

INSPECTION REPORT

THE BROOK SCHOOL

Wordsley, Stourbridge, West Midlands

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103778

Headteacher: Ms L M Cartwright

Reporting inspector: John Stephens
1699

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th October 2002

Inspection number: 246314

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

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Appropriate authority: Dudley

Name of chair of governors: Mr T Harper

Date of previous inspection: 14th – 15th June 2000

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9880	Tony Comer	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22434	Sandra Bradshaw	Team inspector	Geography, History, Music	
1967	Jennie Willcock-Bates	Team inspector	Science, Art, Religious Education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
26961	Michael Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology, Design and Technology, Physical Education, Education Inclusion, Special Educational Needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brook Primary School is situated in Dudley in the West Midlands. It serves a mix of owner-occupied and rented housing built in the 1930's and 1950's and two modern housing estates. There are currently 218 pupils on roll. The pupils are predominantly white European. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is 14%, broadly in line with national averages. The school reports that the closure of local manufacturing industries, particularly steel and glass, have produced a rise in unemployment levels in the area, with more people working part time. Twenty four per cent of the pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is equivalent to the national average. There are two pupils with statements, which is well below the national average. One pupil has English as an additional language. The pupils' overall standards on entry to the school are below the national average.

Following an Ofsted inspection in January 1999 the school was put into special measures. In June 2000 the school was removed from special measures, and was presented with a School Achievement Award. The school is accommodated in a 1930s building, previously a small secondary school, which has recently been attractively refurbished.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Brook School is a very good school, and is led with flair and vision by the headteacher, key staff and governing body. Standards are rising, and are now above average at Key Stage 1. There is a great deal of good teaching, and pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. The behaviour of pupils is good, and the school provides them with a secure and caring environment. The high quality of personal relationships is based on mutual trust and respect. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Financial management is very good, and the school makes very effective use of its funding to benefit the pupils. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in art, music and information and communication technology are above the national average.
- Standards of teaching are good overall, and very good in the Reception class, Year 2 and Year 6.
- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership, and with the support of key staff has created a school community with a shared commitment to success.
- Excellent relationships at all levels encourage a positive ethos, very good behaviour by the pupils and an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- The school cares for pupils very well, and gives them very good support and guidance.
- The opportunities offered by the broad curriculum are enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Provision for the moral and social development of pupils is very good.
- The management of special educational needs is very effective, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution, and pupils with special needs make very good progress; the school is an inclusive institution.
- The governing body carries out its duties very effectively, and has an increasingly important role in shaping the direction of the school.
- The school's increasingly close links with parents and the local community broaden the educational experience offered to pupils.

What could be improved

- The standards reached by the pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are not as high as those reached by the pupils currently in Key Stage 1.
- The marking of written work does not give pupils sufficient guidance on how they can improve.

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 June 2000, and there has been good improvement with the key issues. Standards have risen in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Standards in music, art and information and communication technology are now above average, and there has been satisfactory progress in the other foundation subjects. The overall quality of teaching has improved, and lessons now move at a faster pace, with a corresponding increase in the quality of learning. The headteacher has carried out a formal programme of lesson observation, and subject leaders have monitored planning and the pupils' work. Improved procedures for assessment and tracking the progress of pupils have been devised, and are gradually being implemented.

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	E	D	D	D
mathematics	C	E	E	D
science	B	E	D	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Standards on entry to the reception class are slightly below the national expectation, but the pupils make good progress and they reach satisfactory levels by the end of the year. Overall standards at the end of Year 2 are above the national average, and there has been a steady improvement since 1999. Standards are not as high at the end of Year 6, but are consistent with the expectations for that cohort of pupils and are improving. Although the tables used for the calculation puts the comparison with similar schools as below average for all subjects, the school's results only just fall into that category, and are probably better than the table suggests. Girls perform better than boys at all ages, but the difference is considerably less than that found nationally.

Standards in English are good for the younger pupils and satisfactory for the older ones. Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening, and there has been a pleasing improvement in the standards of writing, especially for the younger pupils. Overall standards of reading are generally good. Mathematics follows a similar pattern, with above average standards at the end of Year 2, and average standards at the end of Year 6. The standards reached by the higher-attaining pupils in mathematics are not sufficiently high. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. There are above average standards in art, music and information and communication technology. Standards are satisfactory in religious education and the other foundation subjects. The school sets sufficiently challenging targets for the performance of pupils, and this year has been successful in meeting or exceeding most of them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the schools are very good. They enjoy coming to school, and show a high level of interest in their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall levels of behaviour are very good, and can be excellent in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships at all levels in the school are excellent, as are opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are above the national average and unauthorised absence is rare.

The attitudes of pupils to their learning, their behaviour, and the quality of inter-personal relationships are great strengths of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good throughout the school. Lessons are well planned, and the learning objectives are carefully explained to pupils. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace, and tasks are carefully matched to the pupils' attainment levels. In mathematics, extension activities for more-able pupils do not always encourage them to take their thinking further. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well, and the school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark Assessment for its work in this area.

Teaching across the school is good overall, and three out of every four lessons seen during the inspection were good or better. In the best lessons, the teachers have high expectations of the pupils and challenge their thinking. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teaching assistants provide very good support in the classroom. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' progress. Although teachers give helpful advice to pupils during lessons, the marking of written work rarely tells pupils how they can improve.

The pupils have good learning skills. They show interest in their work, can sustain concentration and co-operate well with the teachers and each other.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced, and provides very good learning opportunities for the pupils; the school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, and allows them full access to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision for personal development is good. Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. The provision for moral and social development is very good, and a strength of the school. There is a strong sense of community in the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The personal support and guidance given to pupils are excellent. The school provides a safe and caring environment.

There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics. The strong arts aspect of the schools curriculum enhances the pupils' creative, physical and intellectual development. The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils are excellent. There are new and effective systems for assessing the academic performance of pupils and using this information to guide planning, but their use is not yet consistent.

The school's partnership with parents is good, and parents are consulted on a range of aspects of school life. Significant efforts are made to involve parents in the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides inspirational leadership, and is ably supported by key staff. There is a clear and shared vision for the development of the school which is being put into practice.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a good knowledge of the school, and are playing an increasingly important role in its development. They fulfil all their statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are a range of formal structures for monitoring the effectiveness of the school. The headteacher has promoted a culture of effective self-evaluation.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial planning is well organised, and the school seeks value for money in its use of resources. Funds are targeted to maximise the benefits for pupils. Effective use is made of the school budget and the considerable number of additional grants which the school has worked to obtain.

In the last few years, there have been radical improvements in the way this school is managed. There is a clear purpose and sense of direction which is shared by the whole school community, including the pupils.

The principles of best value are implicit in the school's practice. Data is used extensively to compare the school's performance with others. There is wide consultation when important decisions are made and care is taken to get value for money when buying resources and services.

The school has a sufficient number of appropriately qualified staff. Generally the school is well resourced, and a particular strength is the high number of computers available for pupils. The imaginatively refurbished building provides a very good working environment for pupils and staff.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The good teaching in the school. • Their children like coming to school. • The school is very approachable if parents have a question or problem. • The teachers expect pupils to work hard and achieve their best. • Their children are being helped to become mature and responsible. • The interesting range of activities outside lessons. • The management and leadership of the school. • The great improvement in the quality of the building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work pupils are given to do at home.

Virtually all the parental views about the school were very positive. A quarter of the parents who returned the questionnaire felt that pupils did not get the right amount of homework. However, only 51 questionnaires were returned. The inspection found no evidence that the amount of homework was inappropriate.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is slightly below expectations of the local education authority's baseline assessment. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of the reception year, the majority of children will achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. They are well prepared for the National Curriculum. In relation to their attainment on entry most children make good progress in acquiring speaking, listening, reading and writing skills, and by the end of the Foundation Stage most children meet the expected standards in those areas. Most children can count up to 20, and some of the more able ones can recognise numbers to 20. Children make good progress in this area. Many of the children are developing good computer skills. They can control the mouse, and are familiar with the names of the various parts of a computer.

2. Overall standards for pupils at the end of Year 2 are above the national average. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests standards in reading were above average in comparison with all schools nationally and similar schools, while standards of writing and mathematics were well above average on both counts. In the most recent tests (2002) the results for reading and mathematics were above the national average, with writing in line. In the 1999 tests results in all three areas were well below the national average. Since then there has been a steady improvement. Given the standards of pupils on entry to the school, the standards reached by the end of Year 2 indicate good levels of achievement by the pupils. The findings of the inspection confirm the above average standards at the end of Year 2.

3. When compared to national expectations, standards for pupils currently at the end of Year 6 are as high as for those currently at the end of Year 2, although there has been an improving trend since 1999. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above in English improved by 10% from the previous year, and the mathematics results improved by 11%. Science results exceeded the school's target by 10%. When compared with 2002 national results the number of pupils reaching Level 4 and above in English was 3% below the average for all schools, maths was 4% below and science was 1% above. Using the national benchmarking tables, all three subjects do less well than similar schools. However, this finding has to be treated with some caution, as the school is at the lowest end of the category which determines this judgement. If the school was placed in the previous category results would be well above average in comparison to similar schools. The percentage of pupils in 2002 who reached the higher Level 5 in all three subjects is lower than the national average. However, the school's data shows that this was consistent with the levels of previous attainment in that cohort of pupils. The findings of the inspection, and the school's own data, indicate that although standards at the end of Year 6 are lower than those for younger pupils, they are consistent with the prior attainment of the pupils. However, the school will need to ensure that the higher standards at Key Stage 1 result in further improvements as the pupils move through the school.

4. At the end of Year 2 the girls perform better than the boys in reading, writing and mathematics, but in all cases the differences are considerably less than that found nationally. The gap in performance is wider when the pupils have reached the end of Year 6, but is still much lower than the national average. The school has made good progress in this area since 1999, when the girls performed considerably better than the boys.

5. The school allocates a large proportion of its curriculum time to English and the development of literacy skills. Standard of speaking and listening are below average when pupils enter the school and are good when they leave the school. Pupils achieve very well in this area of the English curriculum. This is partly because the strong arts base to the curriculum, and drama in particular, encourage the pupils to be confident in a variety of situations. Many pupils, particularly in the older classes, speak with equal assurance when discussing in pairs and addressing the whole class. The members of the school council talked to visitors about the school, and their role, with pleasing confidence. The pupils have good listening skills, which allow a good standard of group discussion.

6. Achievement in reading is good. Pupils read confidently and with enjoyment. They can talk about their reading preferences, have a personal response to literature, and a good understanding of how language is used for effect in both fiction and non-fiction texts. They have a good knowledge of the range of technical terms which are used in different sorts of texts. Younger children who are not yet fluent in reading are able, and willing, to 'read' a version of the text to each other and adults. Standards of writing are improving in the school, largely because the school has supplemented the literacy hour with a weekly extended writing session for all pupils. Many pupils, particularly those with higher levels of attainment, produce writing of sustained length. In the best examples, the writing is lively and imaginative. Pupils produce improved drafts of their written work. They write in a variety of styles. The strong focus on writing has enabled pupils at the end of Year 2 to achieve as well in writing as in reading, which is contrary to the national picture where writing lags behind. Standards of presentation are good, but standards of spelling and punctuation are not sufficiently high, especially for the older pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

7. In mathematics, pupils attain standards at the end of Year 2 which are above those expected for their age. At the end of Year 6, standards are in line with those reached nationally. There is an upward trend in standards. However, some of the higher-attaining pupils are not reaching sufficiently high standards, because they are not being given tasks which extend their thinking. Pupils with special educational needs achieve particularly well. By the age of seven pupils can count back in ones and tens from any two-digit number, and recognise two-digit multiples of two, five and ten. More-able pupils identify multiples of three, four and six. By the age of eleven, all but the lowest-attaining pupils can round whole numbers to the nearest thousand and multiply and divide decimals by ten. Higher-ability pupils are able to extend this multiplication by one hundred. Pupils can extract information from tables, graphs and charts, and higher-attaining pupils can use simple spreadsheets independently.

8. Standards in science show a different pattern to the other core subjects. In this subject, standards are satisfactory at the end of Year 2. Results are also average at the end of Year 6, but a significant proportion of pupils are reaching higher than average levels. Standards have improved since the last Ofsted inspection in 2000.

9. Standards in information and communication technology are above average overall. The youngest pupils are familiar with the operation of a range of devices, while older children show that they can apply the technology very effectively to research, to experiment and to communicate ideas. Pupils use the internet to research, copy and paste images into their work,

combining these with text. By the end of Year 6 pupils have reached a good standard. They use a range of subject specific language, and experiment with the potential of an information technology program, adding both sound and images to the slides they create.

10. Standards are above average in art and music. In art, standards of drawing and painting are particularly high. The pupils are confident with a wide range of media, such as clay, paint, crayon and pencil. In music, standards are above those expected for pupils aged seven and those aged eleven. Standards of performance in singing are particularly high. The pupils' diction is clear, and they listen carefully to the music. The majority of pupils are able to relate sounds to symbols. As they move through the school, pupils extend their musical vocabulary, and explain their feelings and preferences.

11. Standards in religious education are in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have a good knowledge of world religions, and the deities and holy literature associated with them. Standards in the other foundation subjects are average overall, and there has been a general improvement since the last inspection. In physical education extra-curricular activities are contributing to improved standards in dance, although this has yet to be reflected in all lessons.

12. Pupils who have special educational needs regularly achieve their targets because of the good planning by teachers and the very effective support of the teaching assistants. They receive effective feedback about their learning and achieve very well when they are working in the classroom or on the few occasions that they are appropriately withdrawn. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when pupils were making satisfactory and occasionally good progress in reaching their targets. Although the school currently has no requirement for Pastoral Support Plans, behaviour monitoring is rigorous with the result that all pupils, including those with behavioural difficulties, are achieving well for their abilities. The school is also very good at motivating those pupils who do not readily engage with the curriculum. For example, when a pupil who experiences both behavioural and speech and language difficulties loses concentration and interferes with the work of others, a teaching assistant sensitively diverts him to work in which he has a particular interest and then gently redirects him to the original task. Throughout the school differences in gender, ethnicity, disability or social background do not affect the pupils' capacity to learn, and consequently all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Overall, pupils attitudes, values and personal development have improved since the last inspection, particularly with regard to relationships within the school.

14. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy coming to school and show a high level of interest in their lessons and in the range of activities outside the classroom. Parents believe that their children like school and that they are encouraged to work hard and do their best. Parents also believe that behaviour is good and that the school helps children to become mature and responsible. The inspection evidence supports the very positive views of parents.

15. Overall, behaviour is very good. Pupils and teachers speak of the benefits that recent improvements in behaviour have had on the life of the school. In lessons where teaching is

particularly challenging and the pace of the lesson is brisk, behaviour can be excellent. There was no unsatisfactory behaviour in lessons during the inspection. Pupils play happily together and move around the school sensibly and politely. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour reflect their self-confidence and their respect for each other and for their environment. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour. There have been two fixed period exclusions during the past year.

16. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are excellent. Opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility are also excellent. The school council, the system of monitors and prefects, the involvement of pupils in setting class rules, and of pupils taking special responsibilities in assemblies, are good examples of this. Opportunities for pupils to be involved in the progress of their own learning through target setting and reviews are impressive. The range of educational visits, visitors and after-school activities, as well as the emphasis that the school places on personal, social and health education, all contribute significantly to pupils' personal development.

17. The school has established good relationships with the outside agencies that provide support for pupils who have special educational needs. In consultation with the headteacher and the senior management team, the co-ordinator has identified funds to purchase a relevant and appropriate range of support. The guidance received is effectively followed through into action. Pupils' needs are promptly addressed and are carefully monitored so that the level of provision is appropriate and the requirements of statements of special educational need are met.

18. Pupils' attendance remains good, and is above the national average. Unauthorised absence is rare. Pupils' punctuality is generally good and lessons begin on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching across the school is good overall. Teaching was good or better in three out of every four lessons observed during the inspection, which is a high proportion. Of the 59 lessons seen, only two were considered unsatisfactory. In reception, teaching was always very good and sometimes excellent. The most consistently good teaching was seen in reception, Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching observed during this inspection represents a continuing improvement since the previous one. Parents at the parents' meeting commented positively on the quality of teaching in the school.

20. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and sometimes excellent and has a significant impact on children's learning. There is a good balance between activities directed by the teacher and those that the children choose for themselves. The teaching is based on very good planning that identifies clear learning targets in all areas. Groups of children are organised very well and have good access to resources, which foster the purposeful working atmosphere and very good behaviour. The staff plan the activities together to ensure that all children have equal access to the rich and varied curriculum. Children of this age have short attention spans and the teachers work very hard to keep them interested. Interesting activities are planned which encourage all children to take an active part in the lessons. Very careful assessment during lessons takes good account of children's progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. The nursery nurse is deployed very effectively in lessons and she makes a very positive contribution to children's learning.

21. The quality of the teaching in the five-to-seven years age-group is good overall. The teaching of Year 2 pupils is a strength of the school. All the teachers' planning is good; and identifies very effectively what pupils are expected to learn. This expectation is always shared with the pupils at the start of lessons. The teachers are good at questioning pupils. By encouraging them to think about the answers they promote the learning of basic skills. For example, in an excellent history lesson in the Year 2 class, the teacher assessed the pupils' response to her questions, and was then able to emphasise and recapitulate certain basic facts about the Great Fire of London. This helped pupils reinforce learning about the effect of the wind and how the fire spread so quickly across the city. Lessons usually move at a good pace, ensuring that the maximum amount of learning takes place.

22. In the seven-to-eleven age-group teaching is good. When teaching is very good it is characterised by high expectations, the teachers' good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching, good pace and appropriate activities which meet the needs of all pupils. The very good teaching seen in the Year 6 classes has a direct impact on the quality of the pupils' learning. In less effective lessons, group work does not always meet the needs of the pupils and teachers are less secure in their knowledge of the subject.

23. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is very good. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to ensure that policies, schemes of work, resources and the deployment of support staff reflect the needs of all pupils. Their learning benefits greatly from the productive partnership between teachers and teaching assistants. The assistants regularly sit beside groups of pupils during the oral part of literacy and numeracy sessions, using a small whiteboard to explain difficulties and to enable pupils to try out their own ideas. Group education plans are often addressed by a well trained teaching assistant who directly teaches a small number of pupils in a separate room, but adapting the teacher's lesson plan so that it directly meets the learning targets identified for the children. Good use is also made of information and communication technology to provide suitable learning opportunities for pupils who have special educational needs, both during lessons, and in the group or individual sessions with teaching assistants, when a range of appropriate games and language based activities are also used. The special needs of pupils are identified early, resulting in a significant number of children moving to a lower stage of support as they progress through the school, their needs having been addressed. The co-ordinator has identified the need to continue to provide support and training for teachers. In particular they need to respond effectively to one of the requirements of the new Code of Practice, that all staff be sufficiently skilled to be teachers of special needs in their own teaching situation.

24. The teacher's subject knowledge is good overall. Technical competence in the teaching of basic skills is good and consequently the literacy and numeracy strategies are being taught well. This was demonstrated in a very good mathematics lesson for Year 6 pupils who were learning about equivalent fractions. Pupils used their knowledge of multiplication tables to help them help them produce further multiples. In a science lesson for Year 6 pupils, the teacher skilfully challenged pupils thinking' enabling them to apply the skills they had learned about the pollination of a plant to new ideas and concepts related to seed dispersal.

25. The planning of lessons is good throughout the school. Pupils are aware of what they should be learning, which helps them to make progress. For example, in a very good physical

education lesson pupils were told that by the end of the lesson they should all be able to pass a rugby ball effectively. The teacher ensured that all pupils felt able to achieve this objective. During this lesson, pupils were given the task of passing the ball a number of times for a specified distance. The teacher ensured that the tasks were well matched to the individual needs of the pupils. Teachers use time effectively in most lessons. There are punctual starts, and the careful planning means that lessons move at a good pace, which allows the maximum time for learning.

26. Overall, the teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve, and the level of challenge, are high in many lessons. In the very best lessons they are very high, and pupils are clearly motivated to learn new skills, as seen in a science lesson in Year 2. Pupils were involved in finding out how ice melts. The teacher gave the pupils guidance to assist their writing, so that they could record the findings of the experiment and hypothesise the rate of melting. Pupils were encouraged to observe and to return to the experiment after thirty minutes. Their learning accelerated as they discovered that they had underestimated the rate of melting. The teacher's enthusiasm and inspirational approach enabled pupils of all levels of attainment to achieve highly in this lesson.

27. An effective range of teaching methods is used across the school. A good feature is the use of practical activity to ensure lessons are made interesting and to promote effective learning. For instance, in a numeracy lesson in the Foundation Stage, the children were required to add one more to a given number. Prior to their recording, the teacher involved all the children in adding one more by using their hands at first and then adding one more package of groceries to the cupboard. Pupils are grouped according to ability in many lessons and this enables all pupils to make good progress. Teachers use white boards very well to demonstrate teaching points and to assist pupils in their understanding of new concepts. Information and communication technology is used very effectively throughout the school.

28. Teachers manage pupils well in lessons and their expectations of behaviour are high. On the odd occasion when there is a lapse in pupils' behaviour, it is dealt with in a caring but firm way. Staff have established a positive rapport with the pupils and this results in a good atmosphere for learning across the school. The majority of pupils respond positively to this and, as a result, behaviour in lessons is very good. Teachers and pupils respect each other.

29. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' progress are good in all subjects. However, in most of the foundation subjects the procedures are at an early stage of development. The setting of individual targets is developing and pupils' self-assessment is at an early stage. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent across the school. Although most work is marked positively there are few indications of what the pupils' need to do next to improve. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for homework and it is often used well to support learning in class.

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

30. The quality of curricular and other learning opportunities is very good and prepares the pupils well for the next stages of their education. This is because an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum is in place. There is full compliance with statutory requirements. The strengths in the curriculum identified by the previous inspection have been maintained.

All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. The quality and range of learning opportunities for the reception year are now very good. Exciting activities capture the children's interest as they systematically work towards the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals.

31. The national guidance on the curriculum for primary schools has now been evaluated and adapted to meet the needs of the pupils. The strong and appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics means that the learning needs of all pupils are met. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is very good and individual education plans are regularly reviewed, with targeted activities that will help pupils to achieve. All pupils are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum and planning takes account of the type and extent of pupils' difficulties in order to provide full access. Teachers plan to ensure that pupils are able to work at their own level in most lessons and, when pupils are withdrawn from the class, their learning moves forward at a good pace. The policy for special educational needs is in line with the Code of Practice. The school is effectively implementing the changes in procedure that have recently been introduced.

32. The curriculum is broad. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching and the organisation into groups related to levels of attainment in Year 5 and 6. The arts curriculum is one of the school's strengths, and it enhances the pupils' creative, physical and intellectual development. The provision for literacy and numeracy is well co-ordinated. Teachers use very effective strategies to teach English and mathematics and these are helping to steadily raise the pupils' attainment. Skills in reading and writing are taught in most subjects. In addition, there is a good range of planned opportunities for information and communication technology to be used as a tool for learning in other subjects. Consequently, pupils' basic skills are developed systematically as they progress through the school.

33. Planning is very good and ensures that the curriculum is relevant to the pupils. It is closely matched to the pupils needs. On a few occasions in mathematics and history for example, tasks planned to extend and challenge the learning of high-attaining pupils were not as successful or interesting as they should be. The school's curriculum framework is effective and schemes and guidance for all subjects are regularly updated and reviewed. They help teachers decide what they should be teaching and when. Teachers' planning in the long and short term is detailed and monitored appropriately by subject leaders and the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 curriculum co-ordinators. Lesson planning always shows what is to be learned in lessons.

34. The provision for extra-curricular activities outside lessons is very good. The school has rightly been awarded an 'Out of School Extra Award' for this area of its work. The provision significantly enhances the pupils' learning and attainment in many areas, including art, information and communication technology, music and sport. The breakfast club and Brook Buddies after-school club provide additional activities to promote the pupils' development. The curriculum is also enriched by visits to the library, museums and places of interest. A residential visit enables the pupils to experience outdoor and adventurous activities. Visiting specialists and experts, including local clergy, artists, professional coaches provided by a sports programme, and musicians are used to enhance the provision.

35. All teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to ensure that all boys and girls have equality of opportunities and full access across the curriculum. As a result, the provision

for all groups of pupils within the school is very good and they are achieving well. Careful planning ensures that whatever pupils' attainment or needs they are fully involved in all activities. The school is particularly successful with pupils who have difficulties conforming to the code of behaviour. Clear boundaries are set and activities are planned to be of an appropriate length and interest to motivate them to meet their targets for good behaviour.

36. The provision for the personal, social and health education is good. The well-designed programme of work is having an impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. This area is taught successfully through weekly lessons and group work called 'circle-time'. The ideas that underpin this programme are often emphasised in other lessons and reflected in the school and classroom rules. This makes a significant contribution to the excellent relationships in the school. The staff provide very good role models and the school council is used to enable pupils to comment on the curriculum and its organisation. There are appropriate arrangements for sex education and teaching about the consequences of abusing drugs. Pupils visit the local secondary school to ensure a smooth transition at the end of Year 6. Good links are developing with the use of specialist support from visiting teachers. The very good relationships with the independent pre-school called 'Brook Butterflies', which is situated in the school, helps the children make a smooth transition to the Reception classes. Good links with the local community, including the church, the local nurse and the police, enhance the pupils' personal development.

37. The provision for spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good overall and there are significant strengths in the provision for the pupils' moral and social development. The strengths identified by the previous inspection have been maintained. Opportunities for pupils' spiritual development are satisfactory. Teaching programmes in art and science enhance the pupils' awareness of the wonder of nature and the mystery of life. Religious education helps pupils examine values and beliefs. However, there are not always sufficient opportunities for the pupils to reflect quietly and think about what they have learned and been taught. The pupils' spiritual awareness is developed appropriately through celebrating Christian festivals.

38. The provision for the pupils' moral development is very good and one of the school's strengths. A clear moral code forms the basis for behaviour that promotes racial and religious equality and respect for individual differences. Teachers encourage the pupils to respect their own views and establish their understanding of right and wrong. The school provides a safe environment, inspiring confidence in pupils to discuss their concerns, rights and responsibilities. The use of group work allows opportunities for pupils to express and develop their moral views. Consequently, pupils fully understand the impact of their behaviour on others.

39. The provision for pupils' social development is another strength of the school. The staff provide very effective role models by promoting supportive relationships with each other and with pupils. There is a strong sense of community within the school and teachers provide a broad range of opportunities for pupils to work together and discuss their activities. For example, assemblies, sports, music, dance and the well-established group work enable pupils to work and play corporately. Strategies such as the 'Golden Book' encourage pupils to build upon and be proud of their strengths and talents. In lessons, pupils strive to move their names to the 'happy side' as recognition of good effort and behaviour. Pupils have responsibilities within the school and their involvement in raising money for charities contributes to their understanding of citizenship. Responsibilities such as head boy and girl, prefects and monitors have to be earned and are taken very seriously by the pupils. The school council enables the pupils to be involved in decision making processes and contribute to the development of the school community as a whole.

40. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Religious education and art enhance the pupils' appreciation of other cultures and religions. The personal, social and health education programme and religious education and geography help pupils to explore their understanding of their own culture and the cultural traditions of others. However, cultural awareness is not yet systematically planned into other subjects such as literacy, numeracy and history. Good use of visitors to work with pupils promotes the values and beliefs of other ethnic groups. This helps pupils appreciate the richness and diversity of other cultural traditions. The school's clear policy to combat and confront racism promotes a respect and understanding of cultural diversity.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The personal support and guidance which pupils receive, both formal and informal, are excellent. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions and problems. The school is a very caring environment where teachers, support and administrative staff know the pupils and their families well and respond to their needs. The support for the under-fives and for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school's caring approach is exemplified by such things as The 'Brook Buddies' before- and after-school clubs, the parent and toddler group, the close involvement of the local police and the various initiatives undertaken with local secondary schools.

42. Overall, procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are good, and the school has well planned procedures in this area. This is particularly so for pupils who have special educational needs. There are also plans in place to enhance the way pupils learn independently through developing their learning styles, thinking skills and greater involvement in self-evaluation. The school has an impressive range of assessment data, from both internal and external sources, that informs whole-school curriculum planning. However, the assessment data is not consistently used across all subjects, particularly in the foundation subjects, for short-term lesson planning. The school's assessment procedures are now clearly formulated, but this is a recent development and they have not yet made a consistent impact on teaching and learning.

43. The school has made satisfactory progress in formulating and implementing a policy for personal social and health education. A recent survey (Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire) of pupils' views about a number of aspects of school life has provided valuable data that has been put to good use in planning this curriculum. Plans are in place for additional training of the subject leaders and teachers to ensure that there is consistent implementation across the school.

44. The school policies and procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. Teachers use a variety of strategies in the classroom to manage the behaviour of pupils, who respond very positively. A small number of pupils have individual behaviour plans that are regularly reviewed with pupils and parents. The school also receives valuable support from the 'pupil support unit' of Saltwell Educational Development Centre. Pupils understand and respect the system of rewards and sanctions. The 'buddy boards', which give a visual behaviour reminder to pupils, the nomination of 'pupil of the week' and the 'Golden Book' assemblies are good examples of the positive ethos that exists. Pupils help to formulate and respect their class rules and the playground code of behaviour.

45. The school has established good relationships with the outside agencies that provide support for pupils who have special educational needs. In consultation with the head teacher and the senior management team, the special educational needs co-ordinator has identified funds to purchase a relevant and appropriate range of support. The guidance received is effectively followed through into action. Pupils' needs are promptly addressed and are carefully monitored so that the level of provision is appropriate and the requirements of statements of special need are met.

46. Policies and procedures for promoting health and safety are good, including teachers promoting healthy and safe practices in the classroom. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are excellent. Liaison with the education welfare service and with a variety of other outside agencies further underpins the effective care of pupils.

47. Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance and punctuality are very good. A new electronic recording system and the close liaison with the Education Welfare Service exemplify these procedures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents and the impact that their contribution has on the life of the school is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. Those parents (approximately one quarter) who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire' or who attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting have very positive views on what the school provides and achieves. The inspection evidence supports the positive views of these parents.

49. There is an effective range of methods of communication between the school and parents, with information provided through regular newsletters, notice boards, parents' meetings and annual reports. A 'parent pack' is issued to all parents annually and contains useful general information, as well as information about the curriculum, homework and a copy of the home school agreement. A school website is also being developed. Parents know that they can discuss issues informally with staff and appreciate the 'openness' of the school in this respect. Parents have been consulted, as part of a 'stakeholder survey', on a range of aspects of school life and their opinions have influenced school planning. Pupil reports are satisfactory. They give parents a clear picture of children's knowledge and progress, but lack information on pupil targets, attainment levels and comparisons of progress with others of the same age, both locally and nationally. The school has plans to include this information in future. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are maintained effectively and parents are involved in the review process.

50. The school makes significant efforts to encourage parental involvement in the life of the school. A member of staff has been appointed to manage home-school liaison and this appointment is proving effective. A number of parents provide help in the classroom and in other activities. The school is encouraging others to participate by running parent workshops. Parents are encouraged to attend the 'Golden Book' assemblies and many do. There is a supportive home school association that raises a significant sum of money to supplement the school budget. Parents have been provided with a small room in the school to enable them to meet on the premises. Elected parent governors, as well as other governors who are parents, are committed to the activities of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. In 1999 the school was put into special measures, largely on account of unsatisfactory leadership and management. There have since been radical improvements in this area of practice. The school now has excellent leadership, spends its money efficiently and is becoming a very effective self-evaluating institution.

52. The headteacher provides energetic and inspirational leadership. Her very clear vision for the development of the school has at its heart the promotion of excellence by providing a broad learning experience for pupils, and the creation of an institution which has a vital role within the community. She has been very successful in sharing her vision with the staff, the governors and the parents, who all understand and support it. There is also evidence that, in their own terms, the pupils also recognise the headteacher's priorities. In making the vision a reality, she is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and key staff.

53. The headteacher's success in creating a shared sense of purpose in the school has included a recognition that while some external support is needed, there is also expertise within the school that can be used to move the institution forward. Staff have been encouraged to exercise responsibility. Where necessary the headteacher has initially taken charge of an area, with the intention of delegating responsibility when she feels it is appropriate to do so. An example of this is the co-ordination of the curriculum. The headteacher took charge for a year, during which time she carried out a complete review of the curriculum. The responsibility has now been handed to two key stage co-ordinators, who are receiving induction support from the headteacher as they grow into their roles.

54. The school's shared vision is expressed very well in its explicit aims. These emphasise the need not only to create a happy and caring community, but also the need for a balanced and rigorous curriculum, challenging standards and the highest quality teaching and resources. There is also a statement stressing the importance of the school in the community. In many ways, the school is becoming successful in meeting these aims. Pupils are cared for very well, and inter-personal relationships are excellent. The curriculum is interestingly broad, and staff are responding to the headteacher's promotion of high expectations of the pupils. The overall quality of teaching is high, and the school is acquiring an increasing role in the community.

55. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is well trained and committed to her own professional development. She ensures that teachers and teaching assistants are alert to the criteria for identification of all areas in which specific support may be required. Teaching assistants are very well trained, both as a result of supported experience in school and the opportunity to attend courses. This has a positive impact on pupils' achievement. There is a good range of resources that is well used to help pupils participate in lessons and support them in their specific learning programmes. The governor responsible for special educational needs maintains both formal and informal contact and, together with the co-ordinator, drafts a termly programme for her input. As a result of the good management by the co-ordinator, provision is effectively targeted and the achievement of pupils is good.

56. In her first year in post, the headteacher has spent a considerable amount of time monitoring the teaching in the school. There is an extensive record of her classroom

observations. The lesson observation notes are thorough, and provide a good basis for feedback to teachers on their strengths and areas for development. The observations have an appropriate focus on what has actually been learnt by pupils during the lesson. One result of the headteacher's programme of visits was a very useful summary report on literacy and numeracy lessons in the school. The subject leaders have a clear monitoring role, and last year they focused on the quality of planning within their particular subjects. There was ongoing feedback to individual staff, and feedback to the whole staff at the end of last term. There has been little formal observation of teaching by subject leaders, but the development of this appears in the school's improvement plan for the current year.

57. The school improvement plan is an impressive document. The priorities for development have been determined following extensive consultation, involving staff, governors, parents, pupils and the local education authority. The plan is strongly focused on raising standards. The schools analyses assessment and performance data very thoroughly, and the results of the analysis relate directly to the targets in the plan. In the attainment and progress section of the plan the criteria for success are expressed in terms of challenging quantitative targets. For each priority throughout the plan there is a clear indication of how the action will be monitored and the process of evaluation. The plan is fully costed, and relates closely to staff development needs. In order to progress the plan more efficiently the headteacher produces a termly version so that staff are aware of the actions they should be taking.

58. The headteacher currently has responsibility for staff development. The system is consultative and structured very effectively. Priorities for development are identified through the school improvement plan, the action plans for curriculum areas and the performance management scheme. Money from the standards fund is allocated to support whole-school priorities, and a proportion is retained to support the individual needs of staff. Staff attending in-service courses are required to evaluate them, and they also conduct an annual review of their own professional development. The headteacher produces a very informative annual overview of staff development, which is discussed by the senior management team. The system of performance management for teachers has conformed to the guidelines, and the use of some common targets between staff has been effective in making a contribution to whole-school development as well as that of staff individually.

59. In the 1999 Ofsted report the leadership and management role of the governing body was judged to be unsatisfactory. A clear improvement was registered in the last report in 2000, and this progress has continued to the extent that the governors now play an important role in the life of the school. There have been significant changes in the last few years. The whole governing body now meets twice a term. The school improvement sub-committee, which was set up when the school was put into special measures, has been retained and enables governors to have effective oversight of developments. The governing body has a partnership role in the formulation of the school improvement plan, and is consulted on all important issues. The chair of governors particularly, and the governors generally, have a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Advantage has been taken of in-house governor training which is offered by the local education authority. The headteacher values the challenging contribution made by the governors, and there is a clear shared vision for the development of the school.

60. The schools financial systems are very efficient. The school's administrator manages the financial systems very effectively and has clear systems for obtaining value for money. The governors' finance committee carries out its monitoring role very effectively. It is fully involved in the decisions about the funding of the school improvement plan, and the financial allocations to curriculum areas. There is a clear link between the school's spending decisions and its priorities for improvement. The requirements of the latest audit, which complemented the schools on some aspects of its financial administration, are being acted on.

61. The headteacher has been enterprising in obtaining extra funding for developments in the school. Using support from the home school association fund raising there has been particular success in raising money through Seed challenge sources, where the local education authority matches the money raised by the school. This has been used for a variety of projects, including playground equipment, security measures, the refurbishment of the staff room and offices and the provision of a parent room. Various other grants have been obtained for further playground equipment, and for the extensive out-of-hours learning opportunities.

62. The school does not have a specific statement on how they have responded to the principles of best value, but they are implicit in much of the school's practice. The headteacher has encouraged a great deal of challenge in the school's self-evaluation procedures, with staff increasingly questioning what is needed to produce better results. Data and benchmarking are used very thoroughly to compare the school's performance with others. As detailed above, a wide range of stakeholders are consulted when priorities are being determined. All the relevant staff are very aware of the need to apply the principles of competition when buying services and resources.

63. The school has a sufficient number of qualified and experienced staff to match the demands of the curriculum. Teaching assistants are well trained and deployed. This year the school has no classes containing a mixture of years, which has been achieved by giving extra resources to one particularly large class. Through circumstances outside its control the school was 0.5 short in its allocation of teaching staff at the time of the inspection, but continuity was being maintained by the employment of a temporary teacher. There is a practical and informative staff handbook. There are planned induction procedures for new staff and a comprehensive programme to support newly qualified teachers.

64. The school spends an above average amount of money on resources. Overall the school is well-resourced, particularly in English, science, art, music and religious education. Resources for history and geography are not satisfactory, but the new subject leader has been allocated money to improve them. Some of the physical education fixed equipment in the hall is in need of replacement. The school is very well provided with computers, and the ratio of pupils to computers is high. There is also a good range of other information technology hardware, including a data projector, digital cameras and scanners. The school library is housed in an attractive room, and the books are modern and in good condition. There are four computers and a printer for use by pupils in the library. It was not possible to see the library in full use, as at the time of the inspection a new computerised issue system based on fingerprint recognition was being installed. This will also give pupils access to a computerised catalogue of the books in the library.

65. The school building has undergone a transforming refurbishment in the last year, and this has had a significant impact on the learning environment. In place of old, and reportedly

dark and unattractive rooms, there are now very well designed modern offices and staffroom. The classrooms and public areas are colourful and pleasant, and the standard of display is high. In addition to the extra funding detailed above the school has been part of the community service scheme for young offenders, who have decorated parts of the building. The accommodation is well cared for by the pupils, and by the very efficient caretaker, whose pride in the building is shared by the whole school community.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To continue to improve the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) ensure that the improving standards at Key Stage 1 are further developed into Key Stage 2. (Paragraphs 3, 65, 7, 86, 98)
- (2) complete the development of its marking policy as soon as possible, in order that marking practices are consistent and give pupils advice on how they can improve. (Paragraphs 29, 93, 110)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	21	18	14	2	0	0
Percentage	7	36	31	24	3	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	218
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	46

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	19	16	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	17
	Girls	14	14	16
	Total	30	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (87)	86 (90)	94 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	18
	Girls	14	16	16
	Total	30	33	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (87)	94 (93)	97 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	23	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	13
	Girls	18	16	21
	Total	28	27	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (62)	69 (59)	87 (83)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	12
	Girls	20	18	19
	Total	29	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (62)	69 (72)	79 (79)
	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	190	2	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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– Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR– Y7

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	118

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	n/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a
Total number of education support staff	n/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	n/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	n/a

Financial information

Financial year	01/02
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	£
Total income	573,105
Total expenditure	543,161
Expenditure per pupil	2,235.23
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,862
Balance carried forward to next year	46,806

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0.5
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

218

Number of questionnaires returned

51

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	33	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	47	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	46	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	41	22	2	4
The teaching is good.	65	31	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	55	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	25	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	45	49	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	59	39	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	29	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	69	22	8	0	2

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

66. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and is a strength of the school. The children make good progress, including those with special educational needs.

67. Children with birthdays between 1st September and 28th February are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the autumn term. Children with birthdays between March 1st and 31st August are admitted at the beginning of the spring term in January. At the time of the inspection there were 27 full-time children in the Foundation Stage of learning in the Reception class. The good induction procedures, which include a meeting for parents and school visits, together with the very high quality of relationships, mean that children soon feel secure. This enables most of them to settle quickly into their class routines.

68. Very good provision for children of nursery school age is provided in the independent Brook Butterflies pre-school, which is situated within the school building. The nursery and reception staff plan together, to ensure that children in both areas have access to a similar curriculum at an appropriate level. This means that children are well prepared to enter the reception class. Attainment on entry to this class is slightly below expectations of the local authority's baseline assessment. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of the reception year, the majority of children will achieve the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) in all areas of learning. They are well prepared for the National Curriculum.

Personal, social and emotional development.

69. Provision for the personal, social and emotional development of children is very good. Most children are learning to concentrate and persevere in order to complete activities. They are co-operative and get on well with each other and want to do well in their work. They share things and take turns to help each other. For example, when they work on the computers in pairs children are learning to take turns in using the mouse. In reinforcing and extending their independence skills, they find and display their own names for registration and are learning to operate the cassette player. They are learning to dress and undress themselves in physical education lessons and will help each other to do up buttons and zips at the end of the lesson. They listen carefully to the shaking tambourine which acts as a prompt, then put away equipment tidily and prepare for the next activity by gathering together on the carpet. Behaviour is usually very good because activities capture children's interest and the teacher's management strategies are very good.

70. The children's personal and social development is very well promoted by the teacher and nursery nurse who are kind and caring, infinitely patient and work very well together. The adults provide excellent role models for the children; always treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. The children are constantly encouraged to become socially independent by hanging up their own coats and by collecting and putting away their own equipment. The staff expects the children to put on their own aprons and to do some activities independently. The very good teaching ensures that children under five are learning to work, play and co-operate well with other children.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Provision for communication, language and literacy is very good. In relation to their attainment on entry, most children make good progress in acquiring speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children meet the expected standards in the three areas. The teacher's skilful questioning and friendly, encouraging approaches, ensure that in language and literacy most children listen for a reasonable amount of time without losing attention. Staff take every opportunity to encourage children to communicate. For example, at the beginning of the morning session the teacher showed the children the weather chart and asked the children to tell her which day it was and what the weather was like. She used this activity to remind the children of words such as date, month year and season. All children enjoyed this activity especially the part where they were expected to place the symbols on the chart.

72. Books have a prominent place in the classroom and the book corner looks inviting. Children know how to handle books and will sit quietly looking at the pictures and identifying some of the words. The children choose both fiction and non-fiction and many talk about the main events in their favourite stories. The majority of children can read books with simple sentences of two or three words. By the time they enter Year 1 almost all children know a number of frequently used words and many of them attempt to decode others by using their well taught phonic skills. Most children recognise their own name and the names of others in the class.

73. By the time they enter the Year 1 class most of the children can write their own name unaided. A few more-able children can write simple words spelled correctly. With support, they make attempts at words they do not know, usually phonetically. Children made their own baptism cards and several wrote their own name and simple words of greeting in them. The teaching in this area is very good. Questioning is very good and challenges the children's thinking. As a result, the children gain new knowledge and understanding week by week and their understanding is built up in such a way that the children can cope with it.

Mathematical development

74. Most of the children can count up to 20 and about half the children recognise numbers to ten. Some of the more-able children can recognise numbers to 20. They learn to add on one number. In an excellent mathematics lesson, the teacher used resources very well to help the children understand this concept. The children enjoyed saying Old Mother Hubbard as the teacher put packets and cans of food in the cupboard. They were very enthusiastic to add 'one more' each time another item was placed in the cupboard. In another activity, the teacher involved children in counting up to seven by counting Little Bo Peep's sheep. They know several number rhymes and enjoy playing number games.

75. Teaching in this area is excellent and accounts for the good progress that the children are making. This is rooted in very good planning that interprets the requirements of the National Numeracy strategy for the children in an interesting way. The activities are interesting and the children work hard, sustaining their concentration. The nursery nurse makes a very good contribution to the children's learning because she is well briefed and involved in the planning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Standards are in line with expectations in this area of learning by the time the children enter Year 1. Very good teaching enables them to make good progress. Computer skills are taught well, thus children are gaining confidence in controlling the mouse to operate appropriate programs. Most children are familiar with the names of the various parts of the computer. Programs involving word games and mathematical problems are used for the children to practice their computer skills. When using the computer suite, children became truly animated as they moved the cursor about the screen ‘opening’ cupboards, ‘exploding’ a vase of flowers and ‘filling’ the sink with water! Children learn something about some of the properties of materials as they play with sand and water. They are developing their sense of history as they compare photographs of themselves as babies and photographs taken when they started school. They know that the bible is a special book. Following a visit by the local vicar, children have developed their understanding of religious symbols and of baptisms.

77. The teaching and learning in this area is very good because the teacher’s explanations and questioning encourage the children to use the skills they have and extend their understanding further.

Physical development

78. Standards in this area are in line with expectations for children of this age. Their fine motor control is developing and many children are beginning to form individual letters well. They enjoy using paint and other writing materials to write their names. All of the children can put their coats on and do them up. There is a very good outside area and the children have regular opportunities to play with large wheeled toys. These activities extend the development of their large motor control. The children are gaining confidence in moving around the large school hall and can run, jump and stretch with increasing control. Although they do not always use the space well, the children are increasingly aware of the need to exercise because the teacher draws their attention to issues of health and safety.

79. Children’s attitudes are very good and most are enthusiastic and busy. They are interested in what they are doing and most of them really enjoy talking about their work. Children are proud of their efforts and are developing, with the support of staff, an awareness of what they need to do to get better at their work. Most of the children display confidence and their behaviour is very good.

80. The teaching in this area is very good. The teacher is enthusiastic and her energetic approach inspires the children to try hard and enjoy all the activities. The majority of children will achieve the ELGs by the time they enter Year 1.

Creative development

81. Attainment in creative development is in line with expectations for children of this age. Very good teaching means that children soon learn to control mark-making tools such as brushes and pencils. In the reception class, the children develop good working routines. For example, they put on aprons without being reminded before they paint. They enjoy gluing, painting and drawing. The teacher provides opportunities for drama and imaginative play in the home corner. The children imaginatively explore colour, texture and sound. They skilfully used a variety of tools to make a face with clay and then painted it. Following on

from their work about baptism, the children made their own christening cards. Their skills in cutting and sticking are developing because of the well-planned opportunities for practice. A large majority of children know their primary colours. The children sing songs and nursery rhymes and often sing in tune. They understand that instruments make different sounds, as demonstrated in a dance lesson when the teacher used different sounds to stimulate a variety of movements. The children tried very hard to move in time to the rhythm of the drum, triangle and tambourine appreciating both strong and light movements.

82. The quality of the teaching is very good and sometimes excellent. All staff plan activities and review together regularly to ensure that all children have equal access to the rich and varied curriculum. The contribution of the highly skilled nursery nurse who plays a very important role in the classroom is greatly valued. Plans are often modified in the light of experience. Careful assessment during class lessons takes account of children's progress towards achieving the ELG's. This ensures that all are included in all activities.

83. Very good links are made between literacy and numeracy and other subjects to make the best use of time. The development of speaking and listening skills is present in all subject areas. Homework is regularly set and children take home words and books to share with parents and carers. The very good and excellent teaching observed is characterised by very high expectations, very good use of time and the wide range of resources, and animated presentations and challenge, which positively make children want to succeed. Staff shows that they value children's work by the careful way in which it is displayed and the classroom provides a bright cheerful environment.

84. The co-ordinator provides very strong leadership. She fully involves all staff, including those who work in the independent nursery unit. They plan the curriculum together ensuring that there is a smooth transition from the nursery to the reception classes. Additionally she truly values the contribution that the nursery makes to the education of the children when they enter the reception class. She provides very good support to all the staff and has fostered very good links with parents and carers. Resources are very good.

ENGLISH

85. When the school was inspected in June 2000, overall standards of literacy for pupils at the end of Year 2 were judged to be slightly above average when compared to national figures, and favourable when compared to other schools. This position has been consolidated, and standards in English for these pupils have continued to be just above the national average. In the 2002 tests, the number of children achieving Level 2 and above in reading was six per cent above the target the school had set. The test results for writing have also improved, and the number of children who reached Level 3 was above the national average. The standards of work in English at Key Stage 1 that were seen during the inspection confirm the results of the tests.

86. In the 2000 inspection, overall standards of English at the end of Key Stage 2, when the pupils have reached Year 6, were judged to be broadly average when compared to national figures and similar schools. This has remained the case, with a small rising trend in standards. The National Curriculum test results in 2002 showed that the percentage of pupils gaining Level 4 and above was just below the national average, although it was a ten per cent improvement on the pupils' performance in 2001. The percentage of pupils who gain the

higher Level 5 in English was below the national average in 2002, although the school's data shows that all the pupils who might have been expected to reach this level were successful. Standards of work at Key Stage 2 that were seen during the inspection were judged to be satisfactory.

87. At both key stages girls perform better than boys in reading and writing, although the differences are less than the national average. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English.

88. Standards of speaking and listening are not high when pupils enter the school. However, they make rapid progress, and by the end of Key Stage 1 overall standards are satisfactory; they are good by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. The orderly nature of the classrooms provides a good support for the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills. They are encouraged to speak in a variety of situations, from addressing the whole class to working in pairs. The very good inter-personal relationships contribute to the development of listening skills. The pupils are expected to respect the views of others, which they do very well. This was particularly noticeable when the pupils were working independently in small groups during the literacy sessions. The caring atmosphere in the classrooms allows pupils to speak confidently, without fear that any mistakes will result in criticism.

89. The pupils' developing confidence in speaking and listening is further supported by the school's promotion of drama within lessons. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils were given a poem to perform in groups. They were allowed a minimum of planning time before the performance, but all groups skilfully planned and performed their poem with confidence in the allotted time. In a Year 6 lesson the pupils were studying the characteristics of biographies. The teacher asked the pupils to role play the views of people who might have known the imaginary subject she had described. The pupils did this very well, without self-consciousness, and this teaching technique increased their understanding of this type of writing.

90. Reading has a high profile in the school, and pupils make good progress. Silent reading is often encouraged at the beginning of lessons or during registration times. Until Year 3 pupils are heard reading each week, and this system continues for those with special educational needs. A reading scheme is used to support the pupils as they learn to read, but progress is monitored carefully, and when pupils no longer need the scheme they are encouraged to become independent readers. There is a 'Bookworms' home reading scheme which encourages parents to become involved.

91. In lessons the pupils show an enthusiasm for reading, and are keen to read to adults and each other. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were engaged in group reading, where groups of five or six each have a copy of the book and progress by taking turns to read to each other. The target for the lesson was to read with expression and follow the punctuation, and the pupils were doing this successfully. There was obvious enjoyment in listening to each other, and the pupils were able to talk articulately about the book in question. It was noticeable that younger pupils in other classes who were not yet fluent readers were often eager to share their book with the teacher or a visitor.

92. The pupils have a good knowledge of the characteristics of different types of text, and of the specific vocabulary associated with them. In a Year 3 lesson for example, the pupils were able to identify and use the technical vocabulary of playscripts, such as 'atmosphere', 'setting' and 'narrator'. In a Year 5 lesson, the pupils could identify the typical conventions of an instructional text. The teachers' planning for the teaching of reading shows that pupils are introduced to a wide range of different types of text over a period of time. There is good support for the reading development of pupils with special educational needs.

93. Standards of writing are rising in the school. In addition to the daily literacy lesson, classes have an extra extended writing session each week. This writing is done in a separate book, and allows pupils the opportunity to engage in more sustained writing. In the best examples looked at during the inspection, higher-attaining pupils had been encouraged to write at some length. Much of the writing was lively and imaginative, and done with obvious enjoyment. There were some good examples of the redrafting of written work in these books. Pupils have termly group targets for writing, as well as individual targets. The teachers are efficient in dating the targets as they are reached by pupils. However, the quality of the marking of written work is a weakness across the school. The marking is up to date, but it is normally restricted to encouraging comments. There are few examples of teachers consistently using marking to give pupils information on how they might improve and reach their targets.

94. The pupils use a variety of forms for their writing, including narratives, poems, reports and opinions. They have a good knowledge of technical terms associated with writing, and can use them correctly. Overall standards of presentation of written work are good. Standards of spelling and punctuation are not as high, particularly for the older children where there is sometimes insufficient checking of spelling. There are dictionaries in all classrooms, and generally pupils are competent at using them. However, they are not always available on the tables when pupils are writing.

95. Standards of learning in the subject are high. The pupils are attentive in lessons, behave well and are very keen to answer questions, which they do in an orderly way. A particularly impressive feature is the way in which most pupils respond when they are working in independent groups. Typically the groups organise themselves very well, and proceed with sustained concentration, working at a good pace and making full use of the time available.

96. The overall quality of teaching is good, and there is little difference between the key stages. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. The teachers' planning is very good. The learning objectives of each lesson are always explained to the pupils, and the teachers make sure that pupils understand the words in the objectives. Lessons move at a good pace, and there is a high quality of classroom management. When the pupils work in independent groups the tasks are carefully matched to ability levels. The computers in the classrooms are used effectively and regularly to support learning. The teachers are consistent in their use of technical language and terms, and have appropriately high expectations of the pupils in this respect. Question and answer sessions are generally used effectively to draw out the pupils' knowledge and make them think. When this is less successful it is because the teachers sometimes only take answers from pupils who are offering them, which means not all pupils take an equal part in the lesson. The teachers are ably supported by the teaching assistants, who are aware of the learning objectives and support pupils very well.

97. The deputy headteacher is currently managing the development of literacy in the school. It is being done very well. The development of strategies for assessing the pupils' progress in English is a particular strength. Comprehensive and organised records accompany pupils as they move through the school. There is a clear development plan for English, which includes looking at the needs of higher attainers, further refinements in assessment practices, and the development of cross-curricular writing. Monitoring of planning, pupils' work and lessons has taken place. The school has a world bookday each year, when poets and theatre groups visit. The curriculum statement for English provides a useful steer for the subject, but would benefit from a statement about the use of multicultural texts within the curriculum for English.

MATHEMATICS

98. Pupils in Year 2 are attaining standards above those expected for their age, while those in Year 6 attain overall standards in line with national expectations. Although the 2002 test results for Year 6 indicate that the school is performing at levels below the national average and, in comparison with similar schools, well below, the trend since 1997 has been upward. Test results for 2002 show considerable improvement over those for the previous year for the proportion of eleven-year-olds reaching the standards expected in national tests. The percentage of pupils attaining at the higher level in statutory tests is well below the national average. Despite high levels of expectation by teachers in number work, a proportion of more-able pupils are underachieving. This is because the curriculum in the subject is too heavily focused towards numerical calculation and, although there is a good degree of challenge in these activities, extension tasks do not provide sufficient opportunities for investigative and problem solving strategies to be applied.

99. There is no marked difference in the performance of boys and girls, or in that of any other group in the school in respect of social or cultural background. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported both by their teachers and by experienced and able teaching assistants. These pupils are well motivated and achieve especially well.

100. By the age of seven, pupils are counting back in ones or tens from any two digit number, reading and writing whole numbers to a hundred and almost all are recognising two digit multiples of two, five or ten. Many pupils show that they can identify multiples of three, four and six also. However, they do not recognise the relationship between these or learn strategies that will help them compute with higher digits, for example, multiplying by four by doubling the result of multiplying by two. Pupils estimate, measure and compare lengths and accurately use mathematical names for common two- and three-dimensional shapes. They are further able to construct pictograms, block graphs and pie charts, (making use of information technology), but do not regularly have opportunities to explain their results.

101. By the age of eleven, all but the least-able pupils are rounding whole numbers to the nearest thousand, multiplying and dividing decimals by ten, while higher-ability pupils extend this to multiplication by one hundred. They assess the likely outcomes of obtaining a number when throwing dice and carry out long multiplication computations, applying appropriate methods from the national strategy. Pupils present and extract information from tables, graphs and charts, including some generated by computer activities. Higher-ability pupils show that they are competent in using simple spreadsheets independently. Although there are

frequent opportunities to solve word problems, pupils are not sufficiently engaged in collaborative investigations, making observations on pattern or devising and explaining their own strategies for responding to challenges.

102. The quality of teaching and learning has further improved since the last inspection and is consistently good in both key stages. In the best lessons seen in Year 1, pupils respond to the very clear objectives communicated at the start of the lesson to develop the concept of subtraction, working with their own individual number lines to compute within ten and then twenty. The teacher makes regular assessments when observing the pupils counting on and back using the apparatus. In Year 2, good planning builds upon what pupils already know to extend their knowledge to new learning as they make links between counting on and multiplying by five and then explaining to their peers what they did. In Years 3 to 6, teachers make good use of visual aids, such as an overhead projector that is used by the pupils themselves to demonstrate their own methods for finding simple fractions of quantities. The oldest pupils benefit from very clear explanations of tasks, together with the use of subject specific language, such as ‘numerator’, ‘denominator’ and ‘equivalence’ to enable them to effectively and succinctly communicate their thinking to others as they simplify fractions to their lowest terms. Throughout the school, lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, but extension activities do not provide opportunities for pupils to take their thinking further, while, in some lessons, tasks are not sufficiently broken down to enable lower-attaining pupils to fully understand what they have to do.

103. Teachers are applying the national scheme of work effectively, providing stimulating and challenging question and answer sessions during oral work, when pupils are asked to explain their thinking. Teachers focus effectively on key objectives and direct pupils in strategies for number calculations. Planning clearly defines the learning objectives for each lesson which are clearly communicated at the beginning so that all pupils are aware of what they must achieve. However, plenary sessions do not always require pupils to comment on how well they think they have met objectives or identify appropriate next steps. A good range of mathematical vocabulary is used by the teachers with the result that pupils also discuss their work using correct terminology. There is good pace in most lessons and pupils listen well, responding enthusiastically to the positive way in which the subject is presented and evaluated with them. For example, after work on doubling and halving in Year 2, pupils are asked, ‘What do you think you know now that you didn’t know before we started the lesson?’ Behaviour is good because pupils are engrossed in their work and are frequently reminded of the time they have left to complete each task. The main teaching activities enable pupils, in most cases, to work at their own level and are particularly well adapted for those who have special educational needs or who are experiencing difficulty engaging with the content of lessons. There is, however, an undue focus on the use of worksheets and on numerical operations resulting in the practice of skills rather than extension of thinking ability. Marking identifies for pupils how well they have done, but fails to provide any direction on how work might be improved or what steps should be taken next.

104. The use of information technology to support learning in the subject is a strength of the school and the internet is regularly used as a source of activities to provide practice in what pupils are learning and to develop skills. Mathematics is further used to enhance learning in other subjects, such as when Year 6 pupils use a range of graphs to communicate weather patterns or when they produce presentations using a computer and data projector to consolidate their work on the theme of rivers.

105. Teachers regularly assess pupils' attainment through applying good question and answer techniques and also effective tracking of statistical information. Targets are clearly displayed in pupils' workbooks, but the use of what has been identified from assessment is not yet sufficiently used to help them improve further.

106. Since the last inspection, improvement has been maintained. A knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject leader has worked well to improve monitoring systems, while very good procedures have been set in place for recording pupils' progress. Once these procedures are fully implemented and having an impact on teachers' planning, there is likely to be a significant effect on achievement with standards rising above national expectation.

SCIENCE

107. Standards in the work seen in the current Year 2 are average. Teaching is very good, and the new programmes of work are providing tasks that challenge and extend pupils' learning. Consequently, by the end of Year 2 pupils know about teeth and can name the different types. In an experiment to show how ice melts at different rates pupils were able to note changes in ice and record their findings in a pictorial form. Achievement is satisfactory because they are systematically building on what they have learned in Year 1.

108. Overall standards in science are average by the end of Year 6 and a significant proportion of pupils are reaching higher than average levels. Standards have improved since the previous inspection in 2000. The school now uses the nationally recommended scheme of work that has been adapted to meet the needs of pupils. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed systematically as they move through the school. In 2001, results were well below the national average and the average of similar schools. Because of the very good teaching in Year 6, results in 2002 are now in line with the national average. Although comparisons with similar schools are not yet available, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher than average Level 5 remains low.

109. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory from Years 3 to 6, and they make appropriate gains in their knowledge. Their application of skills in scientific enquiry is less well developed than their knowledge and skills in other sections of the programme of study, such as life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. The school recognises this and is successfully focusing on developing pupils' enquiry skills. The low-attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because they are supported effectively and teachers design work to meet their needs. Consequently, by the end of Year 6, more pupils are attaining standards that are above average. They confidently use scientific terminology when describing what they have been learning. For example, pupils' confidently talked about open and closed electrical circuits and described how the earth spins on its axis. Pupils know how to make a test fair, but cannot always record their findings accurately or draw conclusions.

110. Teaching is good overall. It is at least satisfactory and in Year 2 and Year 6 it is often inspirational. Teaching was very good in five out of ten lessons. This has a significant impact on pupils' learning and their enthusiasm for science. Relationships are excellent and both boys and girls work hard when learning new skills and knowledge. For example, in one Year 6 lesson for pupils who need support for their learning in science, the teacher very skilfully

boosted pupils' confidence by using their knowledge of the life cycle of plants to introduce how seeds are dispersed. Using a series of short tasks interspersed with very effective direct teaching, the teacher captured the pupils' interest, motivating them to use new terminology to describe what they had found out. They made rapid gains in their understanding. Teaching is often supported by very good knowledge of science. A good example of this was in the lesson about the rate ice melts in different locations in Year 2. The teacher very skilfully helped the pupils understand how they could make the test fair using the same number of ice cubes and observing what has melted at regular intervals. The pupils were very excited about what they were learning. They worked very effectively in groups observing and discussion their findings. The very few shortcomings in teaching occurred when work did not match the different needs of pupils in the class. Teachers assess pupils' work appropriately, but marking is inconsistent in quality. It does not inform pupils what they have to do next to improve.

111. The science curriculum is now well-balanced and appropriate emphasis is placed on scientific enquiry. Information and communication technology is often used as a tool for learning. For example, pupils have used sensors to measure light and temperature and created a graph to analyse their results. Subject leadership is generally good. While there are strengths in the way standards, teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated, test results are not yet as rigorously analysed as they could be to provide helpful information to raise standards. Challenging targets are set and the school is well placed for further improvement.

ART AND DESIGN

112. It was only possible to observe one art lesson during the inspection, but from the pupils' work and discussing their ideas and knowledge, standards in art and design are above and often well above average, particularly in drawing and painting. The work shows that teaching is very good. This is one of the school's strengths and marks a good improvement since the previous inspection. These good standards are one of the main reasons the school was awarded the School Council 'Artsmark Gold Award'. By the end of Year 2, pupils use colour effectively and printing to express their ideas. There are many examples of pupils' work that is above the levels expected for their age group. Pupils mix colours to create shades and tones that they use for paintings of the sea and sky. Because they are systematically taught designing skills and knowledge of materials, and use a broad range of media such as clay, paint, crayon and pencil, their achievement is good. In the Year 2 lesson seen the teaching was excellent and, as a result, the standard of pupils' work was above average as they used their prints to re-create the good quality drawings they had made of the entrance to the school.

113. Achievement is good in Year 3 to 6 and pupils are making significant gains in investigating and making art and craft design. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average and there are examples of work, such as a painting of a swan, that are well above average. Pupils' work shows that they have a good knowledge and understanding of art and they explore and develop their ideas effectively using clay, inks, pencil and paint. They skilfully manipulate a range of media and materials. A good example of this is found in the prints that were the result of the study of Paul Klee's work. The work of artists is used skilfully to enhance the pupils' knowledge and skills. Pupils are excited by their designs for a clay mural for the school entrance, which is work undertaken by a local artist. A large sculpture built from blocks carved with heads shows care and imagination. Pupils skilfully used a range of tools in their sculpture, which was motivated by working with another visiting

artist. Prints that were designed and made in the style of Andy Warhol, and lively square and rectangular patterns stimulated by a study of Mondrian, indicate how the pupils' experiences enable them to attain high standards and develop an understanding of colour, shape and form.

114. The curriculum is broad and covers all the elements of the art and design programme of study. The scheme of work is regularly evaluated. Changes are made to ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge are systematically developed as they progress through the school. For example, the school is currently developing work that will enhance the pupils' understanding of art and design in a range of other cultures. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support pupils' learning. Subject leadership is good and the subject leader is knowledgeable and promotes art within the school. The progress of pupils is carefully recorded and analysed. The teachers' planning is evaluated, and helpful feedback is provided to teachers.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

115. Standards are satisfactory at the end of both key stages and, throughout the school, are consistently better than at the last inspection because priorities are better defined and teachers now have better subject knowledge. However, the standard of work seen indicates that pupils are not experiencing a full range of activities in terms of making and then modifying the products of their designs. For example, pupils in neither key stage are able to recall experiences of designing and making wheels or cogs or of specifically investigating more than a narrow range of ways of joining materials.

116. Satisfactory teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2 is developing pupils' awareness of the design and make process. In the best examples of work, younger pupils construct moving models of teddy bears using card and split pins and towards the end of Year 1 they continue the theme, experimenting with straws as push rods. Year 2 pupils develop skills in joining textiles to produce glove puppets, and selecting materials to decorate these. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show that they are able to produce clearly labelled designs which they follow to manufacture slippers to suit a particular purpose. In most cases, however, there is a strong bias towards the design element. This results in pupils sometimes being engaged unproductively for lengthy periods of time upon activities that improve the presentation of their work, such as adding pictures and borders to 'pop up' cards, rather than extending their skills in using tools or independently selecting from a variety of materials. Pupils are not provided with frequent opportunities for testing and evaluating, with the result that high achievers do not have sufficient scope to extend their thinking.

117. Pupils persevere with their tasks, working sensibly and safely. They communicate with one another about what they are doing and respond well to the values and systems in place at the school. For example, when one pupil notices that a left-handed peer is experiencing difficulty in cutting card, she recognises the need to ask the teacher for a pair of left-handed scissors to make the task manageable. Pupils do not, however, have regular opportunities to work as part of a team and to collaborate, because tasks are mainly teacher directed.

118. Teaching assistants provide very good support. Lesson plans are differentiated so that pupils with special educational needs are included fully in all activities and achieve well. For

example, pupils who are finding it difficult to record their evaluations on the appeal of a variety of types of bread are able to use and respond to symbols that indicate preferences.

119. The subject leader has improved the level of resourcing for the subject and has organised these to provide easy access for teachers. A relatively new, nationally recommended scheme of work is being effectively implemented and evaluated by the subject leader and she is aware of the need to monitor its impact, annotating the amendments necessary to adapt units so that the school's needs are fully met. A comprehensive file providing records of progress, including examples of the school's involvement in 'technology challenges' an architects workshop on structures and the input of staff from the partner secondary school, is being developed. This file demonstrates how active the subject leader is in responding to the information she gathers to influence teaching and planning in design and technology, but it needs to be supported by more rigorous monitoring to ensure that all aspects of the scheme of work are fully addressed.

GEOGRAPHY

120. During the week of the inspection, it was possible to see only one lesson in Key Stage 1 and one lesson in Key Stage 2. Together with additional evidence from pupils' past and present written work, displays and discussion with pupils, these indicate that standards at both key stages match national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.

121. By the age of seven, pupils develop their understanding of the local area by carrying out surveys of the different types of vehicles which use the roads near the school. They draw graphs to illustrate their findings. In Year 2, pupils draw comparisons between their own local area and the Isle of Struay. During the lesson, pupils were encouraged to spot the differences between the physical and human features of both places. The teacher made very good use of two blank outline maps of the locations for pupils to decide which geographical features they would place in each area.

122. At Key Stage 2, pupils build on their previous knowledge and develop a sound understanding of geographic vocabulary. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 extend their knowledge of the immediate locality. They use photographs of features in the locality such as the Cone (at the nearby glass factory), the canal, church and post office to describe where they are to be found on the map. They also study aerial views to spot their own area of Wordsley. Pupils in these year groups study a similar topic and geographical skills are developed throughout the two-year programme. By the end of the key stage, pupils begin to recognise physical processes when, for example, they study rivers. In a good lesson in Year 6, pupils used investigation skills to find out where major rivers might be found. Pupils clearly enjoyed using resources to produce a 'fact box' about the river Nile and its location.

123. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Consequently pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. Lessons are well planned, in accordance with the school's scheme of work, and are appropriately prepared with learning resources readily available at the start. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the geography curriculum. The work presented captivates the interests of the pupils from the start, as in the work of the immediate locality of the younger pupils. The good quality of the teaching ensures pupils behave well and enjoy the subject. Geography makes a sound

contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy skills, for example when pupils are looking at fact sheets and books and discussing and writing about their findings.

124. The subject leader has had this responsibility for only two months. During that time she has begun to audit the resources, and has great enthusiasm for supporting staff in their teaching of the subject. She is aware that there is a need to extend the resources which are unsatisfactory. The policy and scheme of work have recently been modified and there is a need to monitor the implementation during the next year. The subject leader has identified a need to ensure that the new assessment procedures are in place and that information gathered is analysed well to inform planning in order to raise standards. The use of information and communication technology as a resource is now in place and will be extended as programs become available. There has been insufficient staff training and development in this subject.

HISTORY

125. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe lessons in Year 1 and Year 5. Judgements are made on evidence gained from a scrutiny of pupils' past and present work, displays around the school, discussions with pupils and teachers about their topics and on an examination of the school's planning. The indications are that at both key stages standards appear to match national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both key stages. There are no differences between the attainment of boys and girls.

126. Pupils in Year 1 compare toys of the present time with those of the past. They have discovered that different materials were used and many toys were of a comparatively simple design. In an excellent lesson in Year 2, pupils learning about the Great Fire of London had their learning enhanced by the teacher who played the role of Samuel Pepys. Pupils were invited to question Pepys about his knowledge of the fire. Because the teacher carried out this role so well pupils were inspired to ask more and more questions of a probing nature. They asked such things as 'Why did the fire spread?', 'Why was London so smelly and dirty?' and 'Why did you write it all down in your diary?' This was a very good learning experience for these pupils and made history come alive.

127. At Key Stage 2, pupils begin to have a satisfactory understanding of different periods of history. In Year 3 pupils explore the invaders and settlers of Britain. They find out about the clothes, homes and lifestyles of the Saxons and the Vikings. Pupils in Year 4 develop their understanding of people who invaded Britain by finding out about the Romans and the battles they had with the Celts. Pupils extended their understanding of stories that can be written from a point of view by discussing and writing about the story of Boudicca's revolt. Pupils are developing their sense of the passage of time by producing time-lines to illustrate the dates of these events. Year 5 pupils have centred their learning on the problems of children in Victorian times. They found out about Dr Barnardo and Lord Shaftesbury and the important part they played in improving life for the poor children of that time. Pupils in Year 6 developed their research skills further by trying to find out exactly why Dr Barnardo and Lord Shaftesbury should want to help the children. This was a very good lesson where the teacher completely captivated the pupils' attention and imagination. She enabled them to imagine how dreadful it must have been for a child to be a putta in the mines. The pupils had written their own diaries describing the terrible conditions of the time. The pupils clearly enjoyed this lesson and developed a good understanding of life in Victorian times. There

were also useful links with literacy, as the pupils used their imaginative writing skills when writing their diaries.

128. The quality of pupils' written work is inconsistent. Although some is very neatly presented some of it is untidy and unfinished. Occasionally there is an over reliance on worksheets with an emphasis on colouring in rather than promoting the pupils' understanding of history.

129. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent but overall it is good. The teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. There is a good range of different topics which pupils found interesting and supported their understanding of the passage of time. Teaching is at its best when pupils are challenged to investigate the past and to draw comparisons with their own lives. Teachers planning is good and builds on the experiences and learning which has gone before.

130. The subject leader, who has had the responsibility for only two months is very enthusiastic and determined to provide good support for colleagues. She has worked very hard to do some auditing of resources and to identify needs. Policies for the subject, and a recently modified scheme of work are in place. Procedures for assessment have recently been introduced and the subject leader is aware that these need to be fully implemented in order that the data can be analysed to inform planning and in order to raise standards. She has begun to monitor planning and has identified that there is a need for staff development in the subject. Resources for the subject are unsatisfactory but money has been identified in the school's budget to purchase new books and artefacts. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural and social development in their studies of their own and other cultures in the past.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

131. Standards in information and communication technology are above average overall. Very good resources and the good subject knowledge of teachers are resulting in the continued development of skills across the school. The youngest pupils are acquiring a familiarity with the operation of a range of devices, while older pupils show that they are able to apply the technology very effectively to research, to experiment and to communicate ideas.

132. In Key Stage 1, standards are rising above those expected for the pupils' age because there is an effective scheme of work that is being appropriately adapted to the needs of all pupils. Teachers are providing a good range of challenging work for pupils, although practice in the strand of control is still under-developed. Basic skills are taught effectively in Year 1 and reinforced systematically in Year 2 so that pupils, for example, move on from assembling and labelling images from a bank on the screen to independently creating their own shape images in the form of a collage.

133. Similarly, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are performing at a level above national expectations. Pupils in Year 6 achieve well because the teaching is of a particularly high calibre. For example, in a lesson to enable pupils to experiment with the potential of an information and communication technology presentation program, pupils are led to use subject specific language such as 'resize', 'hyperlink', 'import' and 'thumbnail' as they show that they are able to add both sound and animation to the slides they create. They then go on

to evaluate their own work and that of others while viewing the presentations using a data projector. In Years 3, 4 and 5, pupils make use of the internet to research, copy and paste images into their work, combining these with text. They create block graphs and use spreadsheets to assist them in mathematical computations as well as using a paint program to explore symmetry and to insert text or graphics, varying the fonts and size. Younger pupils carry out tasks with a floor turtle, this strand of the subject is continued further on in the school to provide experience in the control of external events, particularly in Year 5 using Logicator software.

134. Teaching and learning in both key stages is good because teachers have good subject knowledge and focus on the development of a range of information and communication technology skills, while also supporting other curriculum areas by giving pupils experience in applying the skills they have learned. Pupils show that they are able to browse the internet independently and they respond with enthusiasm to their teachers' explanations on following links in web sites such as 'Living Library', which enables them to locate answers to their enquiries. In literacy and numeracy, particularly in Key Stage 2, teachers are very resourceful in making use of programs available on the internet to counteract a deficiency in specific software resources for the classroom.

135. Curriculum documentation provides very good guidance for teachers, while two clubs, before and after school, enable pupils to experiment with programs and to use information technology for the purpose of improving the standard of their homework. The subject leader, who has only recently taken on the responsibility for co-ordinating the programme of study, liaises very well with the previous subject leader so that earlier success is built upon and continuity is maintained. Although there is not yet a detailed system in place for tracking pupils' attainment, work is well matched to their abilities, particularly for those who have special educational needs. Work with computers is often used to motivate those pupils who find writing difficult or who show tendencies to become disaffected in other subjects. The subject leader has a clear understanding of how and where information technology needs to be developed to raise standards further and is aware of the need to enhance marking so that effective feedback guides pupils towards where they need to focus next.

136. The number of computers available for pupils is well above average. There is an impressive array of hardware, including a data projector, digital camera, and scanners. Classroom computers and those based in the suite are all linked to the internet. The school has continued to make good progress since the last inspection and standards have continued to rise because of good leadership and the commitment of teachers to develop their subject knowledge.

MUSIC

137. Standards by the age of seven and by the age of eleven are above those expected of pupils of their age. The standard of teaching and learning overall is good with some very good teaching in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and build successfully on their learning as they move through the school.

138. Standards of performance in singing are very good. At both key stages, pupils show confidence and enjoyment as they sing and play together in lessons, assemblies and clubs.

Their diction is clear and they listen carefully to the music. During a very successful hymn practice the pupils sang a hymn in three parts, maintaining their own parts very well.

139. During a very successful lesson in Year 2, clear explanations by the teacher enabled the pupils to appreciate and sing high, medial and low notes. This was further extended when pupils used percussion instruments to produce a similar variety of notes. Pupils worked very effectively in three's as they read notation sheets to produce a tune. The majority of pupils were successful at relating sounds to symbols and working co-operatively together.

140. Recorded music is used appropriately in Year 4 to help pupils investigate how music might affect moods. The teacher played a wide variety of music ranging from composers such as Mozart, Wagner and Vivaldi to the more modern styles of Queen and Blur. Pupils were then invited to record their feelings. Good questioning by the teacher encouraged pupils to explain their feelings and to select the music they preferred. Pupils clearly enjoyed this experience as they tapped their feet and sang-along with some of the music. Listening skills are further developed in Year 5 where pupils are involved in listening to recorded music to appreciate and create variations on a theme. Pupils' music vocabulary is extended as they familiarise themselves with terms such as tempo, key, major and minor. Pupils in this lesson were involved in listening and analysing a piece of music before they practised composing music for themselves. Pupils in Year 6 were able to sing in time to a piece of recorded music which they intended performing to the whole school in their class assembly. They clearly enjoy singing together and built on their understanding of major and minor keys.

141. Pupils' behaviour is usually very good in lessons. In the best lessons, pupils listen carefully and appreciatively to others' contributions and are eager to ask and answer questions. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to appreciate and reflect when carefully chosen music is played at the beginning and end of the daily assembly. Pupils are made aware of the importance of such music and learn about the composer. Teachers are careful to celebrate good achievement, as observed in a Year 2 class when pupils played tunes in groups to the rest of the class. This raised their confidence and self-esteem considerably.

142. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good teaching in both key stages. Teaching is less successful where the pace slows down and management is less secure. The expertise and experience of the music subject leader have a significant impact on standards. She provides good support for all teachers and has established a wide range of school clubs and outside activities which successfully extend pupils' skills. She uses her own talents and expertise to very good effect in both lessons and clubs. More significantly, she has developed a broad and balanced scheme of work for the teaching of the required curriculum and carefully selected themes and songs which inspire the pupils and ensure their enjoyment. Some music from other cultures is included but this is an area of the curriculum which needs to be developed. Many pupils benefit from instrumental tuition and many more learn to play the recorder. A considerable number of pupils sing in the school choir. The subject leader has, over time, built up a good selection of quality resources and these contribute significantly to the good standards achieved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations and both boys and girls perform equally well. Since the last inspection, the school has developed particular

strengths in its provision for dance, making a significant contribution to the attainment of the 'Artsmark' award. Pupils have become involved in local dance festivals and in public performance, while benefiting from professional visitors such as the input made by a team of African dancers. There is an after school dance club which is able to rely on the talents of a teacher and a teaching assistant. These activities have not yet, however, had the intended impact on the standard of dance lessons throughout the school, which do not yet have a consistent quality. This is because the pace is often too slow and pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to work together or to evaluate one another's efforts.

144. In the lessons seen, the responses of pupils to activities varied from satisfactory to excellent, with the most successful lessons involving gymnastics and games and taking place in Key Stage 2. In both key stages, pupils show an awareness that their performances may be carried out at different levels, involving variations in flow and pace, while requiring concentration on balance together with an appreciation of where the body weight is being transferred to.

145. In Key Stage 1, pupils are able to link movements into simple sequences and match the timing of these to the beat of an instrument. Pupils observe one another at the direction of the teacher and respond well to questioning on the quality of their work, but do not have the opportunity to collaborate or to offer their own comments. Because of the very strong focus on teacher-led activities, some pupils are not fully engaged and this leads to a reduction in the pace of lessons.

146. In Key Stage 2, while dance lessons similarly lack pace and focus, gymnastics and games sessions demonstrate a well planned progression of skills that enable pupils to reach a standard above that expected nationally. By Year 6, pupils have a broad movement vocabulary that they readily apply to tasks. They work effectively in pairs and in groups, responding to their teacher's very clear instructions, putting in a great deal of physical and intellectual effort. In these lessons, pupils share ideas and modify movements as well as demonstrating a high level of concentration. For example, in one very good lesson, a group of pupils developed a sequence that involved a series of crouching and stretching actions linked with leaps over one another in which split second timing was required. In the best lessons, praise and encouragement are used well, and clear expectations of effort and behaviour are communicated. Consequently, pupils know what they have to do and work hard to improve their performance.

147. The curriculum for physical education is broad and well balanced. It further provides a range of extra-curricular activities and ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to practise regularly in order to meet the national expectation of being able to swim a minimum of twenty-five metres by the end of Key Stage 2.

148. There is currently no subject leader to lead activities in physical education but the subject is effectively managed by the head teacher, supported by a member of the teaching staff who coaches a number of competitive sports. Activities in the subject are being evaluated, following the assessment guidelines of a national scheme of work. However, there is still a considerable variation in the quality of the work across the school that will require the attention of the permanent subject leader when one is appointed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

149. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards and teaching have been appropriately maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and by the end of Year 2, pupils can recount parables and stories of the miracles performed by Jesus from the Bible. They know the Bible is a holy book to Christians and that the cross is an important symbol. Achievement is satisfactory overall from Years 3 to 6, and pupils make appropriate gains in their knowledge of the comparisons with other world religions and Christianity. By the end of Year 6, pupils know which are holy places for Christians and Muslims. They make sensitive comparisons between the Hajj, the Muslim pilgrimage, and pilgrimages Christians made. Pupils discussed with sensitivity their feelings about the terrorist attacks on the United States of America by extreme Muslims, condemning the violence but not Muslims generally. They know that the Bible is the holy book that guides the lives of Christians and holy books such as the Koran and the Torah are important to Muslims and Jews respectively.

150. Too few lessons were available to observe during the inspection to make a secure judgement about teaching. The pupils' work and their attitudes to religious education indicate that teaching is at least satisfactory and, in some instances good. A new locally agreed syllabus has recently been introduced. Teachers are introducing new programmes of work that are broader than the previous syllabus. The curriculum meets requirements, and makes an effective contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. While resources are adequate, appropriate plans are in place to extend the resources to match the requirements of the new syllabus. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support pupils learning. Pupils use the internet as a tool for research. The subject leader is new to the role. She has had effective training in the new agreed syllabus, and has a clear plan for developing the subject. The school is well placed for further developments.