

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RED HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Lower Gornal, Dudley, West Midlands.

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103784

Headteacher: Mr Brian Dent

Reporting inspector: Mr Alan Blank  
8358

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th February 2003.

Inspection number: 246315

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Zoar Street Lower Gornal Dudley West Midlands
Postcode:	DY3 2PA
Telephone number:	01384 813850
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Dennis Beard
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8358	Alan Blank	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13762	Norman Shelley	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? How well does the school care for its pupils?
3751	Trudy Cotton	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs Equal opportunities	
19897	Arthur Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
7593	John Collier	Team inspector	English	How well are pupils taught?
26405	Carole Bond	Team inspector	Science Music	
21904	Diane Gale	Team inspector	The foundation stage History	
19507	Beulah Andrews	Team inspector	Geography Religious education	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Red Hall Primary School caters for 580 children aged between 3 and 11 years. It has a nursery that takes children on a half-day basis. The attainment of children on entry to the school is below average. The background of pupils is almost wholly white British; there are a few pupils who have a different or mixed ethnic background, but all of these are fluent in English. Eligibility for free school meals is above average at 24%. An above average number of pupils have special educational needs (26%), eleven of these have a formal statement of special educational need (SEN), quite a high proportion. The school was awarded a Schools Achievement Award in 2002 for steady improvement in results since 1998.

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

Red Hall is an improving school and is effective in providing a sound education for all its pupils. The headteacher is successfully leading the drive to improve standards, which have been low in the past, by improving the quality of education provided for the pupils. Standards are generally below average. Both teaching and pupils' progress are satisfactory overall, though they are good in some year groups. The school provides sound value for money.

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

- Provides a rich and interesting curriculum for its pupils.
- Provides very well for pupils' social and moral development, which results in very high standards of behaviour and pupils who have very good attitudes to school.
- Ensures that pupils' welfare is very well catered for.
- Is thought of very highly by parents, who feel that their children make good progress and learn well.
- Provides very well for pupils who have a statement of educational need.

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

- Standards in English and mathematics by Year 6.
- The use of information on attainment to track pupils' progress.
- Levels of attendance that are well below average.

*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 November 1997. In tests that followed the inspection, standards were very low. Overall results in national tests for eleven-year-olds have improved each year between 1998 and 2001. Much of this progress was sustained in 2002, even though standards fell back in English and mathematics. Based on the evidence of the last report, teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. There were seven key issues raised by the last inspection. The school has made good progress by improving provision for pupils with special educational needs, the monitoring of teaching and areas of school management. Still more needs to be done in using information from assessment to monitor pupils' progress.

## 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	E	D
Mathematics	E	D	E	D
Science	D	D	C	B

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

Children enter the school and Year 1 with attainment that is below average. Results in assessments taken by pupils aged seven have improved generally since 2000 and overall results in 2002 were probably the best ever achieved by the school. The results achieved by seven-year-olds in 2002 were average compared to schools nationally and above the average for similar schools in writing and mathematics. In reading, standards were below the average for schools nationally, but in line with the average for similar schools. In the current Year 2, standards are below average in English, but are average in mathematics and above average in science.

In tests taken in Year 6, the number of pupils reaching the expected level for the age-group in English, mathematics and science, has risen each year from 1998 until 2001. In 2002, overall results were similar to those achieved in 2001. The school met its targets, but there was a dip in English and mathematics, whilst performance in science improved. Gradual overall improvement led to the school receiving a Schools Achievement Award in 2002. Standards in the current Year 6 are below average in English and mathematics, but average in science.

Targets for 2003 are quite ambitious in mathematics, but in English they reflect only modest progress, based on pupils' earlier attainment, and they may be too low. Progress in the nursery and reception is satisfactory overall. Progress is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Standards in other subjects are average throughout the school, except in art and design in Year 6, where they are above average.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are industrious and dependable and they get on with their work well. Pupils like school and find lessons interesting on the whole. They are proud of their school, but would like a better field and hall for physical education.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. They listen well to teachers and each other. Pupils are given opportunities to show initiative and independence which they respond to very well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show respect for adults and each other. There is an atmosphere of sharing and belonging in a community that is orderly but also tolerant, in that it celebrates individual differences.
Attendance	Well below the national average. Improving the attendance of pupils overall and especially those whose attendance is poor is a priority for development.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

*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.*

Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects and the age ranges they teach; they manage pupils well in lessons, moving smoothly from whole class teaching to working with groups. Good use is made of learning resources, and education support staff are skilled in enabling pupils to learn effectively. The support provided by classroom assistants also enables pupils who have special educational needs to make good progress overall and sometimes pupils with statements of special educational need make very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs are involved fully in school life. Pupils' learning and achievement reflect the quality of teaching closely, so that they make better progress in Years 1 and 2 generally than in Years 3 to 6. In these classes for older pupils, teachers do not have sufficient access to information on pupils' progress over time, especially for pupils whose achievement does not match expected levels in English. Information is also needed to enable teachers to devise more specific short-term learning targets, particularly in reading and writing. Overall the teaching of mathematics and basic numeracy skills is good. Teaching in English and basic literacy skills is satisfactory, but needs to be more specifically targeted to meet individual needs and to provide a better match of work for classes that are set by ability. Pupils' interest in their work, their levels of concentration and ability to work independently are strengths that are evident in the better lessons, where teaching and learning can often be very good and sometimes excellent.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for its pupils. It makes good use of the local environment. The school has improved pupils' opportunities and access to learning, which were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision overall is good. Provision for pupils who have statements of need and those who receive support from professionals from outside the school is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Provision for spiritual development has improved from unsatisfactory to good since the last inspection. Progress has been made in enriching pupils' cultural awareness and this is now satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and their academic progress are unsatisfactory. Procedures for promoting race equality are sound.

The school works well with parents, keeping them informed about their children's progress. Parents feel welcome in the school and are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning. The school needs to work more closely with parents to raise levels of attendance.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is leading the school well in the aftermath of amalgamation, and has led the drive to improve standards. The quality of management is sound, though not enough use is made of assessment information in monitoring pupils' progress.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are loyal and industrious. They have a reasonable understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and carry out their statutory duties in full.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The progress of the school improvement plan is watched carefully and adjusted appropriately. Information on pupils' ongoing progress to inform judgements about the value added by the school is limited.
The strategic use of resources	<p>Good. The school budget is monitored very closely by both managers and governors. Services and resources are evaluated thoroughly for quality and value before they are ordered.</p> <p>The school is well staffed. Learning support staff account for a relatively high proportion of the school budget and provide good value for money. The site is very difficult to manage, the halls are small and the school field limits progress in physical education. Resources are adequate in all areas of the curriculum. They are generally used well, but only limited use is made of the portable computers.</p>

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and are happy there.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• They feel welcome in school.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More consistency in homework.</li> <li>• A wider range of after-school clubs.</li> <li>• Information about how their children are getting on.</li> </ul>

Overall parents' views of the school are very positive. Pupils do enjoy school. Inspectors agree that there is a pleasant atmosphere of tolerance and respect for each other. Progress and teaching are satisfactory overall and good in some year groups. The school is well led. There could be a more consistent approach to homework, though it is used effectively on the whole and pupils in Year 6 feel that homework is handled fairly. The information provided for parents on the progress of their children and the range of after-school clubs are satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be average throughout the school in all subjects except information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 1 and 2, where standards were above average and in geography and design and technology in Year 6, where they were below average. In the 1998 national tests in English, mathematics and science that followed the autumn 1997 inspection, results were significantly below these standards. In Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics were below the national average and in Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science were well below average.

#### **Current standards**

2 Children enter the nursery with a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, with attainment on entry below average. Some children are drawn from areas nearby that do not have nursery education at their neighbouring schools. At the end of the nursery phase about a quarter of the children move on to the reception classes of other schools. Many of these are the most able children in the nursery classes and the attainment of children entering the reception classes at Red Hall in September and January is still below average even though they make satisfactory progress in the nursery. The attainment of children entering Year 1 is below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. In personal, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development most children achieve the national targets for their age-group, the 'early learning goals'.

#### **Years 1 and 2**

3 Since 1998 the improvement in national test results has been irregular. There was an improvement in writing in 1999 and then a fall in reading and writing in 2000 to well below average. Mathematics remained below average. There were improvements in reading and mathematics in 2001. In 2002, standards were in line with national averages in writing and mathematics but below average in reading. However when the results are compared with schools similar to Red Hall, standards in writing and mathematics were above average, with average standards in reading. These are the best overall results the school has achieved and reflect a somewhat irregular, but general trend of improvement in recent years. In mathematics a very high number (43%) of pupils achieved the higher level 3, indicating that more able pupils are being challenged well in Years 1 and 2 in this subject. There are differences in some years between the performance of boys and girls in tests, but over time these differences are similar to those found nationally. Current standards in English in Year 2 are below average, especially when speaking and listening skills are taken into account. Standards are average in mathematics and above average in science. In all other subjects pupils' attainment is average. Overall progress is good in Years 1 and 2, reflecting the quality of teaching.

#### **Years 3 to 6**

4 From the low base recorded in 1998, the number of pupils reaching the expected level 4 or above in tests in English, mathematics and science overall has improved every year until 2001 and in 2002 the number was maintained. This steady improvement has been acknowledged by the Department for Education and Science, which awarded Red Hall a Schools Achievement Award in 2002. This improvement is not always reflected in

comparisons with other schools and it masks changes in individual subjects. Standards in English and mathematics reached their highest point in 2001, when they were below average compared to schools nationally. Results fell back sufficiently in 2002 to be well below average compared with schools nationally, even though the school met its targets. In comparison with similar schools, standards were below average in both subjects. When pupils' progress since Year 2 was considered, this was average in English, but below average in mathematics. In science, standards were average compared to schools nationally, above average compared to similar schools and the progress made by pupils since Year 2 was above average. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls in any subject. The number of pupils reaching the higher level 5 in English and mathematics was comparatively low and did not reflect the high numbers of level 3 now being recorded in mathematics in Year 2. Current standards in Year 6 are below average in English and mathematics and average in science. The targets set for 2003 are lower than would be expected in English, based on pupils' performance in tests when they were in Year 2, and may be too low. In mathematics the target is more demanding and reflects pupils' prior attainment more closely. The attainment of pupils in the current Year 6 is higher than test results in 2002 would suggest, reflecting the generally greater ability of this year group.

5 Attainment at the end of Year 6 in other subjects is average except in art and design, where attainment is above average. This represents an improvement in standards in design technology and geography since the last inspection, whilst standards in other subjects have been maintained. The improvement in geography and design technology reflects the improved curriculum and generally better teaching throughout the school.

6 Overall, pupils with special educational make good progress with their learning. This is because, in most classes, there are supporting adults, learning support assistants (LSAs), who have the expertise to provide effective support for a wide variety of need. The co-ordinator is managing provision well and, with the guidance of experts from outside the school, she targets and monitors progress and support. This is very effective for pupils with statements of special educational need and good for pupils receiving special support from outside agencies, and so they make good progress in their work.

7 Pupils who receive school-based support make sound progress. Provision is built around group targets for pupils with similar needs. The school is developing this support to ensure that, targets are specific enough to meet pupils' individual needs, are used to guide lesson plans and there is more support for pupils who have difficulties with mathematics. Higher attaining pupils make the same progress as other pupils and provision for the few pupils identified as gifted and talented in mathematics, English and physical education is good. These arrangements are fairly new and it is too early to say if the progress of these pupils is better than average.

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

8 In the foundation stage the children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development in the rest of the school are very good and the standard is higher than at the time of the previous inspection. Attendance is poor and has declined. Parents are pleased with pupils' standards of behaviour and their personal development.

9 The pupils are right to be very positive and enthusiastic about their school. They enjoy almost all of their lessons and activities and speak highly of their teachers. They are very conscientious about their work and want to do well. Extra-curricular activities and clubs are well attended. Parents agree, almost unanimously, that their children like school.

10 Pupils' attitudes and conduct contribute very much to the quality of learning and life in the school, the sense of community and the atmosphere of calm that prevails. Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons and about the school. They are polite to adults and considerate towards each other. Their conduct is orderly, they are clearly happy, feel safe and valued. Pupils confirm that bullying is rare. Only one incident has been recorded and one pupil was excluded during the previous year. Pupils rarely give cause for serious sanctions to be applied and can be trusted to maintain their very good standards when unsupervised. The general atmosphere is free from oppressive behaviour such as sexism and racism.

11 Pupils develop a very good appreciation of the effects of their actions. In a Year 6 personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson pupils explained their reasons for voting for the pupil of the week by describing the ways in which she had helped many of them and how they recognise her laudable attributes and conduct towards others. Pupils frequently explore their own feelings about various situations and, for example, the moods that they experience when listening to different kinds of music. Pupils show great interest in the views and efforts of their peers. They accept that others may hold contrary views to their own and fully accept their right to do so. Through religious education and assemblies they come to understand and respect the beliefs and lifestyles of others.

12 Relationships between pupils are very good. Pupils work constructively together and are tolerant and supportive. They take turns, whether it is to contribute to a discussion, or for their lunch. They listen and watch intently when their peers perform in an assembly. Pupils collaborate well, for example, when preparing a class led assembly or working on a project, yet are competitive when the occasion demands.

13 Pupils demonstrate that they can use their initiative, for example by carrying out independent research and taking part in raising funds for charitable causes. They accept responsibility very well, such as undertaking prefect duties and classroom tasks. However, opportunities for such experiences could be extended to involve a greater number of older pupils.

14 Attendance is well below the average for primary schools. The large majority of pupils like school and want to attend, yet a significant minority have a poor record of attendance. The school attributes this to parental attitudes towards education. In many cases pupils are not brought to school for what the school regards as unacceptable reasons. Whilst the majority of pupils arrive on time for the start of the school day, a significant amount of lateness occurs.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

### A TABLE TO SHOW THE QUALITY OF THE TEACHING OBSERVED IN THE SCHOOL

	1997 inspection	2003 inspection
Very good or better	4%	19%
Satisfactory or good	84%	78%*
Less than satisfactory	12%	2%

\*33% good, 45% satisfactory

15 Teaching at the last inspection was judged to be satisfactory. This is still the case when the overall picture of teaching is judged. However, the above table shows a significant improvement in the amount of very good and excellent teaching seen during this inspection and a notable fall in the number of lessons that were judged to be less than satisfactory. It is, therefore, fair to say that there has been a real improvement in teaching since 1997. When

the figures are broken down into key stages<sup>1</sup>, teaching and learning are now judged to be satisfactory overall in the nursery and reception classes taken together, and in Years 3 - 6. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are good because in 76 per cent of lessons teaching and learning were deemed to be good or better.

16 Classrooms are orderly places and teachers do not have to spend time correcting inappropriate behaviour. They have very good relationships with their pupils and this promotes positive attitudes and a real interest in learning. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, where pupils discussed their concerns about prejudice and explored the values that they would like to see in society, all felt able to contribute because the teacher had an excellent rapport with them, and they with her. This enabled them to express their views confidently without fear of ridicule. Most teachers consciously try to involve everyone in the lesson, though sometimes they only take answers from pupils who have their hands up, leaving some to sit passively. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included. Sometimes, a teaching assistant encourages them to speak up during class discussions and in Year 2, the teacher praised their contributions to a discussion about the settings in the story of 'The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse' so that their self-esteem was visibly boosted.

17 Teachers, particularly those in Years 1 and 2, teach the basic skills well. Phonics teaching is good in these year groups, so that pupils learn to apply some strategies for reading unknown words. In a very good Year 4 lesson, the skill of historical research was properly promoted as pupils found information about Sir Walter Raleigh as part of their topic about the Tudors. During a hymn practice for all the juniors, correct attention was paid to the proper posture, breathing and dynamics for good singing. In lessons such as these, teachers display secure knowledge of their subject and appreciate the importance of developing skills as well as acquiring factual knowledge. Occasionally, teachers get something wrong, but in a Year 5 science lesson, the pupils spotted the deliberate mistake when the teacher confused 'transparent' with 'translucent'.

18 Most teachers, particularly those in Years 1 and 2, understand what it is that they want pupils to learn and they state this 'learning objective' clearly in their planning. Teachers explain this to pupils at the start of a lesson and review progress at the end. This helps pupils to acquire a knowledge of their own learning. This is especially noticeable in the infants, because this is a new skill that they are acquiring. In most lessons, teachers are clear about the knowledge and understanding that pupils already have attained and what it is that they now need to learn to make progress. This was not the case in an unsatisfactory lesson with reception children. The task of learning a new letter sound and identifying words that began with it proved too difficult for the majority. To a lesser extent, a similar problem arose in a few lessons in the juniors. In a Year 3 mathematics lesson, one-third of the pupils were not clear about the process of division and therefore struggled to calculate the remainder in  $16 \div 5$ . In a Year 5 English lesson, the usefulness of studying relative pronouns was not apparent when the standard of writing of the lower ability pupils was at the level of a typical eight-year-old. However, teachers are helped in their planning of English and mathematics lessons because pupils are grouped by ability from Year 2 onwards. Work can therefore be more closely targeted to meet pupils' individual needs and the higher attaining pupils can be suitably challenged with more difficult work; as in a Year 6 English lesson where pupils were exploring the contrast between formal and informal language in two party invitations. Within some 'sets' teachers wisely plan different work for groups of pupils because there is still a range of ability. In mathematics in Year 4, pupils practised their recall of multiplication facts in the 4, 6 and 7 times tables, but some were given more help than others in the form of a clock face with the multiples listed. This helped pupils to learn. Teachers employ a range of methods to promote learning. Only occasionally is the wrong choice made, as when a religious education (RE) lesson in the juniors centred around the

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<sup>1</sup> Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception), Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6)

Chinese New Year. The teacher chose to let pupils make their own cards and the lesson became art and design. The significance of the celebration was not explored. As an RE lesson, therefore, it was unsatisfactory.

19 Most teachers are conscious that lessons need to move along at a brisk pace but, occasionally, teachers fail to stop a pupil who is giving an answer that becomes too lengthy or talk for too long themselves. The concentration of some pupils therefore begins to wane. The best lessons are where there is a variety of activity and pupils are inspired by resources that the teacher has prepared. In an excellent history lesson in Year 3 about the Ancient Greeks, the teacher had amassed a collection of food – dates and figs, for example, which the pupils tasted as a way of understanding the diet of this ancient nation. Pupils were enthralled. It was an experience they will remember vividly in years to come. Good use of resources and practical activities were a feature of many lessons seen. An interactive whiteboard was well used in a Year 6 mathematics lesson; in a Year 4 music lesson, there were enough tuned instruments for everyone to compose a tune and no time was lost in distributing them; and, by baking cakes, Year 6 pupils were able to understand that changes to the individual ingredients are irreversible, thus promoting their learning in science.

20 The school is fortunate in having an impressive team of teaching assistants who give invaluable help in lessons, especially to the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. These pupils often make good strides in their learning within lessons and this is due, in no small part, to the quality of the help given by the assistants. In Year 1, the assistant had her own planning sheet for an English lesson and this is typical of the good methods that teachers have for co-ordinating the help within the classroom. In a very good art lesson in Year 3, the teaching assistant helped a small group to decide about how colour could be used to represent people of different ages. The pupils then produced work that was appreciated by others when achievements were shared. Many other examples of support were observed, particularly during English and mathematics lessons, when pupils in the lower ability sets received good quality attention that promoted their learning.

21 The marking of work varies across the school. Teachers are always supportive, writing words of encouragement such as, 'Well Done', but they do not always point out to pupils what they need to do to improve. Homework is used satisfactorily to support work in school. Pupils in Year 6 clearly explained the system for setting homework and they thought that the amount was just right.

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

22 Although the school places a high priority on the teaching of English and mathematics, it nevertheless provides a well balanced curriculum, giving the pupils a sound preparation for secondary school. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have swimming lessons at the local leisure centre. There is specialist music teaching for these pupils and, in addition, over 20 of them take advantage of opportunities for instrumental music tuition. There are opportunities for the pupils to use ICT widely across the curriculum. Religious education (RE) is taught using the locally agreed syllabus and the school meets its obligation to provide a daily act of collective worship. Total weekly teaching time meets national recommendations for primary school pupils. The school meets statutory requirements in all subjects, and the foundation years curriculum is planned appropriately using national guidance.

23 The teachers plan carefully for the work which the pupils will do each term and each week. The national strategies for literacy and for numeracy are well established and they are leading to steadily rising standards in English and mathematics, though results in Year 6 fell back in 2002. From Year 2 onwards, these two subjects are taught in ability sets. Despite

this, there is insufficient planning to meet the varying needs of the pupils in English. Planning in subjects other than English and mathematics is soundly based on local guidelines.

24 There is a satisfactory range of well attended after-school clubs for pupils in Years 3 to 6. These include football, rugby, netball, cricket, multi-sports, basketball, recorders and a choir of about 50 pupils. There is a weekly homework club. The school participates in a local five-a-side football tournament. Last year, the school team won a local basketball competition. The teachers enrich learning further by organising school visits to places of interest, such as Shugborough Hall and Twycross Zoo. Year 6 pupils have an annual residential visit. This has been to Whitby in the past and will be to Cleobury Mortimer for the first time this year. The school is looking towards starting some clubs for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

25 A key issue in the previous report was that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) missed out on lessons, because they worked in small groups outside the classroom. Provision has been reorganised and support for the vast majority of pupils is delivered within the classroom and linked to everyday learning.

26 The school identifies pupils with special educational needs as quickly as possible and continues to provide good support for pupils who have joined the school at other times. It responds successfully to the diverse needs of pupils with statements of special need, by using the guidance and support of outside experts and providing high quality support within school. Pupils have very good relationships with their teachers and LSAs, and gain in confidence and make good progress, because of the supportive environment.

27 The school responds successfully to the diverse needs of pupils with statements of special educational need (SEN). It consults with professionals, who have relevant specialist knowledge, and uses their skills and guidance to assess, guide and monitor provision. This means that pupils with statements for SEN and those on School Action Plus (those for whom the school receives specialist help from outside) have specific, targeted help with their learning and so make good progress.

28 Most other pupils with SEN are judged to have lesser problems that can be supported at school level: most have difficulties with their reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers respond to pupils' learning needs by planning work for three broad ability 'sets' in English and mathematics lessons. Presently, planning in lessons is not modified sufficiently to meet the needs of pupils with difficulties with their literacy skills. Not enough use is made of 'group learning plans' to guide work in English and there are even fewer individual learning plans that make specific reference to work in mathematics.

29 A minority of support is undertaken outside the classroom but this does not regularly affect pupils' access to lessons as the times for the support are rotated weekly. Most support is linked to improving skills in literacy and related to national programmes for literacy support. Additional literacy support is provided for pupils reaching 'just below' average levels with their work, who benefit from this provision and make steady progress.

30 The school makes good use of the community to enrich learning and social development. Coaches offer specialist sports tuition after school and other visitors have included the local police officer, theatre groups, an astronomer and Twycross Zoo's Education Officer. There are close links with Zoar Chapel, whose minister sometimes leads collective worship in school. The teachers make effective use of the locality to enrich learning in history and geography and they provide opportunities for the pupils to make use of the local library. Last year, with the co-operation of twelve local shops, the school developed a stimulating 'mathematics trail', which helped to make learning both real and fun for the pupils. The school choir has sung at the Merry Hill shopping centre.

31 There has been improvement in the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for spiritual development is good. Provision for moral and social development is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when provision was judged to be unsatisfactory for spiritual development and good for moral and social. During the inspection there were a number of occasions in assemblies when pupils were clearly enthralled and occasions in class lessons when they marvelled at the wonder of new learning. For example, in a science lesson when the teacher opened up the kernel of a peach, comparing the inside core with the numerous seeds of a pomegranate, pupils gasped with amazement. A spiritual dimension is developed in history and geography and lessons are drawn as pupils relate the power and conduct of famous leaders to authority in their own lives and their personal behaviour. Spiritual development is also well fostered in religious education lessons and in 'circle time' discussions, where pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own feelings and beliefs and how they affect others.

32 School assemblies are effective in helping pupils to understand that they are members of a community with shared values and to reflect on their experiences in a way that develops their self-knowledge. Assemblies have a theme for the week and teachers use them effectively. They extend pupils' knowledge of religions and provide opportunities to explore the effects that human feelings and emotions have on people. The theme of 'Differences' was very well taught during the week of inspection. Through stories from the Bible, well known characters from pupils' reading books, music and personal anecdotes, teachers offer quality opportunities for pupils to reflect on the fact that although we differ from each other, we share similar needs and feelings. Time for reflection is not restricted to assemblies or religious education lessons. It is central to pupils' development in all areas of the curriculum.

33 Provision for moral development is very good and is thoroughly promoted by the headteacher, teaching staff and non-teaching staff. A code of conduct or contract of behaviour is on display in classrooms around the school and is implicit in all pupils' behaviour. For example, even young pupils open doors for adults. Pupils quickly develop their understanding of the differences between right and wrong, particularly in their relationships and in relation to their own behaviour. They walk sensibly around the school and behave responsibly in the playground. In lessons pupils' attitudes to learning is at least satisfactory, often good. The school promotes equality across the curriculum in religious education, geography, history and other subjects, providing regular opportunities for pupils to explore and develop moral concepts and values. This helps all pupils to be included in learning. A system of rewards enables the school to both encourage and monitor the moral development of pupils.

34 The provision for social development is also very good. From an early age pupils are encouraged to work together in pairs or groups. The co-operation resulting from pupils working together makes a very positive contribution to social development. The quality of relationships in the school between pupils and between adults and pupils is very good. As pupils move through the school, teachers build on and increase these opportunities. For example, the school makes effective use of visits and performances to help pupils develop a sense of group identity and acceptable group behaviour. There is a range of opportunities offered that begins to prepare pupils to play an active part in society. In lessons, pupils share their work, explaining what they have done and why and how they could improve. They make choices and recognise that their choices affect themselves and others. Pupils have a good level of involvement in the wider community. They give performances to families and friends and take part in visits that support their learning. They are clear about what harms the local environment and their responsibility to promote improvement. This is demonstrated when older pupils recall with enthusiasm a visit to 'Faith City', a walk together through the woods and their collaboration in identifying ways to sustain and improve the local



environment against the adverse effects of weather and traffic. Pupils enjoy school and readily accept responsibility for jobs. All pupils help in the classroom and take registers to the office. Older pupils support younger pupils during wet break times and help the headteacher with special jobs. The school's prefect system remains a strength, enabling mature and responsible pupils, chosen for their high personal standards and behaviour to act as role models. Such opportunities promote a sense of citizenship.

35 The school makes satisfactory provision for cultural development, although there is limited provision made for pupils to develop an awareness of Britain as a multicultural society. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures through stories and celebrating festivals. Art makes a contribution with the imaginative artwork of different artists displayed around the school. In geography pupils are made aware of the differences between people living in India and those living in Britain. Their interest is particularly stimulated by a teacher who has lived in India and speaks from first hand experience about the lifestyles and the role of women in an Indian village. Pupils' cultural development is also enhanced through work in history and music and effective use of reference books and the Internet to research information.

36 There are good links with the local secondary school. Year 6 pupils spend one whole week in the summer term having lessons at the secondary school, prior to transfer. Nevertheless, the school would like to see these links extended more throughout the school year. The school hosts work experience students from local colleges.

37 There is good provision for the pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). Each class has a timetabled session for PSHCE, in which the pupils have the opportunity to develop confidence and self-esteem and to talk about issues such as interdependence, feelings, families, friendship and differences which make us special. The teachers also deal with relevant issues as they arise and during registration times and assemblies. In science, the pupils learn about the importance of a balanced diet in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The school is a 'health promoting school' and it participates in the National Fruit Scheme. The teachers deal with questions about human growth and development as they arise, with due regard to the pupils' ages and maturity. There is formal sex education for pupils in Year 6 during their last term in the school. The school nurse helps with this. The teachers ensure that all the pupils are aware of the dangers of drugs misuse and this awareness is enhanced by a visiting theatre group.

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

38 Pastoral care and the arrangements for pupils' health, safety and welfare are very good. The use of procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress is unsatisfactory. Educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are satisfactory. Parents are pleased with the quality of care and support that is provided.

39 Pastoral care is a strong feature of the school. Teachers and helpers try hard to meet the needs of individual pupils and pupils confirm that their teachers are kind, understanding and helpful.

40 Relationships between adults and pupils are constructive, mutually trusting and respectful and contribute to an environment that is conducive to learning, and in which, pupils feel safe, valued and supported. Child protection procedures are well managed and the arrangements for health and safety and safe use of the internet are very good. The school pays particular attention to making the movement of pupils between the two sites as safe as possible. First aid provision is adequate. Specialist health and education agencies provide relevant services to the school. The school promotes good health and, for example, provides an item of fresh fruit daily and makes water continuously available to each pupil.

Pupils with disabilities are able to access most areas of the premises and are very well cared for. Supervision is good and the school contacts parents promptly in the event of personal concerns or illness.

41 The monitoring and support for attendance is not sufficiently rigorous. The computer-based system that the school is required to use does not provide easily accessible data that enables the effective analysis of information and trends. The school's ability to react promptly and appropriately is inhibited. The support provided by the welfare service is inadequate in view of the significant number of pupils who have a poor record of attendance or lateness. The school does not at present succeed in engaging the co-operation of a significant number of parents for the purpose of reducing absence and lateness to an absolute minimum. Good attendance is not recognised or promoted amongst the pupils.

42 The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Relevant records are maintained and very effective strategies are applied to manage and improve behaviour. Teaching contributes much to the very good standards of behaviour because pupils are fully engaged in their work and enjoy it. Expectations and codes of conduct are well known by the pupils and the system of recognition and rewards works well. Sanctions are understood but need to be only rarely applied. The co-operation and support of parents are requested when appropriate.

43 The school is effective in minimising the number of incidents of anti-social behaviour. The strength of relationships throughout the school contributes very much to the fact that very few incidents occur and they are always dealt with immediately. The moral and social teaching and messages in school develop very positive and sensitive attitudes in the pupils about moral values and relationships.

44 The school is continuing to develop procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in most subjects. These procedures are satisfactory, giving pupils, parents and teachers information about pupils' learning in specific lessons, in national tests and on completion of units of study in school. Records of pupils' learning are meticulously kept by class teachers and by the assessment co-ordinator.

45 The use that the school makes of this information is unsatisfactory in that it does not track pupils' progress closely enough. Teachers do not have a full picture of pupils' attainment as they move through the school. The systems to track pupils' learning from year to year and to predict levels of attainment in Year 6 from achievements in Year 2 or Year 4 are not robust enough. The assessment of learning in English is particularly affected by this lack, but there are omissions in the use of information in most subjects.

46 There is a timetable for formal assessment of English and mathematics in most year groups. Pupils in reception are assessed on entry, but ongoing assessment in reception could be used more effectively to inform teaching. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 are tested twice each year. Results from these tests are used appropriately to allocate pupils to sets and groups, and a check is kept on progress during each school year. When pupils move to the next year group in September, their new class teacher receives information about the outcomes of tests at the end of the previous year only. Teachers do not have information about attainment prior to that, although that information is held centrally by the assessment co-ordinator. No effective use is made of electronic records to aid the distribution and use of assessment information.

47 All class teachers have folders that contain general objectives for teaching and learning in every subject. These are often very broad, reflecting the National Curriculum requirements, and are not particularly useful in devising individual learning targets for pupils.

Pupils who are experiencing difficulties in terms of specific objectives are identified, but where learning objectives do not include key skills, as in music or art and design, precise learning needs are not picked up sufficiently to ensure that pupils make as much progress as they could.

48 The procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are good overall. The relevant strengths, weaknesses and developmental needs of those pupils who have special education needs are very well assessed, recorded and used to support the pupils. A formal system is not in place for the remaining pupils, although teachers pass on notes about individuals to the teacher of the next class, and personal as well as academic targets may be identified for improvement. The school does not adopt a common approach to reporting personal development in the annual school reports. Nevertheless, teachers know the pupils well and generally provide good advice and guidance about their attitudes, conduct and application. The programme for personal, social and health education and assemblies contribute much to pupils' personal development.

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

49 The very large majority of parents express very positive views about the school and have confidence in the work it does. The partnership between school and parents is good. Relationships between the school and almost all parents are good.

50 Parents are very pleased with the quality of education and care that the school provides. They are very pleased with the academic and personal progress that pupils make. They are almost unanimous that their children like school. Parents feel welcome and all members of staff are approachable. A minority of parents feel that the range of extra-curricular activities is not wide enough. The range is satisfactory for pupils above the age of seven years. Parents are justified in their view that the field used by the school for physical activities is often in an unacceptable condition.

51 Most parents feel well informed about their children's progress. Annual school reports provide good information about what pupils know, understand and can do and indicate areas for improvement. They do not, as yet, clearly state how pupils are achieving with relation to expectations for their age or the national standards, though the school is about to provide such information. Opportunities to discuss pupils' progress are good and the school sends postcards home to advise parents of notable achievements. Teachers are accessible and approachable.

52 The school circulates an outline of what is to be taught each term. Information about the school is provided when children first come to school with helpful advice about how to assist pupils with their work at home. The prospectus does not have information about the number of pupils on roll and absence. It does not adequately describe the school's practice regarding pupils who have special education needs. The governors' annual report and frequent informative newsletters are attractively presented. Notice boards are used to publicise various events.

53 The school successfully involves many parents in their children's learning. Parents of pupils who have special education needs are very well involved in the review process. A small core of parents work alongside pupils in lessons. A good number of parents attend the literacy, numeracy and ICT workshops that are organised. A few help regularly in school and others help supervise trips out of school. The 'circle of friends' arranges activities from time to time to support the school. The school seeks the views of parents about aspects of its work through detailed questionnaires. Most parents co-operate with the school's practices, for example by making contact promptly when pupils are absent, but the school has not

successfully engaged the co-operation of all parents to keep absence and lateness to the absolute minimum.

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

54 The headteacher has provided clear direction and good leadership in the drive to raise standards. Throughout the school the general trend in standards since the last inspection has been upwards. This trend has kept pace overall with the upward trend for schools nationally. Results in the most recent tests in Year 2 suggest that the school has the potential to continue to improve. The school was amalgamated shortly before the last inspection and much work has been done in the intervening years to bring the two schools closer together. The layout of buildings, a split site divided by a busy road, continues to make this task and the general management of the school difficult on a daily basis.

55 The quality of management and the leadership has been good in terms of amalgamating two schools. Staff have been given subject responsibilities for the whole school and there is a clear sense of unity between all phases of the school from the nursery through to Year 6. The make up of the senior management team has been sensitively devised to ensure that staff are present who represent all age ranges and phases of school life. They act as channels of communication between the core management team of the headteacher and deputy headteachers, and the rest of the staff. Members of the core management team work well together, and the split site means that one of the senior managers is present on both sites at all times. Currently, responsibility for the assessment of pupils and the monitoring of their progress is split between the two deputy headteachers. This fragmented approach is not providing teachers with the quality of information they need, and this area of management, and how information about pupils' progress is used, needs to be improved.

56 Subject co-ordinators are given responsibility to monitor standards in their subjects and some have been involved in monitoring teaching throughout the school. This was an issue raised during the last inspection and progress in this respect has been good. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is satisfactory and leads to relevant staff training, and professional targets for individual members staff.

57 The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and LEA advisory teacher work well as a team and plan specific, targeted support for pupils, identified at School Action Plus. Clear targets are set in pupils' individual education plans (IEPs), which are monitored regularly so that progress can be tracked. Teachers and LSAs refer to targets and use them in lessons; this enables pupils to make good progress.

58 Governors are loyal and they fulfil their statutory duties. For example, the school has a policy on race equality that is implemented and is part of a whole school approach that respects individuals, irrespective of their background. There is a clear understanding amongst governors as to how the school can judge its effectiveness, for instance, by measuring 'added value' in pupils' learning and progress. There is less awareness of how the school compares with other institutions in terms of its performance. Governors monitor the progress of school development and spending closely; they have a clear of the future and how the school can move forward that is shared by the school management team. For example, they have the long-term ambition to move to one site and reduce pupil intake numbers to become a two-form entry school.

59 Strategic planning for school development is set out clearly and is satisfactory overall. However, in some specific plans for the development of individual subjects there is insufficient detail on how to implement change or how to measure the results of the changes, for instance, in the improvement in pupils' writing and reading. On the whole, resources are

used well to support teaching and learning. The use of the bank of portable computers is not as effective as it could be or used widely enough to involve pupils. Systems to monitor attendance and pupils' academic progress need to be improved to provide more reliable information more quickly and easily. The school spends an above average proportion of its budget on support staff. Classroom assistants provide good value for money, enabling pupils to learn more effectively and providing good support for pupils who have special educational needs. In purchasing supplies and services the school and governors apply effective methods and sound principles to ensure that quality and reliability are taken into account as well as cost.

60 Resources are adequate to support the curriculum. The accommodation has several weaknesses. The split site is complicated to manage. The road between the sites is busy and potentially dangerous, making delivery and collection of children difficult for parents. The school field is shared with the local community and requires constant risk assessments to check if it is clean and safe for use. The school halls are all small. The accommodation limits progress and attainment in physical education, and the school achieves what it does, in spite of the accommodation rather than because of it. The number of teachers and support staff is greater than found in most schools.

61 Grants and special funds are used appropriately and, in the case of funding to support pupils who have special educational needs, very effectively.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62 To continue to raise standards being achieved in Years 3 to 6, in English and mathematics the school should:

- Use information from assessments to track pupils' progress more closely within and across year groups;
- Share information on pupils' progress more widely, ensuring that class teachers have a clearer picture of pupils' progress over time;
- Use information from assessments to guide individual pupils' learning especially in English throughout the school;
- Ensure that the teaching and learning in groups set by ability matches more precisely the range of abilities within these groups.

(paragraphs: 5, 18, 23, 45, 79, 80, 83, 86, 89, 96, 99)

Improve attendance by:

- Developing systems that promote and celebrate good attendance;
- Improve systems used to analyse attendance so that trends are more obvious and can be investigated thoroughly;
- Carry out an analysis of the effect of poor attendance on the progress of pupils and ensure that the information is shared with pupils and parents.

(paragraphs : 4, 41, 53, 59)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

95

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

40

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	18	31	42	2	0	0
Percentage	2	19	33	44	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	60	520
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA	95

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	66

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
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	30	39	69

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	25	27
	Girls	33	34	30
	Total	57	59	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (85)	86 (82)	83 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	25	26
	Girls	33	25	35
	Total	58	50	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (84)	72 (85)	88 (82)
	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	48	36	84

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	28	43
	Girls	28	24	32
	Total	58	52	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (64)	62 (63)	89 (85)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	32	41
	Girls	29	26	30
	Total	51	58	71
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (66)	69 (69)	85 (85)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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



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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	376	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	25

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

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	400

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	60
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	83
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	04/01-03/02
	£
Total income	1,180,110
Total expenditure	1,122,615
Expenditure per pupil	2116
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,186
Balance carried forward to next year	65,681

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	520
Number of questionnaires returned	247

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	32	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	37	4	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	45	2	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	48	9	2	5
The teaching is good.	56	39	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	43	12	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	28	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	39	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	43	41	9	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	57	33	6	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	40	2	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	43	11	4	14

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

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

63 Provision for children in the nursery is good and in the reception classes it is satisfactory. Most children enter the Foundation Stage by attending Red Hall nursery. Children enter the nursery at the ages of three and four on a part-time basis and attend either morning or afternoon sessions. On average about 25 per cent of nursery children transfer to other schools when leaving the nursery. Of those who enter the reception classes, some have had no pre-school experience. Overall, children enter the nursery with attainment that is below average, and most of the children who attain better than average attainment in the nursery do not transfer to Red Hall's reception classes. Children enter the reception classes twice a year, in September and January, when a third class is created. In the reception classes, the children make satisfactory progress, but many remain below the expected levels in communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The achievement of children in the reception classes is satisfactory. Children with special educational needs are identified early and closely monitored to help them make good progress. The quality of teaching is sound overall and often good in the nursery. The quality of assessment in the nursery is also sound, but not enough use is made of information to guide teaching and children's learning in the reception classes.

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

64 Many of the children enter the nursery with below average skills in this area, and the teaching in the nursery provides a climate in which the children can improve these skills. This good practice continues in the reception classes, so that by the time they leave the reception classes children have reached the expected standards in this area of learning and their achievement is good. Children settle quickly and happily to nursery routines. They understand what to do and choose from a wide range of well-prepared activities. Through the many good opportunities provided, all children begin to socialise, work in pairs or as a group and show politeness and consideration towards each other. They develop the confidence to make independent decisions and enjoy opportunities for individual responsibility. Children play happily alongside each other, sharing equipment and ideas sensibly. They relate well to the teacher and the nursery staff, responding well to expectations for both their behaviour and learning. This positive development continues in the reception classes. The children continue to work happily together in the many activities and tasks provided, showing a good aptitude for concentration and persevering at their tasks. They show positive attitudes towards classroom routines, and are immediately attentive when their teachers require them to listen. They are helpful with daily tasks in the classroom and show a good degree of independence when changing for their physical education lessons. They learn to work together as a team through useful activities as part of their physical education lessons. Through the various topics of the curriculum, children develop a sound awareness of their own culture and the culture of others. They learn to express their feelings and appreciate the feelings of others through the good daily opportunities to reflect on feelings of, for example, happiness, sadness or anger.

65 The quality of teaching in this area is consistently good, and in the nursery it is frequently very good. Every opportunity is used to reinforce this aspect of children's learning, whether it is planned or spontaneous. Teachers and support staff provide good role models in the way they interact with the children and by the way they value their efforts. In the nursery, staff are always on hand to encourage and calm children, noticing immediately when support is needed. At the same time, staff provide a caring atmosphere where children

can develop a sense of right and wrong and develop their self-esteem and confidence. In the reception classes, teachers have good expectations and carefully help children to adjust to more formal routines, while maintaining opportunities for them to develop the ability to socialise and share.

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

66 The majority of children enter the nursery with communication, language and literacy skills that are below average. By the time the children leave the reception classes, standards in this area of learning are below average. Children's achievement is satisfactory and there are examples of good progress in the nursery, where teachers consistently plan suitable tasks to match the needs of all children. Children with special educational needs achieve well because of the support they are given.

67 In the nursery, good emphasis is put on the development of children's language skills. The listening skills of the children are good. Nearly all listen attentively and endeavour to respond appropriately to simple instructions and questions. The majority communicate confidently with other children, but few find it easy to engage in longer discussions because their speaking skills are underdeveloped. They are beginning to show an interest in books, with some children choosing to sit quietly and browse through books, although most of them prefer activities which engage them physically. They begin to use pencils and crayons in their attempts at early writing, and higher attaining children begin to form recognisable letters and attempt to write their own names. The children in the reception classes continue to display good listening skills. They enjoy listening to stories, both from teachers and listening tapes, and many of them remember new vocabulary, which is presented to them. For example, they took much pleasure in demonstrating their knowledge of the word 'camouflage'. They have an average vocabulary, and although many of them use more complex sentences, there are a significant number who are not able to put their thoughts into coherent sentences. Children's speaking skills affect other areas of language, such as reading, which needs an increasing spoken vocabulary and confidence with words for good progress to be made. As a consequence, standards in reading are below average by the start of Year 1. Children begin to understand the sequence of a story and enjoy joining in with the stories they hear, and the opportunity to 'read' and think about new vocabulary. Through the structured teaching they receive, many children recognise and know initial letter sounds and the higher attaining children are beginning to use this to help them with their reading. These children are building an appropriate reading vocabulary so that they are able to recognise some words out of context. However, the majority of children are at an early stage of reading and are just beginning to link the sounds they know with reading, or look at pictures in the books and use their own words to tell the story. Many of the children in the reception classes show below average skills in writing though their progress is satisfactory. The higher attaining children show an ability to write and spell three letter words correctly, with carefully formed letters, and are beginning to write simple sentences independently, although these are usually confined to brief sentences such as "I can read, I can paint" which are limited in their content and quality. While the average ability children try to use their knowledge of sounds to help them write, and this results in some recognisable words, most children are at an early stage in the development of writing skills. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is satisfactory overall. It is frequently good in the nursery, where the teachers and support staff engage the children in worthwhile discussion to develop speaking skills in a range of situations. Specific support is given to help children develop their early writing skills, and this is always provided in an encouraging way, matching the aptitude and interest of the children. Teaching in the reception classes is satisfactory overall, but with one unsatisfactory lesson seen. The teaching of basic reading skills is sound overall and well supported by learning support assistants who provide individual help and attention for children's reading. Teachers plan together as a team. This results in a range of sound tasks and activities to develop language and literacy skills. They

are usually well related to what they want children to learn. However, the lesson objectives are not sufficiently precise to ensure consistently good learning for all groups. Some of the tasks are not sufficiently well matched to the ability of the children to provide the necessary challenge to enable progress to be really good. Where not enough account is taken of the results of assessment and the differences within each class when planning, the result is unsatisfactory teaching.

### **Mathematical development**

68 By the time the children leave the reception classes, they reach standards which are just below those expected for the age group. Children with special educational needs are helped to develop their understanding and concentration through the support they receive from all staff and assistants. The nursery provides a solid and practical foundation on which children's mathematical skills can be built. Children begin to recognise and appreciate number through activities such as counting the number of legs of a range of model animals and insects. Through such activities they begin to sort objects according to set criteria. Some are beginning to recognise written numerals and match them successfully to the numbers they have counted. As the children play with sand and water they are encouraged to consider different containers and what these will hold. In the reception classes, the children count and match successfully to ten and some go beyond this. However, there are some who need help in order to carefully match one to one when counting. Higher attaining children understand how to add two numbers together and some are beginning to show a sound understanding of the basic skills for subtraction, but there are others who are not able to record numbers accurately. Some recognise mathematical language such as "one more" or "less", but many lack a sound mathematical vocabulary. They recognise simple shapes, but find it difficult to understand, recognise or copy ideas of pattern sequencing. Through activities such as the use of the sand and water trays they begin to develop their understanding of weighing and capacity. They enjoy using number songs to help such concepts as 'taking away'.

69 The teaching of basic skills for mathematics is satisfactory. In the nursery, teachers and staff provide good opportunities for the children to develop their mathematical understanding through group activities which are based on the current topic. This helps to stimulate the children's interest and helps them to recognise numbers and match one to one carefully. Teachers also ensure that they engage the children in realistic discussion when they are involved in such activities so that their number concepts and vocabulary are extended. There are sound opportunities for a range of skills to be developed, so that children know, for example, that a ball of play dough can change shape and be rolled out flat. Assessment in the nursery is carefully used to match the tasks to children's needs. In reception teachers use the time for teaching the whole class efficiently and use well directed questions to encourage the children to think carefully about what they are learning. However, frequently the lack of precise learning objectives for all groups of children means that the higher attaining children in particular are not always challenged sufficiently. Although group tasks are carefully chosen to extend learning, not enough guidance is given to the children so that they are really sure about what they are to learn through the choices they make. This results in children who, although always well behaved and eager, sometimes lack clear direction. ICT is used appropriately to develop the children's concepts of number.

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

70 By the end of the reception year, children reach standards that are just below what is expected for the age group. This reflects lower standards than the previous inspection, but children enter the school with limited experience of the world around them. Many of them also lack the vocabulary to talk in detail about what is familiar to them. The achievements of the children in the nursery are good. This is due to the range of interesting activities and

equipment available for children to explore and investigate, alongside teacher directed activities. In the reception classes, children's achievements are satisfactory overall, although in some aspects of learning related to their topics they acquire new knowledge which is good.

71 Activities in the nursery such as sand and water play and experimenting with soapy water and natural materials support the good progress of the children. Their eager curiosity means that they concentrate on activities well, while they manipulate, squeeze, pour and mould different materials. When children use the computer, most of them use the mouse competently. They are fascinated by a display which encourages them to investigate light and shapes, and with what they see through a kaleidoscope. They listen avidly to teachers when talking about animals around the world. In the reception classes, children are fascinated by how animals can be camouflaged. Learning in this area is reinforced by imaginative role-play areas, which create a jungle environment. They continue to develop their skills in ICT, and displays show that there are opportunities to learn different techniques for model making, such as the making of "dream-catchers". However, there are too few opportunities for children to build and construct using a wide range of objects and to select the appropriate tools for what they are doing. There are limited opportunities to explore and investigate a range of equipment and activities for themselves. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory overall.

### **Physical development**

72 Children make good progress in their physical development, and by the time they leave the reception classes, they meet the expectations for children of this age. All groups of children achieve well. This good physical development also benefits children's skills in other areas such as their use of pencils, paintbrushes and scissors.

73 In the nursery, children successfully develop their physical skills during both indoor and outdoor play. For example, children in the nursery show good co-ordination when using construction toys and manipulating play dough. When painting and drawing they use paintbrushes and markers with increasing care. When playing outside, they climb, slide and use a range of outdoor toys showing increasing agility and precision. In reception, although there was no opportunity to see children using scissors, they manipulate equipment such as the threading of beads or the pieces of puzzles with ease. In physical education, children show an increasing awareness of space, and demonstrate they can control their bodies with a sense of balance, showing good co-ordination.

74 The teaching of this area of learning is satisfactory. The provision for outdoor play was recognised as a weakness in the previous inspection. The teaching in the nursery ensures that the outdoor area is used regularly and the staff have endeavoured to use it to its best advantage. Nevertheless the site is not an attractive or stimulating environment in which young children can fully develop their physical and creative abilities.

### **Creative development**

75 By the end of the reception year, children reach average standards in relation to expectations in their creative development. All children achieve well and are learning to use different media, tools and techniques.

76 In the nursery, children produce good quality paintings, which are displayed to produce a bright environment. The children are given opportunities to explore texture, form and shape in two or three dimensions, which they do so with interest and perseverance. They use paint and folded paper to create their own butterflies, and manipulate play dough to make their own 'strawberry cakes'. In the role-play area they play together, dressing up

and 'baking' as they prepare for a 'party'. They have many opportunities to explore drawing with different types of pencils and crayons and most have the confidence to create images as they see them. They use construction kits successfully create their own designs and happily play with these. In the reception classes, children continue to develop their creativity by extending the skills they develop in the nursery. They use finger painting to capture the elements of camouflage of animals, and use different materials to create jungle flowers and snakes. Role-play is well linked to their topics and gives sound opportunity for developing children's imagination based on their new knowledge. The children in the reception classes enjoy singing and have a good repertoire of songs which they sing tunefully and with appropriate actions. There was no opportunity to see them using and performing with a range of musical instruments.

77 The teaching of this area of learning is satisfactory. In the nursery it is supported well through the involvement of the nursery nurses. All teachers successfully use creativity to develop children's imagination and increase their skills, but also to help them to develop an appreciation of the world. Some opportunities are missed to develop further the children's creativity. For example, teachers missed the opportunity to extend the children's good musical skills further in a singing time. At times the opportunities for creative development are over directed, with limited opportunities for children to use their own initiative and independently choose their own materials.

## **ENGLISH**

78 Overall standards in Year 2 are currently below average. Reading results for the seven-year-olds are likely to be the same as in 2002, when they were below average. Standards of writing, average in 2002, are below average because the school is anticipating that fewer will achieve the higher level (Level 3) in the tests this year. When compared with the national test results following the last inspection, standards have been maintained. The school has set a modest target for the eleven-year-olds to reach in this year's tests. If achieved, it would produce similar results to 2002, which were well below average, matching the results of the national tests taken after the last inspection. Inspectors judge that standards are slightly better than this. However, they are still below the average for most schools.

79 Standards of speaking and listening in Years 2 and 6 are below those found in most schools. Many pupils lack confidence. When talking to inspectors, for example, many Year 6 pupils in each group found it difficult to reply at length and in sentences and up to one-third, including a disproportionate number of girls, were reluctant to speak. Often, they could not find the words to express themselves and, like some teachers, inspectors found themselves having to finish off sentences or interpret what it was that pupils were trying to say. Conversely, some pupils were very articulate and expressed their views forcefully and at length, demonstrating the very wide range of ability in Year 6. Year 2 pupils, like those in all year groups, concentrate well in lessons. Their listening skills are satisfactory but many remain passive and are not challenged to speak. Teachers tend to ask for answers from those with hands up. In a very good lesson in Year 6, this was not so and the teacher made a point of including everyone in some dialogue. "Who hasn't spoken to me today?" he said at one point. However, lessons usually offer good opportunities for speaking in other areas of learning, particularly in PSHCE lessons, where everyone is encouraged to contribute. Most pupils do not have a wide vocabulary. In Year 2, the teacher experienced difficulties in trying to get pupils to give alternative words to 'nice' and 'lovely', and in Year 5, pupils struggled to explain 'disappointed'. There is also a tentative grasp of Standard English<sup>2</sup> although most pupils in a lesson in Year 6 recognised that 'a do' in an informal invitation meant a party.

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<sup>2</sup> The language of public communication, distinguished from other forms of English by its vocabulary.



Progress in developing speaking and listening skills is satisfactory because pupils enter Year 1 with below average skills.

80 Standards in reading are below average at seven and eleven, but pupils make good progress in the infants due mainly to the impressive attention given to the teaching of phonics. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils had to find *ow* and *ou* words in the Big Book and, when they found *flower* and *flour*, they were helped to understand the difference in meaning. In Year 1, pupils were learning how to blend sounds to identify words such as *shed* and *chip* – the sounds for the day being *ch* and *sh*. These developing reading strategies were evident to inspectors when pupils read to them. However, while reading was generally accurate, only the more able pupils read with fluency and expression. Most talked sensibly about their book and enjoyed reading. All pupils have reading diaries to show that they read at home and teachers and parents write comments so that there is good communication. Pupils are grouped for reading activities in lessons and once a week they read to their teacher. This group reading procedure operates throughout the school and is well organised. It contributes to the steady progress that is evident in reading throughout the juniors. By eleven, however, the wide range of achievement is even more evident than at seven. The above average pupils quote authors such as Philip Pullman and J K Rowling as their favourites with children's classics such as *Black Beauty* as a favourite book. Below average pupils struggle to quote examples. Some of them also struggle to read accurately and have to stop to work out what words say. However, they do have strategies for this. Some words are misread, such as *where* instead of *here*. This sometimes happens with average pupils too but they are more likely to correct mistakes themselves, realising from the context that their reading does not make sense. Above average pupils are accurate, fluent and expressive readers. Even when a word like 'subtly' defied his best efforts to read it, one boy worked out its meaning after reading the sentence.

81 Many teachers, particularly those in the infants, make helpful notes about pupils' successes and difficulties when they hear them read. Pupils are tested formally every year and records are kept centrally for teachers to refer to. However pupils' progress would be more easily tracked if each teacher had access to records in their class. They cannot therefore identify pupils who have not made sufficient progress between one year's test and the next and who need particular attention. This is a serious omission.

82 Standards of writing are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6. Handwriting develops satisfactorily across the school so that, by eleven, most pupils have a clear, legible style though not all regularly write in ink. Seven-year-olds are not helped to produce letters that are consistent in size because, except for their practice books, they write on unlined paper. Some, however, are beginning to join their letters in their everyday work. When given the opportunity to write freely, the above average pupils punctuate sentences correctly and spell most common words accurately. Occasionally, they use interesting vocabulary, such as 'Autumn is squelching mud', but this is rare. Average pupils also understand the need for full stops and capital letters but have difficulty with spelling, for example, 'take' is spelt as 'tack' and 'our' as 'ower'. Some letters are reversed. Below average pupils are not as accurate in forming sentences and some work needs interpretation, mainly because of difficulties with spelling. However, teachers give sound support to these pupils and others through their marking, encouraging them when they do well and correcting the spelling of common words when mistakes occur. Progress in the infants is good in general. There has been a noticeable improvement in the books of the Year 1 pupils since they entered their classes in September. One below average pupil was simply making marks on a page then, but in December was able to write a clear sentence in a letter to Santa.

83 Some pupils still find imaginative writing difficult at eleven, mainly because they don't have the range of vocabulary or the ability to write complex sentences that are typical of

higher level story-writing. Factual writing is easier for them, as was evident in a lesson where they completed an application form for a library card and competently followed the conventions for this type of writing. In some cases, the problems that they have with writing have persisted because teachers are not always aware of the accumulated scores from the end-of-year tests that are taken throughout the juniors. Statistics produced for inspectors showed that, for the current Year 6 pupils who took the tests for seven-year-olds at Red Hall, over half did not make sufficient progress by the end of Year 4. Teachers were not alerted to these pupils but, because there are now sound systems for assessing attainment as pupils complete each unit of work, it is likely that most have made sufficient progress since then. Progress through the juniors for the present Year 6 pupils is, however, only just satisfactory.

84 The above average eleven-year-olds write fluently with accurate punctuation and spelling. They occasionally use evocative vocabulary, such as 'his whole body tingled with energy', and sustain a plot at length. Average pupils have more difficulty in conjuring up adventurous vocabulary and in writing lengthy sentences. Spelling is a problem for some although it is not as serious as for the below average pupils who struggle to spell 'half an hour' [half a nower], 'cloud' [clowed] and 'operation' [hoperwasen]. In the rush to write, these pupils sometime omit full stops. Stories are often planned and several lessons with younger pupils were observed where this was done well. In Year 3, for example, pupils worked out a complicated plot for writing a story of how Polly would trick the wolf, based on a story in which the wolf had tricked her. Year 6 pupils relate how they sometimes re-draft work and there were good examples around the school of how writing had been entered on to the computer to produce attractive pieces of work for the display boards. However, computers were not used in any English lessons during the inspection.

85 Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are supported well and make good progress throughout the school. Except in Year 1, pupils are grouped by ability for lessons and, within the lower ability 'sets', those with particular learning difficulties receive good quality support from teaching assistants. In Year 2, for example, in a lesson looking at the two settings in the story of 'The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse' the teacher included all pupils in the initial discussion and praised the contributions of the SEN pupils, whose self-esteem rose visibly. In the activity session, the teaching assistant continued the discussion with them. There is a warm rapport and pupils are not afraid to make mistakes, for example, putting the wrong label with a picture, knowing that she will help them sympathetically.

86 Lessons are planned thoroughly and teachers share with pupils what it is they want them to learn during the lesson. Discussions at the end of the lesson enable pupils to gauge the extent of their learning. The National Literacy Strategy, however, is not always being used to best effect to meet the specific needs of all pupils. The school wisely groups pupils by ability for English lessons but each class within a year-group then pursues the same learning objective, delivered in different ways and reinforced with different activities. In Year 5, however, the relevance of relative pronouns to pupils of lower ability whose writing has been assessed as at the level of an average eight-year-old was not obvious. The programme for Year 4 pupils centred around the use of adjectives to make writing more interesting and more help to these lower attaining pupils. However, time is wisely allotted specifically for extended writing activities and literacy skills are well promoted in other subjects. For example, in a Year 5 history topic about Victorians, pupils have written a diary about a kitchen maid's day. Visitors to the school, including a poet in residence, have enriched the curriculum and contributed satisfactorily to the pupils' cultural development. The oldest pupils recalled two visitors who introduced them to *Macbeth*. As a result of the 'witches' scene', one pupil was inspired to write a poem containing these words:

*The moon is full, the ground shall shake,  
Demons rise in a lava lake.*

87 The teaching in all lessons in the infants was good or better. In the juniors, teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good but overall was satisfactory. All teachers manage their classes well. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their lessons and behave very well. No time is lost having to deal with inappropriate behaviour but, in the better lessons, teachers maintain a brisk pace and do not fall into the trap of talking too long before activities start. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 displayed particularly good understanding of how to teach the basic skills and they explained clearly what they wanted pupils to do. In two very good lessons in Year 6, the teachers had a lively and exciting style of delivery and resources were well prepared. In one, an overhead projector was effectively used to display text so that the teacher could highlight particular aspects, for example the use of slang in an informal invitation to a party. In the other, very good attention was paid to developing the higher order reading skill of scanning text for information. Teachers throughout the school have good questioning techniques. They ask open questions that do not suggest the answer. This encourages pupils to think and also enables teachers to judge the level of understanding through the accuracy of pupils' answers. Homework is satisfactorily supporting work in school and pupils in Year 6 think they get the right amount to do.

88 The co-ordinator manages the subject well. He has a good understanding of what is happening by scrutinising planning and pupils' work and by observing lessons. The correct priorities for action have been identified but the strategies to achieve them are not always precise enough. Resources are adequate but there is a lack of good modern fiction in the class libraries particularly for the older pupils. The school has two libraries that are used by pupils. However, these also would benefit from an injection of new books and the scrapping of old ones. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 visit the local library to learn how to use it. It was surprising therefore that those in Year 5 who read to an inspector found it difficult to explain how to find a specific non-fiction book in the school library. Conversely, pupils in Year 6 understood the system well.

89 The school has satisfactory systems for assessing the standards that pupils attain through formal testing and through regular assessment of their understanding, judged against the key learning objectives identified in the National Literacy Strategy. As outlined above, the weakness in the assessment system is in the tracking of pupils' progress. A recent innovation whereby pupils complete an unaided piece of writing each term in a 'progress book' is proving beneficial. Teachers assess the work against the National Curriculum levels of attainment and identify the strengths and weaknesses evident from the writing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

90 Standards in Year 2 are broadly average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. In the 2002 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards were in line with the national average and they were above average compared with similar schools.

91 Standards in Year 6 are below average. In the 2002 national tests for eleven-year-olds, standards were well below the national average and they were below average compared with similar schools. Standards are now steadily rising as a result of the school's effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy. The school has set a challenging target for further improvement in Year 6 this year.

92 In both Years 2 and 6, there is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. By Year 2, all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. By Year 6, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Throughout the school, the pupils are keen to learn.

93 Pupils in Year 2 have a sound understanding of place value in two-digit numbers. High attainers extend this knowledge to three-digit numbers. The pupils order numbers to 100. They have a sound understanding of addition facts to 20. They subtract by counting back or by counting on. The pupils are beginning to see that multiplication is repeated addition and they have a satisfactory knowledge of the 2, 5 and 10 times tables. Whilst high attainers recognise division as equal sharing, other pupils find this more difficult. The pupils use coins to make up various sums of money and high attainers are confident in calculating change. The pupils measure the length of lines in centimetres, though low attainers find it difficult to read a ruler accurately. The pupils recognise and name common two-dimensional (2D) shapes and high attainers are confident in describing some of the properties of three-dimensional ones. The pupils understand that data can be shown graphically. For example, they contribute to an accurate class bar chart showing the pupils' heights and they sort 2D shapes by means of Venn diagrams. The pupils use their mathematical skills in other subjects. In geography, for example, pupils in Year 1 contribute to an accurate class bar chart showing the different ways in which they travelled on their holidays. In science, pupils in Year 2 draw accurate block graphs of how movement is affected by the friction of different surfaces.

94 Pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory understanding of multiplication tables. They multiply and divide numbers, including decimals, by 10, 100 and 1000. High attainers use quick mental recall of number facts, but other pupils are less confident. The pupils find long multiplication difficult. They reduce a fraction to its simplest form, but they find it difficult to convert fractions to percentages. Most of the pupils plot simple coordinates and high attainers can plot coordinates in all four quadrants. Many pupils find it difficult to apply their numeracy skills in solving real life problems. The weak literacy skills of these pupils means that they find it difficult to see what information is being given to them and what exactly it is that they have to find out. The pupils calculate the area and perimeter of shapes and they use protractors to measure angles accurately. They transform shapes by turning them on a grid. The pupils record data graphically, but they find it harder to interpret information which is provided in more complex graphs. They have a satisfactory understanding of the probability scale 0-1. The pupils use their mathematical skills in other subjects. In work linked to food technology, Year 6 pupils use the computers to generate accurate line graphs and pie charts of the appearance and taste of fruit cocktails. In geography, pupils in Year 4 compile a class bar graph of one week's temperature and rainfall readings.

95 Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and sometimes very good. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall, though here, too, there are examples of good teaching. Lessons are well planned and the pupils know exactly what it is they are meant to have learnt by the end of the lesson. The teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included in learning. They use a variety of methods to develop the pupils' quick mental recall of number facts. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher made effective use of a 'loop' game, which the pupils really enjoyed and which helped them to solve algebraic equations quickly. In a lesson for pupils in Year 4, the teacher made good use of a pre-recorded audio tape. The pupils joined in with singing multiplication tables and this made learning fun. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher used some large, numbered 'footsteps' on the floor and this helped the pupils to become actively involved in learning how to count on and back to 20 in one's and two's.

96 The teachers organise group work well and they deploy classroom assistants effectively to help. Work is generally well matched to the pupils' differing needs and there is usually plenty of extension work to be tackled by any pupils who finish their tasks. At times, however, work is too difficult for some low attainers. There is a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' ability to solve real life, mathematical problems. In some lessons, the teachers are making effective use of ICT to enhance learning. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher made very good use of an inter-active whiteboard, which helped the pupils to understand algebraic equations and to see how the use of brackets can help to break down

a problem into easy steps. In another Year 6 lesson, some low attainers used ICT to enhance their number work. All the teachers emphasise the use of correct mathematical vocabulary and this helps the pupils in understanding the key words of the lesson.

97 The teachers have high expectations for presentation and this helps the pupils in setting out their work correctly. They use questioning well, in order to make the pupils think carefully. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the teacher asked 'What's special about these numbers?' and this helped the pupils to appreciate patterns of even numbers in their counting on and back to 20. She also asked 'How do you think block graphs are going to be different to pictographs?' This enabled some high attainers to think carefully about their previous day's work and to make predictions about a new way of recording information. 'Can we make these amounts in any other way?' asked a teacher in a lesson for pupils in Year 1, and this helped them to think of how they could use fewer coins, of a higher value, to make the same amounts of money.

98 The teachers finish lessons with short, but valuable, sessions, in which the pupils have the opportunity to talk about their work and about any difficulties they encountered. Each class has regular weekly homework and most of the pupils are keen to do this and to return it to school on time. The teachers mark the pupils' work regularly and positively, though the quality of marking is variable. Where it is best, the pupils are given ideas on how they might improve their work, such as 'Remember to add the digit which you have carried' (Year 4) and 'You must include the title of the graph and to label both axes (Year 6). The teachers frequently ask the pupils to explain how they solved a problem and this aids understanding. However, opportunities to use the mistakes of some pupils as teaching points are often missed.

99 A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils are taught in ability sets from Year 2 onwards. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. She checks the quality of teaching and she has led some in-service training for colleagues. She has developed a clear action plan, which seeks to raise standards further. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment. National test results are carefully analysed, in order to highlight areas of weakness and to plan the next stages in the pupils' learning. A current focus of attention, for example, is on developing the pupils' problem-solving skills. Nevertheless, the tracking of the pupils' progress over a longer period of time is less clear. There are adequate resources to support teaching and learning.

## **SCIENCE**

100 There has been a steady improvement in standards since the last inspection. In 1998, results showed standards being achieved in Year 6 were well below the national average. In 2002 they had improved significantly and were average. Current standards in Year 2 are above average, the same as teacher assessments showed in 2002.

101 Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 and higher achieving pupils in Year 6 make good progress in their learning. This is clearly as a result of the changes made in the teaching of investigations, giving pupils stimulating opportunities to develop their thinking. Those with special educational needs also make good progress, with very effective support provided in a variety of appropriate ways in all classes. All other pupils make sound progress overall. Teaching is never less than satisfactory, and there is some very good teaching in Years 2, 4, and 6.

102 Science is taught through a range of topics, based on nationally produced schemes of work. Because of mixed-age classes in some year groups, the school has devised a two-year cycle, to ensure that all pupils have an appropriately varied curriculum that covers the required learning of the National Curriculum. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 study and

investigate seeds, making comparisons as they discuss different fruits. They know words like 'stem', 'petal', 'root' and 'leaf'. This learning is reinforced by the use of a computer program that enables pupils to build a plant on screen. Pupils begin to think creatively about an appropriate environment to nurture growth. Year 3 extend this learning by investigations using plants and seeds, growing bean plants to consider the need for light, and planting sunflower seeds to discover which measurement of water will bring about the best growth. Year 4 also learn that water is taken in through the roots of plants and transported through the stem to other parts, by experimenting with coloured water for their carnations. Key scientific vocabulary such as 'measure', 'changes' and 'fair test' is emphasised well, and pupils in Year 4 are able to explain these words with good understanding. There is an air of enjoyment in all lessons, as pupils are excited about their discoveries. Groups of pupils work very well together. They are able to organise their own equipment, and to plan investigations independently, using effective guidance from teachers and recording their ideas on a writing frame, designed for the purpose. The frames are a recent innovation, now in need of review, as they are too complicated at present, and have inappropriate prompts that confuse many of the pupils.

103 Both Year 5 and Year 6 pupils find it hard to follow written instructions. This is sometimes because introductions keep them waiting too long, and sometimes because of reading difficulties. This applies particularly to lower achieving pupils when there is no immediate support available. Higher achieving pupils in Year 6 discuss their experiments with confidence, describing how gases will condense into liquids and that candles need oxygen to burn. Pupils with special educational needs are able to contribute effectively to the learning of their peers with accurate and articulate explanations of their findings, for example, about liquids and solids in cake making. They are no longer withdrawn from science lessons for work elsewhere, as they were at the time of the last inspection. This is having a marked impact on their progress.

104 The school now places great emphasis on scientific enquiry, and this shift is contributing well to the improvements in learning. Most teachers demonstrate a good understanding of this in their planning. Some lessons are over-complicated, however, placing more emphasis on the process of the investigation than on the learning outcome. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good, and there is strong and effective leadership from the co-ordinator, who has a good grasp of the subject. Pupils are generally very well organised and managed, although groups in Year 6 are sometimes too big. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are given an appropriate degree of independence in their learning, when members of each group take on the role of leader, recorder or reporter for each experiment. There are a few examples of the use of ICT, but there is room to expand this.

105 A recent monitoring survey of teaching and learning across the school that was conducted by the co-ordinator revealed some useful evidence of good practice. Sharing this is beginning to have a positive impact on progress. Not all teachers mark spelling mistakes in pupils' books, and though some marking is constructive, not all marking encourages pupils to reflect on their work enough.

106 The key area for further improvement in science teaching is assessment. Currently all pupils' progress is marked against the learning objectives identified for each unit of study. Some assessments are carried out that reflect pupils' knowledge and understanding of key objectives. These objectives reflect National Curriculum standards and ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate curriculum in science. When this information is passed on to a pupil's next teacher, it does not contain details of individual needs for most pupils, except for the higher achieving pupils and those with special educational needs.

107 Resources for science are satisfactory, and generally very well prepared for lessons. The allocation of time is very appropriate for most year groups, but the split lesson for Year 5 does not benefit the continuity of learning needed in scientific investigations.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

108 By Year 2, standards in art and design are average. By Year 6, standards are above the national average; an improvement since the previous inspection.

109 Pupils in Year 6 state that art is their favourite lesson, because they can experiment and explore different ideas. Much of the good quality work in Year 6 stems from thoughtful planning of lessons, which builds upon expertise and skills over time. The ability to stand back, evaluate and improve their work enables pupils to carry through their own ideas and achieve the desired effect. This is evident in work linked to the study of Salvador Dalí, when pupils discuss his use of images to communicate ideas. One pupil's response is typical of most. 'I think that the clock in the tree means we have no control over time, and the tree and life keep going'. Good teaching ensures that pupils have the time and resources to create imaginatively for themselves. In this lesson, pupils' montages of black and white images are very striking, but more thought and time is needed for some three-dimensional aspects of their work, if they are to be of a similar, good standard.

110 In Year 3, drawing skills are developed in a way that ensures good progress and that standards are good. Pupils look carefully at the work of a range of artists and record their observations with greater accuracy and detail. Effective teaching focuses on the comparison between 'young' and 'old', and the idea that colour can reflect age and emotions. One pupil chose darker pastel tones for his experiment with ageing faces and trying out new techniques shading line and texture. However, work in sketchbooks in general is disappointing and does not reflect the exciting work and experimentation going on in lessons. On occasions expectations of both pupils and teachers are low.

111 No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, and so evidence from displays and pupils' previous work have helped to make judgements. Although standards and progress are satisfactory overall, provision for art is a mixed picture. Pockets of imaginative work linked to Modigliani's 'Girl with a Pigtail', and snowy scenes of the local environment, show good development of skills using pastels and chalk. Observational drawings of teddy bears provide opportunity to draw on a larger scale and to develop finer skills with drawing. However, overall, work is less spontaneous and often directed - such as filling in templates of vehicles with coloured papers. Displays in the school are lively, and informative.

112 Pupils are keen to learn and well behaved. They share ideas and resources amicably and so lessons move on at a good pace. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to all lessons and are as keen as others to share their ideas and work. There are no pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Within the junior class, work in art is adding to the pupils' cultural development as they study a wide range of artists, such as Seurat and Picasso, and reflect on the deeper meaning of their work.

113 Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good; here teachers have both expertise and enthusiasm and this is reflected in the range of experiences provided in art. Lessons are well managed and pupils are encouraged to experiment and explore. Planning follows well thought out guidelines, and portfolios of pupils' work give evidence of progress over time. As yet, class teachers are not assessing skills in a consistent way and recording what pupils have mastered. Some teachers are making good cross-curricular links with art and other subjects. For instance, good use is made of ICT in creating multi-media presentations on famous artists.

114 The co-ordinator has considerable expertise and commitment and has been pivotal in improving standards in junior classes. Continued monitoring of art is needed to identify areas for development and provide a 'whole school' approach to teaching and learning.

115 Resources are accessible and well used in lessons.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

116 Standards in design and technology by Year 2 and Year 6 are average. This shows an improvement from the previous inspection, when standards in Years 3 to 6 were unsatisfactory. Standards are higher because of clearer subject guidelines for teachers to follow and because there is now sufficient time allowed for the subject. This enables pupils to make better progress as they carry through their ideas and plan, make and evaluate their work.

117 By Year 2, pupils have explored different ways of joining materials together. They choose split pins to join arms and legs of two-dimensional representations of Father Christmas and teddy bears, so that the figures can move. Experiments with simple working mechanisms, such as cogs and wheels, pay dividends, in the good quality of finished products. Pupils begin to plan their work, for instance, considering how to use a winding mechanism, when designing plans for a windmill. They handle and make a range of products, build upon skills in a progressive way and make steady progress with their learning.

118 By Year 6, pupils draw on their experiences in making and evaluating a range of products. This is evident in food technology, when pupils move from testing a range of sandwich fillings, to adapting recipes for biscuits and planning a recipe. Discussions can go on for too long in some lessons, reducing the time available for planning and making.

119 The quality of products is generally satisfactory or better in design and technology lessons. When pupils make Christmas stockings, they have time to practise their sewing and joining skills and produce good standards of work. In a similar way, good joining and cutting skills and well produced illustrations enhance work with 'moving' story books, such as 'The Ugly Duckling'. There is some good evaluation of finished work that helps to build up expertise and knowledge, for instance, when one pupil describes a biscuit as 'looking like crazy paving, but tasting a lot better than it looks'. The quality of planning also varies across year groups. At its best, it has clear step-by-step instructions, but generally there is little use of precise measurements, and tidy presentation.

120 The quality of teaching in the lessons is satisfactory. No lessons were observed in infant classes, because of timetable organisation. Lessons are well planned, have clear objectives and follow the guidelines for the subject. In many lessons, pupils lack the confidence and skills to explain their ideas and so teachers have to work hard to encourage participation. Good liaison with learning support assistants ensures that pupils with special needs are well supported in lessons and so make sound progress. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language.

121 The subject co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject and has planned a good programme of work across the school. Planned art and design technology weeks have worked well in raising the profile of these subjects and in providing rich experiences for pupils. Resources are monitored well and accessible in lessons.



## **GEOGRAPHY**

122 The last time the school was inspected standards in geography were average by the end of Year 2 but below average by the end of Year 6. Current standards are average throughout the school. In Years 3 to 6 the previous weakness in developing pupils' geographical skills has been resolved because of better teaching which places increased emphasis on appropriate use of research and fieldwork.

123 As a result pupils make good progress by the end of Year 2 and progress from Year 3 to Year 6 is at least satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make the same progress as other pupils.

124 The curriculum provided is appropriately broad and balanced and provides pupils with suitable activities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.

125 By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good knowledge of local places and are developing map work skills suitably. This is because of sound teaching and an emphasis on fieldwork. Year 1 draw simple maps of their journey to and from school, noting the positions of houses and other features. Older pupils make sound progress because teaching encourages them to reflect upon their walk around Gornal. Pupils use photographic evidence, and through paired and class discussion, decide why they like or dislike aspects within the locality. Pupils' awareness of environmental improvements is raised when they consider the adverse effects of fumes from cars in a local car park on their local environment. After discussion they agree that their surroundings would be healthier if cars were used less. Such activities are useful methods of increasing pupils' speaking and listening skills and increasing their confidence to state a point of view.

126 By the end of Year 2 pupils understand distance in terms of near and far; they use maps to trace places where they have been on holiday, developing their understanding of how places are linked to each other within the UK and worldwide. This is consolidated in religious education lessons when pupils discuss pilgrimages. When the youngest pupils study the weather and weather symbols, teachers extend the understanding of environmental issues by encouraging pupils to question and express their views concerning the effects of the weather on people's lives.

127 By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed good skills in map work. They are familiar with atlases and use the contents and index pages and four-figure grid references successfully. They locate countries of the UK and the world and can name the capital cities of countries on different continents. Fieldwork is developed throughout the school and pupils in Year 6 have an opportunity to broaden their experiences during a residential visit in the summer term. Year 5 make progress as they record directional information when walking around the school site. They use compasses to help them as they orientate maps and navigate position in relation to the north. Pupils note and record directions (bearings) when travelling from marked positions, recording their bearings to the four points of the compass. More able pupils are suitably extended as they measure with greater accuracy using eight points of the compass.

128 The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. Pupils' active participation is well promoted. In the most effective lessons teachers' planning provides clear objectives for what pupils are to know, understand and be able to do by the end of the lesson. Teachers use resources effectively to stimulate pupils' interest and motivate learning. Previous learning is revised at the beginning of each lesson and systematically built on so pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are used well in geography. Teachers focus on and explain geographical vocabulary,

enabling pupils throughout the school to use precise geographical terms when discussing their work.

129 Good links are made with other subjects for example, mathematics and ICT.

130 Teachers expect pupils to produce sufficient and well-presented work. However, because of the many priorities, rightly recognised by the school, older pupils complete the majority of their geography work during the summer term. As a result there was a limited amount of work seen in workbooks during the inspection. Work recorded in books last year provided sufficient evidence that the geography curriculum is well covered.

131 The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator is keen to develop her personal expertise and that of other teachers in order to improve standards. The school has a sound assessment system, but this is not yet used fully to inform teachers about pupils' progress.

132 Resources for geography are adequate to support teaching and learning. Accommodation is satisfactory and good use is made of the school grounds for fieldwork.

## **HISTORY**

133 Standards throughout the school in history are average, as they were at the time of the last inspection, and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. In some lessons, such as those seen in a Year 3 and Year 4 class, pupils' progress is very good and sometimes excellent due to the lively and stimulating teaching. There are many good features to the subject, such as the use of work in history as a stimulus for other subjects, such as art and design ICT. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately provided for, and they are supported well by learning assistants. Higher attaining pupils are challenged by questions that test their knowledge and their ability to reason.

134 Younger pupils, those in Years 1 and 2 have been given the opportunity to observe pictures and photographs and pose questions. They have a good sense of the past and pupils in Year 1 are confident when comparing life today with 'long ago'. Some are also aware of there being a further difference such as 'long, long ago'. Year 2 pupils have good recall of their history topics and are very confident in talking about them. They are animated when discussing how houses in the past were different to their own, understanding, for example, the effect of no electricity on people's lives and even how this meant that children's toys were different. Through the use of history focus days they increase their understanding of the Victorian way of life, and speak about their knowledge of Victorian schools with relish. They understand that there are different ways of finding information, and relate what they have learned from their parents and grandparents.

135 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 study a good range of historical topics. For example, in an excellent lesson Year 3 acquired excellent new knowledge about the type of food enjoyed by the Ancient Greeks. They tasted Greek food of the time and learned of the custom that women served men. The lesson was then enhanced as pupils designed their own 'Greek' menus whilst listening to Greek music. Pupils are aware that aspects of the past can be studied through the use of archaeological evidence, such as pictures, written accounts, and photographs, and can distinguish between primary and secondary information. Higher attaining pupils show an ability to reflect on what they learn, comparing what they have learned about the Second World War, with current events. Overall, pupils have a good understanding of the nature of historical skills.

136 The teaching of history is good overall. It is never less than satisfactory, with one very good and one excellent lesson observed. Teachers use an investigative approach and

in some lessons display good questioning skills to help pupils to develop their own questioning and reasoning skills.

137 Literacy and ICT are used very well, particularly when pupils carry out their own independent research. For example, in Year 4 pupils produced interesting work on the *Mary Rose* using computers. The work of pupils in Year 3 to 6 shows that they use a range of writing to record their work. Their work is consistently well-presented.

138 The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and manages the subject very well. She has had the opportunity to monitor planning and also to look at pupils' work. The curriculum for history is comprehensive and well balanced and provides a good structure for teaching and learning in the subject. Assessment procedures are satisfactorily in place, and frequently used to target support within lessons.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

139 Information and communication technology (ICT) is, for the most part, taught through other subjects. The school does not have a formal ICT suite, but it does have at least two computers in each classroom and in some there are up to five. The work kept by the school in a portfolio provides good evidence that in all areas of the ICT curriculum average standards are being achieved throughout the school. In their work designing model houses and villages in Year 1, pupils work at above average levels. This is typical of the school's approach to ICT, in this case using geography as the vehicle to develop pupils' modelling skills. This is similar to the judgement of the last inspection team who found average standards further up the school and good standards in Years 1 and 2. Since the last inspection the demands of the ICT curriculum have increased and the school has kept pace with developments nationally.

140 Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 to reach average standards in Year 2. Progress is good because teachers use ICT regularly and widely in their teaching. In Year 1, pupils move from writing words using computers at the start of the year to writing sentences and then short poems by the end. They use computers to create pictures of fish, and design buildings and villages. Pupils create graphs of the numbers of creatures found in ponds. The good progress continues in Year 2 when pupils write short paragraphs, learning how to insert capital letters, how to save their work and to print it off. Later in the year pupils write paragraphs about their work in history and demonstrate the capacity to edit and improve it. They programme a vehicle that can travel specific distances and turn corners when it is provided with instructions.

141 Pupils achieve good standards when they find information by investigating a simple database in the form of a two-column table.

142 Progress in Year 3 to 6 is satisfactory in all aspects of ICT. In writing and communicating, pupils in Year 3 merge text and images in their work on Romans. They send e-mails to friends inviting them to parties. In Year 4 pupils use computers to write about Anglo-Saxon villages, and in literacy write simple articles in newspaper format. Links with history are particularly strong. In Year 4, pupils write about the *Mary Rose* in their work on the Elizabethans, merging text and pictures. In Year 6 the complexity of work covered by pupils increases significantly. Pupils produce multi-media presentations on a range of subjects from the work of Salvador Dalí to their own election campaign to become prefects. This last example is especially impressive. Having developed the skills to merge text, pictures, sound and special effects, pupils decided to use their skills to inform the 'electorate' of why they want to be prefects, what their individual strengths are and what they would do as prefects to improve the quality of life at school. This is typical of the broad and relevant use the school makes of ICT. Where teachers use ICT to enhance lessons and develop

specific skills, they do so very effectively. For instance, during the inspection pupils in Years 3 and 6 used computers to compose music, and pupils in Year 5 used computers to record results on investigations into shadows in science. Pupils also use computers to measure and record temperature and control devices such as model traffic lights. In Year 6 pupils used computers to practise calculations. Teachers are aware of what needs to be done in ICT each term and they build it into their teaching successfully, however there are still occasions where computers are not to good effect. The school has recognised that more detailed references on short-term planning would help to raise the awareness of opportunities as they arise. There is a bank of portable computers in the community room that are used occasionally with larger groups of pupils. This practice could be extended to include regular sessions in literacy and numeracy lessons for most classes.

143 The school has recently introduced systems to record pupils' progress and attainment. These are manageable and produce good evidence for teachers, pupils and parents. To continue its steady improvement in provision these systems need to become embedded and reviewed regularly.

## **MUSIC**

144 Standards throughout the school are average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Some of the areas for improvement identified in the last report have been addressed well. These include introducing a wider range of traditions and cultures and increasing opportunities for music to contribute to pupils' spiritual development. However assessment and record keeping of individual pupils' progress has not been sufficiently developed. The allocation of the co-ordinator's time is heavily weighted to the teaching of older pupils, which is having a positive impact on the quality of learning for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Although progress is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, pupils in Year 1 and 2 would make better progress if the specialist subject knowledge the co-ordinator provides could be shared more evenly across the school. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good and challenging teaching by the co-ordinator.

145 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing well in assembly, with good encouragement to think about correct posture and breathing. This is further developed for older pupils, with effective teaching through prompts on word sheets and appropriate indications of the required dynamics. The music played in assemblies is wide ranging. It includes examples of jazz, Elizabethan, Eastern and Zulu pieces. Singing in one lesson in Year 2 was not as good as it might have been because the choice of songs was inappropriate. The choir is formed from pupils in Years 3 to 6. It provides a very good example of singing for the rest of the school, and is well regarded in the community.

146 Pupils are familiar with percussion instruments. They know how to play them correctly, and are quick to choose an appropriate instrument to reflect a specific sound or mood. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 perform satisfactorily in ensemble groups, remembering to sing as well as play, showing good control and a developing sense of rhythm.

147 The skills taught in these lessons are developed as pupils move through the school. In Year 3, pupils work together to build rhythm patterns and improvise creatively, using poetry as their stimulus. Year 4 pupils build a melodic question and answer pattern, following the style featured in the jazz piece 'Moanin', and by Year 5, pupils are able to sing a 'call and response' African song in two parts, with clear diction and good control of pitch. Year 6 use their knowledge and understanding well to develop a sequence of sounds, with various musical elements, to express emotions or portray a scene. They are able to perform these for the rest of the class, and evaluate each performance against set criteria, including an Asian effect. Some pupils in Year 6 are able to explain technical terms such as 'canon' and 'tempo', but there are too few opportunities for them to do this. Few are able to name

composers or relate specific music they hear in school to its source. Very little reference is made to the titles of music, or who composed it. ICT is used effectively in some lessons, for example, to research into the sounds and appearance of unusual instruments, or to record a rhythm pattern.

148 Assessment is currently related to the learning objectives that are identified for each lesson or unit. Although all pupils experience a continuous build up of learning as they move through the school, skills that do not feature in planned units are not taken note of for individual pupils. As a result, some of the planned learning is too challenging for many pupils. The school makes good use of the skills and talents of those pupils who have instrumental tuition from visiting specialist teachers. They share their additional learning in class lessons by playing instruments such as recorders, trumpets and flutes as part of group work, and this is very beneficial. No pupils are withdrawn from music lessons, as they were at the time of the last inspection.

149 The co-ordinator is hard working and enthusiastic, keeping good records of the overall outcomes of each lesson. Class teachers work alongside her in the classroom, so that subject knowledge and good practice are shared. She has established a wide range of good quality resources, which are easily accessible to all classes.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

150 Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are average, which reflect the findings of the previous inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. Boys and girls attain equally. The pupils change into appropriate PE kit and they participate enthusiastically.

151 In Year 2, the pupils warm up for lessons by travelling around the hall in different ways and by stretching and curling. In gymnastics, pupils make wide and narrow body shapes and they use these as they travel on the floor and on apparatus. Some pupils, however, find it difficult to hold a balance. In dance, the pupils move soundly in response to music. They stretch, curl and move in small steps, in order to imitate the movements of *Incey Wincey Spider*, climbing down spouts and avoiding puddles. They incorporate these movements into a 'happy sunshine' sequence. High attainers are aware of all available space, whilst other pupils find this harder.

152 By the end of Year 6, almost all the pupils can swim at least 25 metres and with reasonable technique. The pupils are developing basic rugby skills, but many of them find it difficult to pass the ball accurately and at the correct height. In dance, the pupils make contrasting body shapes, both individually and with a partner. In response to music, they devise a sound sequence of movements, which incorporates a definite break in continuity, a moment of stillness. In gymnastics, the pupils build up a sequence of movements on both floor and apparatus on the theme of 'flight'. These sequences incorporate travelling, jumping and balancing. They also involve mirroring and matching movements with a partner.

153 Overall, teaching is satisfactory, although there are examples of good teaching. The teachers manage changing sessions well and they pay due attention to safety, both in terms of items worn by the pupils and in relation to potential risks in the halls and on the field. They ensure that all pupils are fully included in learning. Subject knowledge is secure. The teachers begin lessons with worthwhile warm-ups. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher asked 'Why do we start our warm up slowly?' This reminded the pupils of the need to prepare their muscles for physical activity. There is sound teaching of specific skills. In the lesson quoted above, for example, the teacher emphasised the need for control and for good body shapes in the air and this had a positive impact on the pupils' development of movement sequences. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher emphasised the need for good starting positions and for

movements to be at varying levels. This helped the pupils to improve their dance sequences. The teachers give the pupils the opportunity to observe and to comment on the performance of others. This helps them to think of different ideas and to improve their own performance. The teachers use questioning well to make the pupils think. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the teacher asked 'What do we have to remember when we jump?' and this reminded the pupils of the need to bend their knees on landing. Teachers emphasise the correct handling of apparatus. This took a long time in a Year 2 lesson, but is worth the effort in instilling good routines at this early age. Lessons sometimes end rather abruptly, with the result that there is insufficient time for the pupils to cool down.

154 A clear policy meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning is soundly based on a local authority scheme of work. The co-ordinator manages the subject well.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

155 Standards in religious education are average throughout the school reflecting the expected levels in the locally agreed syllabus, as was the case at the time of the last inspection.

156 The quality of teaching is predominately sound in both key stages. A very good lesson was observed in Year 2 and there was one unsatisfactory lesson in Year 4. Pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. Pupils in Year 1 know about the journeys made by people around the time of the birth of Jesus such as the angel Gabriel, Mary and Joseph, shepherds and wise men. They learn about the journey made by Muslims to Mecca. Pupils in Year 2 extend this idea as they consider aspects of their own special journey. They learn to empathise with people from other times and cultures as they recall times of happiness and sadness in their own journey through life. In a Year 2 lesson pupils explored a range of personal feelings, making connections with situations that induce such emotions. Good teaching is being established in some year groups and lessons are planned to take account of pupils' knowledge and experiences. From discussion with pupils, lesson observation and pupils' work, teaching can be seen to be imaginative. As a result of teachers' high expectations pupils take pride in their work as seen in many examples, which were thoughtfully presented. Pupils' appreciation of the contributions made by people such as King David and Martin Luther King provide useful reference points when applying lessons to their own lives.

157 In Years 3 and 4 pupils learn about religion as they collect and record facts related to important people in Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. During a discussion with inspectors, pupils in Year 6 had difficulty in naming the sacred books and symbols associated with these different religions. Pupils develop their understanding of how important religious festivals are to peoples of different faiths. They explore and apply the underlying messages about love, friendship and caring to their own lives.

158 Older pupils begin to study Christianity and Islam in more depth through comparing similarities and differences found in the rituals and symbols of each religion. They deepen their understanding of birth, initiation, marriage and death by creating a personal time line and marking on what they perceive to be important stages in their lives. A visit to 'Faith City' promotes pupils' awareness of the different beliefs and perspectives held by people in a multi-faith society. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils considered world events in relation to their own positions and feelings. Pupils' interest and motivation are ensured through opportunities to use a range of approaches when recording information. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress, including pupils with special educational needs.

159 Resources are satisfactory and there are books and artefacts available that reflect the religions that are studied. Effective use is made of visits to local places of worship. A sound assessment system is in place.