performance. Use the information gained to raise standards.
- Continue to seek ways of improving the internal design of the building so that pupils' learning is not adversely affected by the lack of space and loss of concentration from the working noise made in adjacent classes.
- Give co-ordinators more opportunities to monitor their subject areas, especially teaching and learning.
- Ensure statutory requirements are met for the daily acts of collective worship, governors' annual report for parents and in some aspects of subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

76. To improve standards further the school should:

1. Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 by ensuring that:
 - teachers match their work more appropriately in lessons to pupils' level of ability;
 - teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are raised;
 - the pace of lessons is increased, so that pupils make more effort and produce a greater volume of work in the time allotted.(Paragraphs 4, 9, 24, 27, 31, 32, 109, 111, 117, 120, 124, 126)
2. Raise standards in English*, mathematics, science, ICT*, design and technology and religious education by:
 - developing a consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work, indicating to pupils what they need to do next to improve;
 - ensuring that the co-ordinators monitor teaching and learning in their subjects and analyse data in order to plan precisely how improvements in standards can be made;
 - ensuring that all the elements of science, ICT and design and technology are taught, as prescribed in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and, in the case of religious education, the locally agreed syllabus;
 - developing pupils' ICT skills across all subjects so that pupils use it as a tool to enhance their learning;
 - increasing teachers' knowledge and understanding and giving them the associated practical skills in design and technology; in addition, producing and teaching a structured scheme of work which ensures that skills in designing, making and evaluating are taught, developed and applied systematically;
 - re-organising the curriculum in religious education to ensure that there is adequate coverage of the agreed syllabus, especially giving appropriate time to Christianity; also raising teachers' expectations about what could be achieved by the older pupils.(Paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 29, 36, 37, 100, 102, 103, 105, 106, 108, 111, 118, 119, 121, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 136, 137, 152, 153, 169, 172)
3. Continue to seek ways of improving the internal design of the building so that pupils' learning is not affected adversely by the lack of space and loss of concentration from the working noise made in adjacent classes.*
(Paragraphs 4, 17, 25, 74, 112, 125)
4. Establish a rigorous whole-school system for the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and the evaluation of school performance. Use the information gained to raise standards.
(Paragraphs 10, 64, 67, 71, 113, 135, 140, 151, 161, 168, 172)
5. Improve assessment procedures, especially in English, mathematics and science, by ensuring that they are implemented consistently throughout the school and contribute to target setting for individuals and groups of pupils. Develop a secure, shared understanding of the criteria for achievement at each National Curriculum level.
(Paragraphs 4, 8, 55, 56, 57, 111, 113, 121, 128, 129, 135, 140, 151, 155, 156, 163, 172)

**Areas of improvement already identified by the school*

In addition to the above issues, the following less important matters should be considered for inclusion in the school action plan:

1. Raise the level of attendance.
(Paragraphs 17, 54, 64)
2. Ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements by:
 - including information on site security in the governors' annual report to parents;
 - providing an act of collective worship each day of the school week.(Paragraphs 14, 37, 43, 63, 70)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	62
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	56

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	6	21	28	4	0	0
Percentage	5	10	34	45	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	29	413
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	84

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	73

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	146

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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	27	31	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	19	24
	Girls	27	24	28
	Total	49	43	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (89)	74 (96)	90 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	23	21
	Girls	25	25	21
	Total	45	48	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (93)	83 (98)	72 (91)
	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	29	30	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	24	25
	Girls	24	21	27
	Total	45	45	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (75)	76 (67)	88 (90)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	23	25
	Girls	24	20	27
	Total	45	43	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (77)	73 (69)	88 (92)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	188	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	7	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	112	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	6	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	10	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)	19
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	339

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	132
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	1,069,030
Total expenditure	1,081,133
Expenditure per pupil	2,618
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,011
Balance carried forward to next year	23,908

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	413
Number of questionnaires returned	89

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	42	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	43	6	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	45	7	8	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	49	15	6	2
The teaching is good.	51	38	6	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	37	10	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	35	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	37	4	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	37	13	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	47	37	7	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	37	4	2	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	35	11	6	13

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

77. The school has continued to maintain the good provision for the children in the nursery and reception classes since the last inspection. This is because the teaching is consistently good across all areas of learning with a significant proportion that is very good or excellent. The levels of care and support the children receive are very good.

78. The school provides 60 part-time placements for the children in the nursery, and full-time schooling in the reception classes. At the time of the inspection there were 58 children receiving part-time education in the nursery and 59 children in two reception classes. For all the children, the nursery is a new experience. At the time of the inspection, most of the children had been in the nursery and the reception classes almost a full year. The children enter the nursery well below the age-related expectation in all aspects of learning. This is particularly noticeable in speaking and listening skills, literacy, and in their personal, social and emotional development. Despite the very good start to their learning in the nursery and the reception classes, the majority of the children's overall attainment by the end of the reception year remains below that expected except in their physical development and some aspects of their creative development.

79. All members of the staff team have a strong commitment to continuing their improvement of the curriculum for the youngest children. Since the last inspection the staff have worked hard to ensure a greater consistency in the curriculum provision between the nursery and reception. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is a very good practitioner who gives good guidance to adults working in the nursery but the school has identified that there is a need to ensure that this good practice continues into Year 1. The assessment of the personal, social and emotional development and the children's academic achievements is good. A significant feature of the school's work is the early identification of the individual needs of the children, particularly those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs. As a result they are given very good support to help them meet their targets. Parents are welcomed and are given good opportunities to become involved with their children's learning through structured play activities in the nursery and this helps to promote and support their child's learning. There are no significant differences in the various groups of boys and girls in any aspect of the curriculum. This comes about because the staff ensure that the curriculum is well planned to meet the needs of all the children.

Personal, social and emotional development

80. The curriculum provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is a major focus throughout the first two years in school. The initial settling-in procedures are very good and this enables all children to feel secure, happy and confident in coming to school. This helps their self-confidence, raises their self-esteem and makes them keen to participate in all the activities around them, in both the indoor and outdoor learning environments. When they first start school in the nursery their attainment is well below the age-related expectation but by the end of the reception year they make good progress and as a result a substantial number of the children are achieving below the expected levels. This is because the staff work well together, show a very good caring and sensitive approach to the children and provide good quality teaching in both the nursery and reception classes. As a result the children make a very positive start to school life.

81. The well-established routines provide a structure within which the children can begin to find some independence. They are beginning to be able to plan their own activities from those provided, and attend to their own personal hygiene. A significant number of the children are able to put on their own shoes and socks after physical exercises in the hall without help. Those who do need help are guided by the staff, but at the same time left to do the task for themselves, following instructions step by step and, as a result, they feel proud of their achievement.

82. In the nursery, the children have already become familiar with planning their own learning. This has enabled the children to start to take some responsibility for certain tasks and choice of activity and is fostering good independent learning and responsibility for their own actions. Most of the work at this stage in both the nursery and reception classes is solitary play amongst their peers, but already a few children are beginning to communicate with one another through body responses or short one- or two-word utterances. A significant feature is the planned structured play activities outdoors that allow the children to communicate as they go about their work. It also provides time where the children can, if they wish, communicate with each other in their mother tongue. This feature shows that they are beginning to learn to socialise well, especially when involved in purposeful play with the bricks, or having a 'Teddy Bear's picnic' under the trees as a group activity. In this way they are beginning to respect the views of others. Snack times are very good occasions when the children begin to meet and make friends.

83. All the children are learning to share, take turns and agree time limits well, for example when riding on the trucks. They are learning to take on the responsibility of tidying up at the end of sessions, albeit noisily in the reception classes. Most of the children are learning to establish relationships with the adults and other children well. This is particularly the case at 'review' time in the nursery. As a result, they are beginning to develop an awareness of and sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others. This is because the adults place a great emphasis on reinforcing socially acceptable behaviour. Already the children are beginning to learn and understand the differences between right and wrong. For example, when one child snatched the container at the water tray from another child, the adult dealt with it immediately in a quiet, kind but firm manner in the child's own language. The pace, quiet rigour and attentiveness to the individual children's needs are notable features of the adults' work. For example, when the children were given the opportunity to touch a snail, the adult talked all the time to the individual child about being gentle and caring so as not to frighten it. The child responded appropriately, demonstrating very clearly the sense of trust that is being built and the rapport between adult and child.

Communication, language and literacy

84. The children's spoken language skills in both the nursery and the reception classes are well below average. However, as a result of the good and often very good teaching and the wide range of curriculum provision offered to foster children's speech the children make good progress from when they first start school. The adults working with the children also give very good attention to the development of spoken English during, for example, 'literacy sessions'. Many children either do not speak clearly or else make single-word observations, for example when they are announcing their choice of activity. Some do not yet engage in talk with other children who may be working near them. However, they usually respond to the adults, whom they trust, by either gesture or facial expression. The staff are very good at trying to encourage the children to speak beyond the one- or two-word responses and in simple sentences and as a result the children are gaining confidence in their responses. Most of the children have difficulty with sentence construction. More attention to, and involvement by the reception class teachers in, the structured role-play activities would raise the confidence and use of spoken English. Very few children by the end of the reception

year will achieve the targets of the Foundation Stage Curriculum despite the good teaching they receive.

85. Listening skills are better, and by the time they leave the reception classes they are working well towards the expected levels. The children listen to stories well. In the nursery for example, the staff are very good at promoting the children's curiosity about books by carefully asking questions such as, "What can you see on this page?", and "What do you think will happen next?" In the reception classes when given teacher-directed tasks to complete, the children listen very well to the instructions. They also listen to each other's decisions about their own planned learning and reviews of what they have done. As a result of these activities, the children are beginning to listen carefully and speak more confidently to the adults and to other children. Discussions, both with individuals and in small groups, are enriching their spoken English.

86. The adults place a strong emphasis on sharing books. In the nursery, the children are beginning to find stories a source of pleasure, and have a growing understanding that print conveys meaning. They share non-fiction books, for example about the habitats of mini-beasts and it is evident that the children are keen and stimulated by the information given as they stare at the snails. The adults are adept at reinforcing language by gestures and the use of visual materials such as the caterpillar puppet, leaves, cocoon, and the different fruits based on the story of *The Hungry Caterpillar*. The translation of this story with a small group of children into Punjabi was excellent. This high quality teaching for the children who are at an early stage of learning English and others whose language ability is very limited, benefit greatly from the methods used by all adults to ensure that they understand what is being said. In the reception classes a significant minority of the children know their initial sounds or have begun to read some words. However, most know that we read from left to right and can point to words and letter sounds. Their ability to memorise repetitive parts of stories is better because they have learned by heart the key lines of, for example, the story *What if...* The children take books home to share with their parents on a regular basis. It was evident from conversations with the children that they want to share books and learn to read. Despite the good teaching and progress made since starting school, nevertheless, a substantial number of the children are still below the age-related expectation by the end of the reception year.

87. The children have suitable opportunities to understand that marks, words and letters convey meaning. In both the nursery and the reception class the children's early attempts at writing are encouraged and most of the children are beginning to write random letters of the alphabet, form letter shapes and write their own name with a mixture of capital and lower case letters. Others are making appropriate marks on paper to represent early writing. A very small minority of the children can copy simple words and are learning to correctly form the upper and lower case letters. The progress that the children are making in pencil control is good because of the high quality teaching they receive. The children make a good effort at trying to control the pencil crayon as they apply colour to, for example, a picture or a mathematical shape. The adults are skilful at fostering hand control skills through a variety of activities such as construction kits, jigsaws and painting activities. Despite this, a substantial number of children are below the expected age-related goals set out in the National Foundation Stage curriculum by the time they leave the reception class.

Mathematical development

88. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. It is particularly strong in the nursery class. The imaginative teaching using a variety of plastic bugs for counting in the nursery, and making and eating the popcorn in the reception classes as they learn to understand the principle of subtraction, is helping the children to make a good start in their

mathematical learning. As a result, the children are making good gains from a low understanding of mathematics on entry to the nursery. Children with English as an additional language make similar progress to those children in their age group. They receive good support from bilingual assistants who use their expertise in translation when he need arises. Those children with special educational needs also make good progress because assessment systems are thorough and activities are well tailored to their needs. Nevertheless, it is unlikely despite the good progress made that the children will attain age-related expectations by the time they leave the reception class.

89. In the nursery, the children are beginning to count numbers in sequence to ten by being presented with boxes which contain the 'bugs'. This is an imaginative approach and immediately attracted the children's interest in wanting to count them. A substantial number of children can confidently count beyond the number ten and recognise the number shapes but few recognise the higher numbers beyond it. The use of structured play to support mathematical learning is very good in the nursery. Many activities linked to other areas of the curriculum support the children's mathematical learning and the adults are skilled in drawing out the children's language and understanding through practical experiences, such as the use of water play and in other outdoor activities. In this way, the adults, through the challenging and probing questioning, ensure that the children see mathematics all around them and encourage them to think mathematically. The breadth of activities both indoors and outdoors enables the children to make good progress in their understanding of number and other mathematical concepts such as mathematical investigations and shape. This can be seen, for example, when they are handling money for buying and selling their food at the café or developing their knowledge and understanding of different shapes at 'small group' time. The children have already started to develop positive attitudes towards mathematics because all members of staff make the learning fun. This very good work is continued into the reception classes and the children have suitable opportunities to build upon the prior learning through the structured play activities. They do so, for instance, by asking what shape is the wheel, or checking whether a child knows a right turn from a left when they come to manoeuvring the trucks, which brick is heavier or lighter, which container has 'more or less' water, or developing skills in weighing, measuring and estimating when making popcorn. However, it is essential to review the amount of time spent on the introductory sessions in mathematics and the more formal recording of mathematics in order to meet the individual needs of the children and to plan a greater range of mathematical activities that will reinforce the mathematical concept taught.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

90. The staff make good provision to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Suitable foundations are being laid in their knowledge of past events in their short lives, science and ICT. The staff use questioning very sensitively to promote enquiry and discovery in children's learning. For example, in the nursery the children were looking at snails and the adults' very good subject knowledge and questioning skills motivated the children's curiosity about them. This challenged the children to look more closely at the shape, the two different textures, the position of the eyes, and how snails use their feelers to find food and drink. The children were fascinated by the movements and stood in awe of the snail's silvery trail left on the table. Care and respect was shown by all the children for the snails. Teachers ensure that the curriculum is suitably matched to children's interests, especially those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

91. The children have good opportunities to use construction toys, play dough, clay and a wide range of materials to develop their cutting and sticking skills. In both the nursery and the reception classes the children's cutting skills are improving but most find it difficult to cut accurately, for example around a shape. They receive good adult support and the

perseverance on the part of the children means that they are making positive strides forward in the use of scissors to cut both paper and a range of other materials. There are very good opportunities for the children to extend and acquire a greater understanding of the world around them by going out to study the local environment and by visiting places, such as a farm.

92. The adults in both the nursery and reception classes are developing effectively the children's early computer keyboard skills and their control of the 'mouse'. However, many children have some way to go before they master the manual control to reach their age-related level of attainment. The children are beginning to follow the instructions on the screen, but as yet do not fully understand how the computer programs will support their learning. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good overall and children make good progress. Children with special educational needs make appropriate gains in their learning, similar to their classmates, because they receive good support. Children with English as an additional language, although their language skills are limited, make good progress because adults give them individual attention.

Physical development

93. The physical skills of the children in both the nursery and the reception class are being suitably developed and most of the children are on course to achieve the age-related expectation as described in the Foundation Stage guidance. They are using a suitable range of larger equipment both in the school hall and in the outdoor learning environment confidently and competently. The children enjoy the challenge and show pleasure in their achievements as they 'push' and 'steer' the trucks, or paint their tractors made from the large cardboard boxes using the professional decorator's paintbrush. When the children first start school the finer physical movement skills, when for example using small tools, jigsaws, pencils and crayons, are less well co-ordinated but they have made very good progress in acquiring the skills. The regular opportunities for the children to use a range of crayons, pastels or pencils when drawing, or use clay tools are good. The adults explain very clearly how they need to improve the grip and position, for example of the pencil or a pair of scissors. This helps the children's hand control.

94. The teaching to foster the children's physical development is good overall but particularly strong in the nursery class. The adults ensure an appropriate balance between vigilance about safety and encouraging independence. This was very evident as the children prepared for the physical activities and in the careful use of the space in the hall. The children do not encounter any difficulties in putting on their shoes and socks independently. This is because throughout the school year the adults have persevered in supporting the children but do not take over the task, but help them to position their shoes so that the operation is made easier for them. In the reception classes they have begun to understand the effects of exercise on the heart and that when running around the heart beats faster. The children know how to use the different outdoor areas so that no one is put at risk. The children greatly enjoy physical activities and are beginning to learn how to take turns, for example on the bicycles, and to co-operate with each other.

Creative development

95. From well below expectation when children first start school in the nursery, the children have made very good progress and it is likely that a substantial number of children will reach the national age-related expectation. This is because of the high level provision and the consistently good and in some cases excellent teaching, especially in the nursery class. For example, most children make good progress or very good progress in their artistic work, their musical development, and their role-play activities in the nursery. The staff's

planning has clear aims and objectives stating very clearly what the children are intended to know, do and understand. Children for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to other children in the nursery and reception classes because of the good quality of support they receive. Those children with English as an additional language are supported well and make similar progress to other children in the Foundation Stage. The good level of bilingual and teaching assistant support is a key factor.

96. All children produce a wide range of artwork. They are highly capable of selecting their own materials and express themselves freely in paint and collage. Adults are on hand to guide them in the development of skills and techniques in the handling of brushes and the development of close observational drawing. For example, when drawing a snail the children are beginning to develop proportion, positioning of the shell, the eyes and feelers, as well as developing shading techniques. All work is highly valued so that every child feels very comfortable with what they have accomplished. This motivates them to want to experiment and discover. Evidence from previous work shows a strong link with mathematics, history, geography and scientific activities as well as using and applying a range of techniques in most of the artwork. For example, some activities allow very good opportunities for the children to begin to develop awareness of a repeated pattern, texture of a range of materials and printing.

97. There are good opportunities available for role-play. Most of the children are given the opportunity to explore the equipment and play out their role in either the café or the travel agents. They are making good progress because the planned provision stimulates the children's imagination and is beginning to foster their understanding of the world in which we live. However, the use of role-play to support learning in the reception classes requires a greater interactive role from the adults to extend and support the learning opportunities.

98. The majority of the children's musical experiences are very limited on entry to school but because the staff ensure that the children have free access to musical instruments in outdoor learning environment, as well a small group session in the music room, the provision is good. In the session observed in the nursery the children are well within the expected levels and this is because they are challenged and well motivated to succeed through a wide range of exploration of musical sound, singing and listening activities. The short sessions are well planned and focus on the development of musical skills. Most of the children loved either to listen or to join with the adult in singing the action songs. They were beginning to appreciate the differences between a high and low sound as the teacher turned the xylophone on its end so that they could associate the high sound with going up or low sounds going down. The children confidently play loud and softly when asked. They could use their voices expressively when following the contour of a line which went up and down the page when conducted by the adult. This was skilfully led and at the same time produced sounds that developed a strong awareness of dynamics. This was an enjoyable time and a positive reinforcement and enrichment of the children's musical understanding.

Area for development

- Review the planned use of time in reception classes by following the very good model used in the nursery setting.

ENGLISH

99. By the end of Year 6, overall standards in English are just below average, but broadly average compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected level 4 has increased significantly since the last inspection. Over their six years of compulsory schooling, pupils are making satisfactory progress. However, the current Year 2 is attaining well below average standards and results of national tests at the

end Year 2 vary considerably from year to year. The current Year 2 contains a greater than normal proportion of pupils with special educational needs and an above average number of pupils with English as an additional language. National Curriculum tests for 2002 at the end of Year 6 were below average for English but have improved steadily over the last few years. The use of booster classes, held in school and at the local secondary school, has helped to raise standards in this subject. Standards in National Curriculum tests in 2002 at the end of Year 2 were below average for reading and writing but average compared to similar schools. Teacher assessment for 2003 indicates a fall in standards at the end of Year 2. This is due to problems with staffing during the latest school year and weaker teaching.

100. Many pupils start school with no English or limited language skills, but progress in speaking and listening is steady. However, standards are well below average even though by Year 2 many pupils are willing to answer factual questions and to talk about what they have done and do so competently. A significant proportion are still reluctant to talk, especially during class discussions, but are more confident to speak to adults one to one. A similar proportion do not listen carefully enough to instructions, and are then uncertain about what to do subsequently. Only a small proportion of pupils respond to questions which require them to give reasons. Confidence increases rapidly throughout the juniors and by Year 6 standards are below average. Most pupils readily offer ideas and opinions as well as answering a range of questions in lessons. A remaining weakness for a significant number of pupils is the confidence to speak audibly to a large audience. Additionally, weaknesses in pupils' grammar in their spoken language are reflected in their writing, particularly the use of the verb 'do' and of comparatives and superlatives.

101. Pupils with special educational needs are actively involved in discussions, including during group tasks with learning support assistants, and also regularly improve their contributions. Bilingual support is available in English lessons for the youngest pupils whose mother tongue is not English, and this enables pupils to take a full part in lessons. While particular needs are not precisely identified for older pupils, teachers respond to individual pupils well and overall progress is as regular as for native English speakers.

102. Reading skills are well below average by the end of the infants and progress is slow. By the end of Year 2, average attaining pupils read suitable texts competently. Most pupils read familiar words confidently and can use appropriate strategies like letter sounds and pictures to work out unknown words. However, they often have to be encouraged to do this because they would rather be told what the word is. Too many of these pupils do not understand what they are reading, and then do not realise that some words they have misread do not make sense. Higher attaining pupils read fluently, with more expression, and predict events in the story. However, few are reading longer and more challenging texts. Lower attaining pupils often know their letter sounds, but cannot always use these to build words. They often fail to recall what they have read. Higher attaining Year 1 pupils identify the author and title and name main characters, but average attaining pupils read word by word and often only attempt to guess unknown words from their initial letters. Lower attaining pupils are still at the early stages of reading, with limited sight vocabularies and few other strategies for tackling unknown words.

103. By the end of the juniors, reading is just below average. While the proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected level 4 is broadly average, too few reach a higher level. This is mainly because pupils' comprehension is weak, and they do not apply their skills sufficiently when reading. Few Year 6 readers find the information they need by quickly skimming or scanning the text, but they tend to read the whole page word by word. It is also only the highest attaining pupils who can infer or deduce information from what they are reading. While all the Year 6 pupils who read to the inspector had basic library skills, they

were unable to proceed if the subject they were searching was not listed, few being skilled enough to try broader headings or allied words. As a rule, pupils do not use context to work out unknown vocabulary. While the more confident readers are developing tastes for a particular genre or authors, many of the sample had no real preferences and no great enthusiasm for reading. Lower attaining pupils lack fluency and only have a general idea of the story they are reading. In Years 4 and 5 the higher attaining pupils have a greater awareness of genres and authors than their peers, and read with better understanding of the plot. Lower attaining pupils often still have difficulties working out unknown words. Year 3 higher attaining pupils read fluently and with good general understanding of the story, but make limited use of context. They use contents and indexes to locate appropriate pages of information. Average attaining pupils are able to correct their errors when they realise the sentence does not make sense and use alphabetical order to locate words. Lower attaining pupils also know the alphabet but are more hesitant and lack confidence when tackling unseen texts.

104. Pupils with special educational needs are given additional support with word recognition and phonics⁴ in class and withdrawal groups. This enables them to make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets, but in lessons insufficient account is sometimes taken of their prior attainment and they are given texts which are too difficult for them, hindering their progress on the task.

105. At the end of Year 2, pupils' writing skills are well below average. A few pupils write readily and with enthusiasm. Two pupils, for instance, were writing their third chapter in a story in the style of *Winnie the Pooh*. These stories had an appropriate structure, used the characters from the original *Winnie the Pooh* books effectively, and were written accurately. More typically, though, pupils write a few connected sentences on the *Winnie the Pooh* theme, but with no true narrative, and less consistent punctuation and spelling. It is not uncommon for pupils to make grammatical errors such as misuse of 'a' and 'an', and application of general rules to irregular verbs, such as 'drawed' instead of 'drew'. Lower attaining Year 2 pupils often write very little. They do not use full stops and capital letters consistently and spelling is often erratic. In their lesson on using commas in lists during the inspection, some pupils placed the commas successfully, but like many of the skills taught in isolation, pupils fail to apply this in their own writing consistently. Higher and average attaining Year 1 pupils write simple single sentences independently and sometimes remember to put a capital letter at the beginning and a full stop at the end. Lower attaining pupils are not yet writing independently and some do not remember to leave finger spaces even when copying. Although some progress has been made since September, when few pupils wrote independently, even higher attaining pupils are below the expected level.

106. Better progress is made throughout the juniors and standards are just below rather than well below average when pupils transfer to secondary schools. By Year 6 higher attaining pupils write letters and responses to a magazine problem page in appropriate colloquial style. They use the sample texts provided to structure their writing, and incorporate what they have learnt about how to handle bullying so that answers are thoughtful. Most writing is accurately spelt and punctuated, including being divided into paragraphs. In other work pupils use apostrophes and question and exclamation marks correctly. There is limited use of interesting vocabulary in pupils' written work, despite exercises in similes and adjectives, however. Average attaining Year 6 pupils write less effective letters and responses, taking a long time to reach the point and showing limited awareness of the style used by 'agony aunts' and the people who ask for advice. Punctuation is less consistent and there are more spelling errors. Some pupils do not use the information on characters from previous lessons to provide the required context. The

⁴ Phonics – the smallest unit of sound in a word.

lower attaining pupils have even weaker comprehension and are unable to identify and outline the parts of *Kensuke's Kingdom* which they liked best, let alone think of pertinent questions to ask the author. Some pupils struggle to write a few sentences in the 20 minutes provided in their literacy lesson. In Year 5 higher and average attaining pupils write consistently in the first person in response to writing as the character of Laura or Ma from *Little House in the Big Woods*. Lower attaining pupils, however, struggle to sustain the first person narrative. Year 4 learn to use connectives to join sentences such as 'but', 'because' and 'then'. Higher attaining Year 3 pupils write letters to someone they know, mostly in a suitable style. Basic punctuation and spelling is accurate by the time pupils have checked their work, whereas average attaining pupils do not always identify their errors. Lower attaining Year 3 pupils correctly sequence sentences to create a story.

107. Teachers are alert to pupils with English as an additional language and appropriately support them in increasing their vocabulary when they require advice, but pupils receive no specific assistance. They make similar progress to their peers. Pupils with special educational needs are given additional support with the technical aspects of writing, but limited help in understanding how to improve the content, thus their work becomes somewhat more accurate but often remains stilted.

108. Handwriting is variable throughout the school. The neatest writers produce well-formed, joined script before they leave the school but many junior pupils do not join their letters, form them incorrectly and do not ensure that ascending and descending letters are placed properly on the lines. Many pupils even in Year 6 have incorrect pencil grips and sit inappropriately in order to produce good handwriting. The weaknesses in handwriting adversely affect the quality of presentation overall.

109. English is soundly taught throughout the juniors and pupils' learning is satisfactory. At the time of the last inspection three quarters of teaching was judged to be good. A similar proportion (five eighths) of the lessons observed during the inspection was also judged to be good. There has been an improvement in consistency across the juniors. In the infants some of the teaching is unsatisfactory and this adversely affects learning.

110. Throughout the school basic skills are appropriately taught and reinforcement and practice (including relevant homework) are given so that pupils learn and consolidate them. During lessons teachers provide timely support and guidance so that pupils understand what they are doing and achieve success. Units of work are well planned to give a range of applications and examples of any particular style of writing, and a good variety of texts are deployed. Pupils regularly draft work before producing a final recording so that they improve on the content. In the better lessons in the juniors, questioning is effective in making pupils understand better, and expectations of pupils are higher. In the Year 6 literacy lesson on seeking advice from a problem page, for instance, pupils were expected to apply their previous work on bullying, write in the style of the sample texts and produce a finished piece of writing in a single lesson.

111. Expectations are sometimes low or inappropriate, though. Higher attaining pupils in Year 3, for instance, waited for the teacher to supply correct spellings when they had the skills to try words independently or learn to use a dictionary. In Year 2, pupils with special educational needs whose targets included recognition of common words were given a text containing too many words they did not know. Work is not always planned to match different needs. For example, the lower Year 1 set all wrote the same two-sentence summary of *The Mungle Flap* irrespective of their prior attainment. Over the long term, marking and feedback are ineffective, so pupils do not know what they need to do to improve their work. Books are regularly marked, and teachers give plenty of praise and encouragement, but they seldom state precisely what is good and what needs to be done to be even better. Although some

writing targets are identified and given to some pupils, this is not consistent throughout the school. During plenary sessions, examples of pupils' work are praised, but it is rarely made clear what made a particular piece of work successful. As a result, pupils' work does not improve at the best rate. Moreover, assessment information is not used to identify what pupils need to learn next. Reading records, for instance, are rarely diagnostic, not even for guided reading sessions. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, are not always challenged by the reading books they are given. Pupils are also not helped by the way completed work is kept. Many worksheets are placed unordered and adrift from the finished work for which they were used so that the drafting process is not clear, and pupils cannot see how their work was refined. The excessive use of worksheets is also restricting meaningful use of skills and not enabling pupils to apply them. Little use is made of ICT in the drafting process.

112. The English curriculum is satisfactory and there are sound literacy links across a range of subjects. However, timetabled English lessons take a very large proportion of each school day, often exceeding an hour. In addition, some pupils then have a guided reading session as well on some days of the week, and separate story sessions. By rationalising the time so that guided reading is related to the literacy focus, and the story supporting the genre when appropriate, time could be made available for other subjects or extension through drama and role-play. The accommodation makes it unnecessarily difficult for pupils to learn. It is sometimes impossible to hear one teacher clearly if the other half of the year group is not having a plenary session at the same time, and even when both classes are attending to the teacher it is hard for pupils within earshot of both adults to concentrate. In classes of older pupils (who are physically larger) the only way to partly mitigate such problems is for some pupils to sit uncomfortably on the floor between the tables of peers, on occasions craning their necks to see shared texts. The library provision is good and is used appropriately by junior pupils. There are some good examples, particularly by Year 6 pupils, of detailed research taking place in history and geography topics. Infant pupils use the library less frequently. Library monitors supervise the area at lunchtimes and ensure that provision is well maintained.

113. Although the co-ordinator monitors provision properly through procedures such as looking at planning and pupils' work, this is not an effective way of disseminating best practice or providing an overview of strengths and weaknesses in attainment. Monitoring is not rigorous enough. Insufficient work is regularly undertaken in analysing the detail of assessment data.

Areas for development

- Match work to different needs, including using the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs, through the effective use of assessment data.
- Provide clear guidance to pupils on what they do well and what they need to work on improving next.
- Enable pupils to apply the skills they learn more effectively, particularly in comprehension and writing.
- Improve handwriting and presentation so pupils are proud of their work.

MATHEMATICS

114. Standards in mathematics are currently just below average at the end of Year 6, even though expectations are high and many pupils are working at an appropriate level for their age-group. This is mainly because of a group of lower attaining pupils with significant weaknesses in mathematics, some of whom joined the school quite recently. Fewer pupils than average are working at the higher level 5, but even so this is a good improvement on last year (2002), when test results were well below the national average. The present Year 6 includes more higher attaining pupils with better mathematical skills and slightly fewer pupils

with special educational needs than last year's group. All of the pupils in this year group are now being effectively taught and have made good progress since September. Their exercise books suggest, however, that not enough had been achieved by the end of Year 5 last year, leaving too much ground to be made up. This situation has now improved and, taking the junior years as a whole, the achievement of all the pupils is satisfactory overall, with good progress in some groups. The booster classes provided by teachers in school and by the local secondary school staff have had a positive impact on pupils' attainment. Over the last five years standards in mathematics have improved in line with the national trend.

115. By Year 6, most pupils recall their tables quickly and accurately, demonstrating secure mental arithmetic skills in routine calculations. Average and above average pupils work confidently with both whole numbers and decimals in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division operations, using brackets where appropriate. They identify equivalent fractions and calculate percentages accurately. The lower attaining pupils cover some of the same ground, but are not yet working with decimals or negative numbers. Almost all the pupils have undertaken work of at least an average standard on shape, space and measures, including calculating the perimeter and area of rectangles. They have a secure understanding of the angles of triangles and measure accurately using a protractor. Overall the pupils' number work and practical skills are average. However, they find number problems expressed in words difficult and not all are good at deriving information from graphs. Even higher attaining pupils struggled in a recent assessment when they were expected to convert kilometres into miles. The pupils lack experience of solving logical and algebraic problems, but during the inspection they responded very well to a lesson which required just this kind of reasoning.

116. Pupils who speak English as an additional language do at least as well as the others and are, by Year 6, amongst the school's most capable mathematicians. Some boys from the ethnic minority communities are particularly enthusiastic about their mathematics, but some of the quieter girls lack confidence and this may explain why boys tend to do better in this subject at Stoke. Those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers, although at a lower level. Some high quality class-based support is available, but these pupils would have a better opportunity to catch up if learning needs and targets for mathematics were identified in their individual education plans.

117. Standards at the end of Year 2 are well below average, and, in general the pupils are not achieving as well as they should be. This is consistent with the school's test results in 2002, which were well below the national average, largely because too few pupils reached the higher levels 2A and 3. Despite a good start in reception, the pupils are not covering enough ground in Year 1 and the teaching in Year 2 is not strong enough to make up for the lost time. Staffing problems in these year groups have exacerbated this situation. As a result, achievement is at present unsatisfactory in the infant classes. Standards over the last five years have been variable depending largely on the innate ability of particular age-groups.

118. By the end of Year 2 the most capable pupils show a secure understanding of number to 100, and their work with number squares is helping them to develop the concept of place value (tens and units). They handle addition, subtraction, multiplication and division within 20 confidently and know their tables up to $\times 5$. However, some of these pupils are not working at the level of which they should be capable, for example by working with numbers greater than 100 or using decimal notation correctly for calculations involving money. Average pupils tend to work quite slowly and make errors with numbers greater than 20. Some of their mistakes suggest an insecure understanding of place value, for example, $54 - 10 = 45$. Their mental arithmetic is slow, although generally accurate, when handling numbers greater than ten. These pupils find it difficult to explain their answers and even the

most capable tend to flounder when faced with problems of a kind they have not encountered before. All the pupils are still heavily reliant on tangible aids to support their calculations. In one lesson with the upper ability group, for example, some pupils worked successfully on money problems using plastic coins to help them; but those who were asked to work out the value of stamps could not cope because they could not visualise the problem. A small number of lower attaining pupils are still struggling with calculations within ten. Work on shape, space and measures is of an average standard and has included some effective work on reflective symmetry. Lower attaining pupils have completed similar work to the rest in this area, with good levels of classroom support.

119. Teaching in the junior classes is sound overall and the National Numeracy Strategy is taught appropriately. Many of the lessons observed during the inspection were good, with some very good teaching in Year 6, but work in pupils' books is for the most part only satisfactory. At best, the teaching of mathematics is challenging and enjoyable. In a highly successful Year 6 lesson, for instance, the pupils identified and 'decoded' multiplication tables represented entirely by letters. They went on to attempt a series of problems requiring a combination of trial and error methods and careful reasoning. Many of the pupils rose to the challenge, either working together effectively or engaging in good-humoured competition. Some teachers have high expectations of the pupils, for example insisting on real precision when measuring angles. Further strengths of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 include effective lesson planning, a good use of quick revision sessions and inclusion of all by well-targeted questioning. Pupils with special educational needs are often very well supported by classroom assistants, enabling them to maintain steady progress. Effective use is occasionally made of ICT to support learning, for example the use of an interactive whiteboard to help lower attaining pupils with their work on angles, but there is scope for further development. Exercise books and folders suggest that in some groups little is done to cater for individual differences and, in particular, to challenge the most able pupils. Sub-standard work is occasionally accepted, for example in Year 5, when the rate of learning is still not fast enough. Marking consists almost exclusively of ticks and crosses, and there are as yet no indications of either group or individual target-setting.

120. Teaching is unsatisfactory at the infant stage. During the inspection a good deal of the teaching was poorly matched to the group's level of understanding, suggesting that staff do not have the pupils weighed up well enough. This sometimes results in a lack of challenge, as when Year 1 pupils were asked to produce a basic alternating pattern of squares and circles at a level appropriate for younger children. On other occasions pupils struggle with work that is too hard for them. For example, Year 2 pupils were introduced to terms such as 'triangular prism' before they had fully grasped the meaning of 'side', 'corner' and 'face' in describing three-dimensional shapes. When asked to identify a shape with four corners, they were thoroughly confused to find that this was a triangular pyramid, not a rectangle. The pupils' exercise books demonstrate slow progress in Year 1, where average and below average pupils are not making enough progress. There is too much reliance on worksheets, so that these pupils are not learning to set work out for themselves. Although the pace of learning improves considerably in Year 2, some shortcomings in planning remain. In one group, for example, work on sequencing numbers becomes progressively easier rather than more challenging.

121. The management of mathematics is not yet entirely satisfactory. The co-ordinator is recently appointed and has yet to make her mark in leading the subject. She does, however, have some sensible ideas about what needs to be done and has taken sound advice. A potentially effective system for assessing pupils' progress has been developed, appropriately based on the National Numeracy Strategy, but the new system has not been fully implemented through the school and there are no arrangements for target-setting. The co-ordinator has checked her colleagues' planning and identified areas for improvement, but

has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. Analysis of test results to identify areas for improvement is at an early stage of development.

Areas for development

- Take steps to improve teaching in the infant classes.
- Ensure that the recently introduced system of assessment is implemented throughout the school and used to set realistic targets for individual pupils and groups.
- Strengthen subject leadership and management, especially by monitoring teaching and learning in the classroom.

SCIENCE

122. Standards in science at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were judged to be below average compared with nationally expected standards. Standards observed during the inspection were also below average. Few pupils reach the higher level 3 and about a third of pupils are below the expected level 2. This is largely due to the unsatisfactory teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 and the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language in the year groups.

123. Standards in science at the end of Year 6 in the 2002 national tests are in line with those achieved nationally and better than those achieved in similar schools. Standards observed during the inspection were in line with national expectations. Many pupils acquire knowledge and understanding to the expected level 4, with about a third of pupils achieving the higher level 5. Standards have improved steadily over the last five years. Overall, progress is sound throughout the school.

124. Although teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is judged to be unsatisfactory overall, there is some satisfactory teaching taking place. However, the pace of lessons is often slow and the work unchallenging with too much colouring in, cutting and sticking. More able pupils are not sufficiently challenged to build on what they know and can do. Teaching and learning are sound in the junior classes. They are good in Year 5. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in all classes so they make similar progress to their classmates. However, they are still expected to undertake the same work as the rest of the class. Whilst the support they receive enables them to complete the tasks, they do not always completely understand what it is they have been doing. Those pupils with English as an additional language are usually given good support by education assistants and bilingual staff and also make similar progress to others in the year group.

125. A scrutiny of work in pupils' books, observation of lessons and discussions with pupils reveal that whilst pupils have good opportunities to watch or undertake practical activities, they have too few opportunities to plan and undertake their own experiments. In most lessons pupils are told what to do, what equipment to use, how to set it up and how to record their observations. Teachers tend to adopt this approach because space is limited and they want to minimise the level of noise in case they disrupt neighbouring classes. An exception is in Year 5 where pupils are given good opportunities to devise and plan their own investigations, albeit at a relatively simple level because they lack previous experience in doing this.

126. Pupils in the infant classes have many opportunities to learn about themselves, animals and plants. They sort fruit and vegetables correctly, using appropriate criteria, and more able pupils identify that fruits have seeds. Pupils measure temperature by taking readings from a thermometer but do not use graphs as a way of interpreting results. In junior classes there is a better balance between different strands of the curriculum. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of life processes are better than their understanding of

materials, their properties and the effects of mixtures and changes. Nevertheless, they generally use scientifically accurate vocabulary and describe differences between the properties of various materials. Most pupils know the major organs of the human body and usually identify their positions accurately. Pupils use graphs competently and draw conclusions but they do not always offer explanations for their findings. This practice does not encourage pupils to develop skills learned in English lessons. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to research information from reference books or the Internet.

127. The co-ordinator gives sound leadership and has ensured that standards have continued to rise by the end of Year 6 but the management of the subject is weaker because the curriculum is not monitored rigorously enough in order to ensure that topics are covered thoroughly. Specific scientific vocabulary is set out well in the planning, but opportunities for developing writing skills and using and practising mathematical skills are not identified. More attention could be given to varying tasks in order to challenge the more able pupils or to ensure that those with special educational needs learn effectively at their level.

128. There is no structured whole-school assessment procedure in place to monitor pupils' attainment and progress through the school and there is no evaluation of national test answers to identify areas of common weakness, which need to be addressed by the school in the future.

129. Standards have improved since the last inspection by the end of Year 6 at the same pace as national results. Resources have improved and are now judged to be good but there is little evidence of the good investigative work in the school as reported in the last inspection. Marking, judged by reference to the last report, does not appear to have improved and assessment is still in need of further development.

Areas for development

- Ensure that the curriculum includes specific opportunities to develop all investigative skills identified in the National Curriculum for science.
- Include specific planned opportunities for using ICT, developing writing skills and using results recorded as graphs to explain findings and make reasoned deductions from them.
- Devise and implement a whole-school assessment procedure which identifies what individual pupils know and can do.
- Use assessment information to plan lessons, so that work is more closely matched to different ability groups within each class, and so that more able pupils are properly challenged and less able pupils make real progress in understanding.

ART AND DESIGN

130. Taken overall, the standards in art and design are above average throughout the school. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Lessons were seen in Years 1, 2, and 3, but art and design work at the upper end of the school was wide-ranging and the depth of coverage of the National Curriculum was clearly evident. A strong feature is the use of art and design to support the work in history, geography and science as well as very fine pieces of sculpture on display and the use of ICT to support the art curriculum. There is an appropriate emphasis on the progression of basic skills when using, for example, pastel, paint, charcoal, pencil, textiles and clay as well as acquiring knowledge of the work of famous artists, including artists from non-European countries.

131. The pupils throughout the school make steady gains in their learning and this is because the teaching is generally effective. A range of good experiences is being

successfully offered using a variety of materials, tools and equipment. Pupils in Year 2 study patterns based on the work of William Morris and colours found in flowers. Through their observational drawings and paintings the pupils develop an appropriate use of colour and a good sense of proportion. The pupils really enjoy their art lessons and in one case, during the explanation of the task by the teacher, one little voice piped up and said, "I can't wait to get started." The pupils sustain good levels of concentration and produce work of good quality. This is because there is a good level of interaction by the adults' effective use of subject-specific vocabulary. The adults give the pupils appropriate support so that all, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, feel successful and make the same good progress as their classmates. The adults continually give the pupils suggestions for improvement and at all times are well focused on improving skills.

132. In Years 3 and 4, pupils draw pictures to illustrate the moods that music can create. They study the work of the Aboriginal desert tribes and in their work they clearly understand how the earth colours from sand and soil are used. As a result, they mix their own colours and apply the technique to their own work. The main purpose is to support work on pattern and line, and to use skills in making marks and drawing lines. At the upper end of the school, the pupils study ideas of pattern and design based on the work of a range of artists to inspire them to create their own in batik and fabric collage. They use a wide range of media such as ink, pastels and paints, to recreate posters, and make life-size sculptures supported by artists who regularly visit the school on a yearly basis. The results demonstrate that the pupils are successful in a wide range of experiences using a variety of materials, tools and equipment. A significant feature of the displays of the pupils' work is that they are clearly labelled and use technical language to support and enrich pupils' own vocabulary.

133. Good use is made of ICT to support artwork. In Year 5, the pupils have taken several pieces of work, for example by Van Gogh, and tried to recreate for themselves the same work using a computer program. This has been successfully achieved. Furthermore, their ability to work fairly accurately on perspective and proportion when drawing a chair, for example, is very good. The school has identified a small number of pupils in Year 5 who have a real talent for art and have encouraged them to attend a class outside school to extend their work to a higher level.

134. In discussion, the pupils showed their enthusiasm for art and said that they enjoy illustrating when engaged in other subjects, for example, when illustrating their stories, painting a miniature portrait of Henry VIII, or making sculptures of the stages in the life cycle of the butterfly. However, greater use of sketchbooks throughout the school for the specific purpose of improving skills, techniques and close observational drawing would take the art curriculum to an even higher standard.

135. The co-ordinator has taken a very active lead in emphasising the development of the basic art skills. A significant feature of her work has been to support teachers' planning, and give advice. There has been monitoring of art in lessons. The school does not keep a portfolio of samples of work. This would be advantageous so that all staff and pupils could see why each piece of work is considered to be a good example of the development of skills, techniques and creativity. This would further support and guide teachers when making assessments on individual pupils' work.

Areas for development

- Greater use of sketchbooks for specific purpose of developing skills and techniques such as shading, tints and tones.
- Collate a portfolio of work to support both adult and pupil self-evaluation.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

136. Standards in design and technology are very low at the end of Years 2 and 6. Although pupils have some skills in joining fabric and card these have been acquired mainly through art lessons and pupils have had very little experience of working with any other materials. Pupils rarely plan a technological project. When they do, the outcomes, even by Year 6, are just drawings, not well-considered step-by-step intentions. There is no evidence that pupils ever give consideration to function or different users, or make their own decisions about a product. They do not evaluate outcomes or consider these in relation to their declared intentions. There is very limited progression; for instance, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 in an art lesson were using several different stitches while in Year 6, pupils making puppets only used one. This Year 6 lesson was the only one observed and was soundly taught. There was a great deal of useful adult support, showing the commitment of some volunteer helpers.

137. The major weakness identified at the last inspection has not been addressed properly and this has resulted in declining standards. There is a lack of understanding throughout the school about what constitutes design and technology, and as a result pupils are not being taught the subject on a regular basis. The curriculum fails to meet National Curriculum requirements and in practice a very low proportion of scheduled time is devoted to it. Many of the projects planned by teachers are actually art and design, not design and technology, because they are decorative and not functional. In Year 2, for instance, long-term planning shows weaving 'dream-makers', making flowers and table decorations, sewing Christmas stockings and producing Easter cards. The actual design and technology work planned for the year lists use of construction kits (without any focus on which mechanisms) and Christmas cooking (with no actual product given). Card making is identified for every year group from Year 1 to Year 4 with no apparent progression. Not all year groups have full plans, and none of the plans which do exist bear proper relation to the school's scheme of work, which consists of the local education authority's guidance with some annotations. The school planning does not show where particular skills are to be introduced and developed, and no evidence of considering the user, ways of planning projects or any evaluation. The resources available are inadequate for a properly planned design and technology curriculum, with insufficient tools and very limited materials stocked. The subject has a low profile, with very little work in pupils' books, few completed artefacts and very little display around the school. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils found it difficult to talk meaningfully about the subject, but they did confirm that they rarely planned and evaluated any artefacts and were unclear about what design and technology is.

138. A new co-ordinator has recently taken on responsibility for the subject and is enthusiastic about making changes, but she and the rest of the staff have significant training needs before provision will be satisfactory.

Areas for development

- Increase teachers' knowledge and understanding of design and technology and give them the associated practical skills;
- Produce and teach a structured scheme of work which ensures skills in designing, making and evaluating are taught, developed and applied systematically;
- Improve resources.

GEOGRAPHY

139. It was not possible to observe any geography lessons during the week of the inspection so no judgement has been made on the quality of teaching. The judgement of pupils' attainment is based on evidence that was collected from teachers' plans, examining books and displays of pupils' work around the school, and discussion with teachers and pupils. On this basis, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in geography are average. Pupils make satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, who are well supported to access information and to understand and use the geographical terms related to the subject.

140. There has been satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection. The school has reviewed the curriculum, developed new policies to inform teachers' planning and updated the schemes of work to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Mapping skills, an identified weakness at the last inspection, are now being taught well across the school. However, there has been little progress in the use of assessment and in the monitoring and evaluation of the subject. At present the headteacher is acting as subject co-ordinator until a new appointment can be made.

141. School visits and visitors into school incorporate many aspects of the geography curriculum and help to reinforce the class-based activities well. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 visit the local environment. As a result they express their views about some of the features, and have a clearer understanding of what a map is and how to use them and draw detailed plans. These skills are developed and used when pupils sketch plans and use maps, for example in Year 4 to find their way around the village of Harbury and in Year 6 when pupils visit Dol-y-Moch and Coombe Abbey.

142. The work based on a city, town, village and farm in Year 4 helps pupils to distinguish between similar and different characteristics of places. Particularly helpful in developing these skills is the visit to Harbury, where pupils experience at first hand what a village is like. There are few opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT skills but unfortunately, because of technical difficulties this year, the pupils were unable to use e-mail to contact the friends they made. Visits help the pupils in Year 5 to further understand and compare what life is like in other places abroad, for instance, life for Evangeline and her family on the farm in Naro Moru in Kenya and for the Yanomami community living near the Amazon.

143. Pupils in Year 6 begin to understand the importance of water and its effects on the landscape and pupils have written good explanations of the physical features of rivers entitled *From Spring to the Sea*.

144. Pupils develop speaking and listening skills through their contact with other people on their visits and asking questions of visitors to their class. Discussion helps pupils express their opinions on moral dilemmas, for example, "Should rainforests be cut?" "Are people more important than rainforests?" Pupils use the library to research information and they have written letters to the authorities complaining about pollution in the river. Reading skills are planned in literacy lessons when teachers carefully choose suitable books related to the topic. Pupils develop their numeracy skills through working out the time it takes to reach places and how far away a place is, and using co-ordinates and grid references.

Areas for development

- Appoint a permanent geography coordinator.
- Begin to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning of pupils.
- Find a meaningful way of assessing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding and tracking progress over time.
- Continue to develop pupils' ICT skills.

HISTORY

145. Standards are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and this matches the judgement made at the previous inspection. All pupils make sound progress including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue. These pupils are supported well to access texts and put into context the meaning of the historical language being used. The improvement made to the schemes of work, adapting some of the more recent National Curriculum guidance and the teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the units being taught, is having a good effect on teaching. Teaching and learning seen during the week of the inspection were good. Teachers and pupils enjoy history. Visitors, and visits to different places of historical interest all help to enrich the curriculum and enhance the knowledge of the periods being studied. These give pupils opportunities to develop skills in speaking and listening, note taking and sketching.

146. The Year 1 pupils enjoy learning about people and events from watching the *Magic Grandad* videos. They begin to show a sense of time as they sequence a range of Teddy bears from 1920 to 2000. The pupils know they are part of history and recall the date of their birth and some of the changes in their short lives. However, the work that a number of pupils produce is not as good as it could be due to the pupils' lack of writing skills. Teachers make good use of videos in Year 2 to help pupils understand what life was like 100 years ago. In a very formal lesson observed the pupils experienced what it was like at school then. They did not like the hand, shoe and nail inspection, sitting still, or the idea of the cane. It was pleasing to see how well the pupils were able to do their handwriting using chalk on black paper. Curiosity is aroused through a good range of Victorian objects on display, which the pupils are able to handle. As a result of discussion pupils know that there was no electricity or plastic when these were used. The teachers were preparing them well for their visit to Holdenby Hall, showing them how to make the clothes to wear for their role as a servant.

147. The work in Year 3 and Year 4 is interesting and exciting. The pupils have already studied the Romans and Anglo Saxons and are beginning to find out what life and work was like during the Viking period. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to work in groups and share their findings about coin making, the bone maker, thatchers, wood workers, fishermen, jewellers and shoemakers. Good use has been made of suitable good quality videos to give pupils a deeper understanding of the time. In general, pupils' ICT skills are underdeveloped but they have been shown how to e-mail and were at the time of the inspection eagerly awaiting their replies from Thor and looking forward to the visit of a Viking Man. Pupils in Year 4 enjoy being 'time detectives' at Kenilworth in 1575. The workshops presented the pupils with a series of activities resulting in the gaining of information about the Elizabethan period and the development of historical enquiry skills.

148. Year 5 pupils celebrate history and successfully learn about Coventry from the time of Leofric. This includes the Combat at Gosford Green in 1397, Longinus and the lost helmet, and the visit of Elizabeth I to Coventry, and builds on the knowledge of Tudor buildings studied in Year 4 and recalls the visits to the Cathedral in Year 3. Their work shows good overall use of historical terms and a good understanding of chronological knowledge. Enquiry skills are developing well, a great improvement from the previous

inspection when this area was less well developed. Good use is made of local knowledge and local sources to find out about this area in the past. These pupils have made good progress.

149. The booklets on Ancient Egypt presented by each pupil in Year 6 show good coverage of this unit of work. Pupils found the British Museum website on Ancient Egypt very useful to research their work on the development of a pyramid, the mummification process, and the discovery of Tutankhamun in 1922. Pupils designed Egyptian necklaces and used beads made from paper to make them. The coffins on display show how well the pupils have understood the craftsmanship and the significance of them.

150. There are good links with geography. Pupils use maps to identify the different places in Britain where people invaded and settled, and world maps to identify the position of Greece, Egypt and the River Nile. Displays celebrate the good links with art, for instance rows of Victorian houses, large Tudor ships made from wood with sails powered by the wind with a mast and crow's nest, large displays of Tudor houses, miniature portraits painted on vellum, Greek masks representing Perseus and Medusa and good observational drawings from the visit to St John's Museum in Warwick.

151. The newly appointed co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has worked hard since being in post to support the subject. She has kept abreast of recent changes occurring nationally and is secure in her knowledge and understanding of the local area but also of the National Curriculum for history. As yet she has not had an opportunity to monitor teaching and learning to identify if they are consistent and progressive. She is aware that assessment is in its early stages of development and that there needs to be a further challenge in writing to meet the needs of the higher attaining pupils. She plans to develop the role of monitoring to ensure teachers continue to use the assessment procedures that are in place and make greater use of ICT.

Areas for development

- Monitor teaching and learning to identify if they are consistent and progressive.
- Continue to use and make greater use of ICT.
- Develop assessment so end of unit tests link to the National Curriculum levels. Use the information to help further planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

152. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are poor, as they were at the last inspection. They are below expectations in communication skills, such as word processing, picture making and using the Internet. They are very low in data handling, using spreadsheets, monitoring and measuring, modelling, using control systems and creating multi-media presentations. Indeed for most of the latter, only those pupils who have good access to computers and help at home understand what these are; most pupils have no experience at all. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in ICT. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, even though they are well supported, do not make sufficient progress. A similar situation exists for pupils with special educational needs.

153. The number of up-to-date computers in school has improved considerably since the last inspection. However, the use of these as tools for learning has only just begun. The school still lacks equipment to fulfil some of the strands of the subject. It does not have appropriate software or equipment for controlling on-screen or floor turtles, nor does it have equipment for monitoring changes in the environment, for example temperature or sound sensors.

154. A recently appointed assistant specifically for ICT is having a very positive impact on provision, especially in Years 5 and 6. She works with small groups of pupils, supporting work in different curriculum areas. A good example was when she worked with less able pupils from Year 6 who were practising measuring angles using an appropriate software package. She also supervises a daily lunchtime drop-in club for Year 5 and 6 pupils. Although pupils are free to choose what they do and often access games on the Internet, they have made significant gains in confidence and skills. When pupils are given opportunities they make very rapid progress. Year 5 pupils have produced some impressive reproductions of Van Gogh's paintings using the Microsoft *Paint* program. Other pupils are confident in word-processing skills – changing the size, colour and style of font and choosing an appropriate format, for example the layout for a poem. Some pupils import pictures.

155. Although there is insufficient evidence to make a judgment on the quality of teaching it is clear that most teachers are reasonably confident using computers; they use computers to produce worksheets and captions for their wall displays. Teachers in Year 5, one of whom is the recently appointed subject leader, have a good understanding of what is needed to develop the subject so that pupils receive their entitlement to the full curriculum. Together, they have begun to audit the resources against what is required. They know that much needs to be done to bring standards to the level expected for pupils to use ICT as a tool and resource. They have not yet had time to have a significant impact on standards, but they have the drive and enthusiasm to make rapid progress as soon as the necessary resources are available. They also need to ensure that teachers in each year know what skills their pupils need to develop to use computers and other technology, such as a digital camera, video and tape recorders and sensors, to support work in all subject areas. The assessment procedure they have begun to use will help in identifying what individual pupils know and can do so that even the most capable and knowledgeable pupils can be challenged instead of being used to help their less proficient classmates. The assistant's support is invaluable in developing the subject.

Areas for development

- Give all pupils sufficient access to computers and other resources to raise standards.
- Ensure all resources needed are provided to meet fully the National Curriculum requirements.
- Ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are taught progressively through the school.
- Ensure that each subject's scheme of work includes specific reference to using all aspects of ICT as a reference source and tool.

MUSIC

156. During the inspection only two class lessons of musical performances by pupils, and individual instrumental teaching were observed. The average standards achieved at the time of the last inspection were in line with those expected nationally and this has been maintained by the end of Year 6. However, the composition element and the assessment procedures recommended in the report have not been sufficiently addressed.

157. It is not possible to make a judgement about standards and pupil achievements in Years 1 and 2 because no music lessons were timetabled to take place during the course of the inspection. The school's planning indicates that the music curriculum follows a published scheme.

158. The positive elements of the music curriculum are essentially focused in singing as a collective activity. The quality of singing is satisfactory in assemblies. The pupils are able to maintain a steady beat, the melody contour has shape, the pupils can discriminate and

utilise variations in the sound patterning and the pitch is fairly accurate although it wavers somewhat on the higher notes. Music is played when the pupils enter the hall for assembly, but a greater focus on the musical appreciation element of the National Curriculum for music would enhance the pupils' understanding of what they hear. There are missed opportunities, for example, to draw pupils' attention to and celebrate the high quality recorder playing by both a member of the staff and pupils. Disappointingly, some of the pupils and adults talked to each other as the music was being played.

159. The lessons seen in Years 3 and 5 indicate that teaching is satisfactory and standards are in line with what is expected nationally. Pupils generally make sound progress. Those pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language do not usually receive additional support in music lessons but they generally make similar progress to their classmates. In one lesson, the pupils produced sounds on un-tuned musical instruments that were beginning to be musical in nature and showed some control over rhythm. The lesson was coherently structured and the satisfactory teaching ensured that the pupils had generally understood the planned learning experience. However, because the lesson was not rigorous enough, there were missed opportunities for them to practise, evaluate and then improve upon their performance. In the other lesson, the notable strength was the pupils' ability to work collaboratively when developing repeated patterns and then performing them to their peers confidently and competently. However, the pupils needed greater challenge in order to move them on to the next stages in the use of musical patterns. This showed an element of uncertainty in the adult's subject knowledge and understanding of the music curriculum.

160. The wealth of musical experiences that the pupils have, such as musical performances at the end of terms, visitors to the school performing on the steel pans, drums, the tabla, and the sitar, is very good. Lessons for individual pupils provide them with a very good foundation in basic skills, notation, knowledge of musical terminology and the mastery of the instrument, because the teaching is very good. The school's strength in music is its provision for individual tuition and extra-curricular activities such as recorder playing and the harmonium. The standards in the older pupils' individual instrumental achievements are well above those expected of this age group. A significant number of these pupils have reached Grades 1 to 5 in external examinations.

161. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership in the subject. She plays an active role in supporting the music curriculum, and gives freely of her time, particularly in raising the profile of the extra-curricular activities. She recognises that the staff need training in order to develop their own skills, knowledge and understanding of the composition element of the curriculum, the use of music technology and assessment. Music has not been an area for development due to the implementation of other national priorities. There has been no monitoring of the class lessons.

Areas for development

- Address the issues raised in the last report regarding composition and assessment.
- Improve class teachers' knowledge of basic skills in the delivery of the curriculum.
- Provide support through monitoring of the curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

162. Standards in physical education are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Overall, pupils make sound progress through the school by developing appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. Those pupils for whom English is an additional language are

well supported by education assistants and bilingual staff, which enables them to make appropriate progress.

163. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Standards have been maintained and some areas of provision have been improved, especially learning resources and extra-curricular activities. However, proper assessment procedures have yet to be introduced, which was an issue raised in the last inspection.

164. It was possible to observe only two lessons during the inspection period so additional evidence was gained from interviews with pupils in Years 2 and 6, through discussions with the acting co-ordinator and by analysing planning documents. This information has formed the basis of judgements in the subject.

165. In Year 2, pupils explore basic skills in a range of activities, including gymnastics, games and country dancing. They understand the need for warm-up and cool-down activities at the beginning and end of lessons. They know the importance of a healthy diet and exercising regularly. Their skills of evaluation of the performance of others are not so well developed and it appears that pupils rely on the guidance of teachers.

166. By Year 6, pupils have become competent swimmers. The vast majority swim distances in excess of 25 metres, using a range of different strokes. The more capable swimmers swim well beyond 100 metres and have become proficient in some survival techniques. These pupils have had a wide experience of games activities at the AT7 centre (a local leisure complex run by the local authority), and gained a sound level of proficiency in athletics activities. A residential trip to Dol-y-Moch in North Wales has also enabled pupils to develop an understanding of outdoor adventurous activities. Teamwork skills have been developed through orienteering, and the challenge of canoeing has enhanced their understanding of water safety and zest for adventure. Pupils understand the effect of exercise on the body but appear to have few opportunities to evaluate the performance of others.

167. Evidence from the two lessons observed shows that teachers manage their classes well and ensure that pupils remain on task. They concentrate on skills' development and give pupils ample time to practise but teachers give insufficient direction and only occasionally are pupils used as good models. Teachers generally give pupils encouragement to improve and use an appropriate range of resources to make lessons interesting. In the two lessons observed, no time was allocated to evaluation of performance by pupils, thus failing to allow pupils the opportunity to think more deeply about their own performance. Pupils enjoy lessons and generally behave well. Teachers ensure that pupils are properly dressed for physical education lessons.

168. The headteacher is acting as temporary co-ordinator and a newly appointed co-ordinator is expected in September. The headteacher has sound knowledge of the subject but does not formally monitor standards. An action plan has been produced and this gives some guidance for future development. The curriculum is good and provides a good range of interesting activities for all pupils, especially in Year 6. There are appropriate links for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills through discussion and recording measurement. Extra-curricular activities are also good and there are clubs for cricket, football, netball and basketball, organised by teachers and parents. This allows some of the more talented pupils to attain higher standards in games activities. The accommodation has good indoor and outdoor facilities and the school possesses a good range of learning resources which supports and enhances the pupils' learning.

Areas for development

- Introduce assessment procedures linked to the curriculum.
- Encourage pupils to evaluate their own performance and the performance of others in order to know how they can improve.
- Undertake monitoring of lessons in order to evaluate the standards throughout the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

169. The standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 are broadly in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, but these have fallen to below expectations by the time the pupils reach the end of Year 6. This is a worse position than at the last inspection, when standards in Year 2 were said to be good and progress was judged good throughout the school. Achievement is now satisfactory at the infant stage, but there is a decline in the junior years. There are a number of reasons for this, including a failure to cover the full curriculum set out in the locally agreed syllabus. In particular, insufficient time is given to the study of Christianity in the upper junior years, with the result that the older pupils are often confused and ill informed. In discussion, Year 6 pupils could not distinguish between the Old and New Testaments of the Bible and recalled nothing about Moses. They knew little about worship and celebrations such as the place of Holy Communion in the Christian tradition. However, they did have some factual knowledge of Hinduism and Sikhism. Pupils from minority ethnic groups spoke confidently about their own faiths as experienced in the family setting.

170. By the end of Year 6 the pupils' books indicate that expectations are not high enough. Written work is concerned almost exclusively with basic factual information rather than dealing with challenging topics that require higher order thinking. Written work on Sikhism and Hinduism in Year 6 is in some respects less demanding than that undertaken in Year 4. Whilst links with personal and social development are often good, the older pupils are not developing a mature understanding of the influence of religious belief on people's lives and actions. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, the pupils could not attempt to explain why Mohammad was initially unwilling to take on the role of messenger of Allah but subsequently agreed. The younger pupils are doing better. An extended topic on the Christmas story in Year 2 produced some detailed writing of an average standard for this age-group, whilst pupils in discussion showed a secure understanding of festivals from different world faiths. Their recollection of key narratives from the faiths they have studied is patchy, though.

171. Since only two lessons were directly observed, it is not possible to make a valid judgement about teaching and learning. A lesson observed in Year 5 successfully introduced the pupils to the story of the call of Mohammad and the first Pillar of Wisdom. The teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge, and provided every opportunity for the pupils to reflect on the story and to interpret it in the light of their own experience. In Year 1 an appropriate video extract was used to introduce the pupils to the concept of forgiveness in a short session. There is some worthwhile use of visits to support learning, especially the Year 3 visits to Coventry Cathedral.

172. The management of this subject is a weakness. The curriculum is not adequately organised to ensure that the full requirements of the Coventry Agreed Syllabus are met. There is no formal system of assessment and no monitoring of standards or teaching, so the co-ordinator cannot be sure what is going on throughout the school. In some classes there is a tendency for ill-defined 'caring and sharing' to predominate over the study of the key elements of authority, belief, celebration, relationships and worship as set out in the agreed syllabus.

Areas for development

- Re-organise the curriculum to ensure adequate coverage of the agreed syllabus, especially giving appropriate time to Christianity.
- Raise teachers' expectations about what could be achieved by the older pupils.
- Introduce a system for assessing the development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.