

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **JUBILEE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Tipton, West Midlands

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103916

Headteacher: Mr H McNeil

Reporting inspector: Mr N Sherman  
16493

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> February 2003

Inspection number: 246325

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Nursery, infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Highfield Road  
Tipton  
West Midlands

Postcode: DY4 0QS

Telephone number: 0121 522 2598

Fax number: 0121 520 1318

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs E Perrins

Date of previous inspection: January 2001

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16493	Mr N Sherman	Registered inspector	Information and Communication Technology Art and design The Foundation Stage	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What could the school do to improve further?
31729	Mr B Harrington	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
273324	Mrs D Crow	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Pupils with special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
22147	Mr M Newell	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education English as an additional language Educational Inclusion	How well is the school led and managed?
10611	Mr M James	Team inspector	English Music Religious education	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Jubilee Park Primary School is situated in the district of Tipton in the West Midlands. It is average in size and provides education for children aged three to eleven. There are 214 pupils on roll, although there are slightly more boys than girls. 60 pupils, 28% of the school roll have special educational needs, a figure that is higher than average. Three pupils have a statement of special educational need, a number higher than the average. 95 pupils, 49% per cent of the school roll claim free school meals, a figure that is well above average. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is low and none are at an early stage of learning English. The school has a slightly higher than average number of pupils who enter the school at different times of the year. Pupils enter the school with well below average levels of attainment, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and their communication, language and literacy skills.

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

This is a rapidly improving school. After a long period of being classed as having serious weaknesses, the school is now providing the pupils with an appropriate and rapidly improving quality of education. Children in the Foundation Stage are helped to settle quickly into the school. Although standards are below expectations in a number of subjects by the time they leave the school, pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. The overall rate of pupils' learning is hampered, however, by poor attendance and for the Reception class and at Key Stage 1 this is extremely poor. Across the school, teaching is good and many teachers and support staff manage the pupils well. The school is very well led and managed and the headteacher plays a key role in moving the school forward. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good, resulting in children getting a good start to their education.
- The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good.
- Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science .
- A hard working and dedicated staff cares very well for pupils.
- Pupils work well in lessons and behaviour in and around the school is good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is good.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with a high level of need are fully included in all aspects of school life.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is providing the school with a clear and purposeful direction. He is well supported by a committed staff and supportive Governing Body.

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

- The level of attendance.
- Standards in a number of subjects.
- The support and involvement of parents in their children's learning.
- The use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in



daily lessons.

- The way pupils work independently and take responsibility for aspects of their learning.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 2001. At that time, it was judged to have serious weaknesses. The rate of progress since then has been good. Standards attained by pupils in the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests have improved at a faster pace than those seen nationally. Pupils' progress is hampered, however, by the poor attendance rate of children, particularly at Key Stage 1. Teaching has improved, as has the quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage. Resources for information and communication technology are also much better. The headteacher, appointed just before the school's last inspection, has been instrumental in improving many aspects of school provision and good progress has been made in tackling the key issues from the last report. The staff, governors and parents appreciate the strong direction he gives to the school and under his leadership, the school is well placed to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	E	E	C
mathematics	E	E	C	A
science	E*	D	E	C

<b>Key</b>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The results of the 2002 Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in English and science indicated that standards were well below the national average. In mathematics, standards were average. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in English and science and in mathematics well above average. The pace of improvement by the school in raising pupils' attainment in National Curriculum tests over the past three years has been at a rate higher than that seen nationally.

The findings of the inspection are that at the end of Key Stage 2 standards in English, mathematics and science are below expectations. Pupils make good progress in these subjects as they move through each of the classes. Standards in music are in line with expectations. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, and religious education are below expectations. While overall progress is satisfactory, the pace of pupils' learning is hampered by their ability to remember what they have learned, their weak literacy skills and their poor attendance. The school sets challenging targets for pupils to work

towards in the National Curriculum tests. These are based on a good working knowledge and understanding of the pupils and what they are likely to achieve.

The 2002 National Curriculum test results for Key Stage 1 indicated that pupils reached standards in reading and writing that were well below the national average. In mathematics, standards were very low and in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in reading and writing. In mathematics, standards were very low and in the lowest five per cent of schools in the country. Inspection findings indicate that standards are well below the national expectation in reading, writing and mathematics. Given the low standards of attainment many pupils demonstrate when they first enter the school and their poor levels of attendance, their overall progress is satisfactory.

Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The school's few higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress.

Children in the Foundation Stage work hard in lessons and make good progress in their first two years at the school. Nevertheless, by the end of the Reception year, standards in their communication, language and literacy, mathematical knowledge, and knowledge and understanding of the world are well below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Pupils make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, and good progress in creative and physical development but attainment is below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are enthusiastic about the school and work well in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well in and around the school and are considerate of one another's needs. Some pupils find the school's expectations about the importance of good behaviour more difficult to follow.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good but pupils' personal development is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils are very dependent on the teachers or support staff to support them in their learning and their ability to work independently is very limited.
Attendance	Very poor. Attendance rates are well below average and in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 are a real cause for concern. The very low level of attendance severely hinders the rate of pupils' learning.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils</b>	<b>Nursery and</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
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<b>in:</b>	<b>Reception</b>		
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is effective and provides good opportunities for children to learn through structured play. This has a positive impact on developing the children's ability to work effectively with one another. Teaching in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good. The teaching of English and mathematics is effective and increased attention is paid by the school to ensuring that pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed through other subjects. The teaching of science is good. Although standards in many subjects are below expectations, teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. The pace of pupils' learning, however, does not match the quality of teaching, owing to the pupils' weak ability to recall what they have learned. Characteristics of effective teaching include how pupils are managed, the use of support staff and, for pupils with special educational needs, the good use of practical equipment to aid their understanding.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and suitably enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The time given for design and technology and art and design limits pupils' progress and gaps between the teaching of some subjects make it difficult for some pupils to remember what they have previously learned.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school makes early identification of pupils with special educational needs and in many classes there is a high level of support. Children with a high level of need are very well included in all aspects of learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The few pupils who have English as an additional language are well supported in lessons and make similar progress to their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development. Good opportunities are provided, for example, for pupils to discuss issues of a moral nature and to reflect on how their behaviour can impact on others. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All staff demonstrate a high level of care towards pupils and have a good understanding of the pupils as individuals. Assessment arrangements to monitor and track pupils' progress in English and mathematics are very good and the information is used well to plan learning to meet the needs of the pupils.

Despite the school's increasing and better efforts, the majority of parents find it difficult to support the school in its aims of improving the level of attendance and the rate of pupils' learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and his determination to raise the quality of education for pupils has played a critical part in raising standards. The senior management team provide good support and all co-ordinators effectively undertake the duties asked of them.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors have a secure understanding of the school's needs and have given the headteacher good support since his appointment. They are effective in fulfilling their responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The monitoring of teaching in English and mathematics is regular and the information gathered is effectively used to identify where improvements in pupils' learning are to be made. Rigorous use is made of National Curriculum and other test data to both support pupils and indicate what extra support some pupils may need to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Effective use is made of additional grants to support pupils' learning. The school has a satisfactory understanding of the principles of 'best value' but has yet to devise ways to fully measure its own performance with that of similar schools.

The quality of the school's accommodation is sufficient for the National Curriculum to be taught, although space for outside play for children in the Reception class is limited. There are a good number of qualified teachers and support staff. Resources are satisfactory, although those for information and communication technology are good.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The care their children receive while at school.</li> <li>• The recent improvements to improve provision for information and communication technology.</li> <li>• The good start their children receive in the Foundation Stage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework their children receive.</li> <li>• The amount of information they receive about their children's progress.</li> </ul>

Inspectors support the positive views that the parents hold of the school. Inspection findings indicate that pupils receive an appropriate amount of homework during the course of a week. In addition, the school does provide parents with regular information about their children's progress both in terms of pupils' reports and in the number of consultation evenings. Inspectors do not support parents on these issues.



## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The children enter school with well below average levels of attainment. Many have very poor language and literacy skills and need additional support in class for this aspect of their work. As they move through the Nursery class and into the Reception class, children make good progress, but this is hampered by the very poor attendance of the children. Despite the good teaching evident in the Foundation Stage, children attain standards that are well below the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage in their communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Progress is better in terms of their personal, social and emotional, creative and physical development, although standards are below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals by the time the children transfer to Year 1.
2. The Key Stage 1 2002 National Curriculum tests indicated that pupils reached standards in reading and writing that were well below the national average. In mathematics, standards were very low and in the lowest five per cent of schools in the country. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in reading and writing but still very low in mathematics and in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. Teacher assessments in science indicate that standards were very low when compared with the national average and well below the average when compared with similar schools. Over time, greater improvement has been made in reading and writing than in mathematics. The findings of the inspection are that the current group of Year 2 pupils is on course to reach standards that are well below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Given the very low attainment of pupils when they start school as well as the high number of pupils with special educational needs pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However, the pace of progress is severely impeded by pupils' very poor attendance as many pupils miss too many lessons to build consistently on what they have already learned.
3. The Key Stage 2 2002 National Curriculum tests for English and science indicate that pupils reached standards that were well below the national average. In mathematics, standards were in line with the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. Over the past three years, the school has made good progress in raising standards and the overall pace of this improvement has been higher than that seen nationally.
4. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of the current group of Year 6 pupils is below national expectations in English, mathematics and science. The difference between National Curriculum results and inspection findings is attributable to the difference between the attainment of pupils in different years. The school's own assessments for the current group of Year 6 pupils indicate for example, that fewer pupils are likely to reach the higher levels in the forthcoming tests.

5. From a low attainment level on entry to the school, pupils make good progress in English at Key Stage 2. The increased attention by the school to developing the pupils' literacy skills across different subjects impacts well on their progress. While pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below the national average by the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress. Many increase in confidence in attempting to speak clearly and articulately as well as developing their understanding of the need to listen carefully to others' viewpoints. Good progress is made in reading and while many pupils read slowly and lack a general knowledge and understanding of the works of famous children's authors, they increase their confidence in reading from a wider range of sources and use a variety of methods to help them research and gather information. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of the need to present their written work neatly and accurately, but for many of the pupils do not make the best use of imaginative vocabulary in order to make their writing more interesting for the reader and they could be more accurate with their spelling.
6. Pupils make good progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2. Teachers effectively follow and use the National Numeracy Strategy in planning learning and this ensures that the pupils develop a range of strategies in order to solve mathematical problems involving number, shape, space and measurement. However, pupils' poor ability to remember what they have learned restricts their learning and teachers often have to spend time in lessons going over and clarifying for pupils concepts that they have previously covered. Increasing use is being made of information and communication technology to further support pupils' learning. As a result, pupils understand how the functions within a spreadsheet can be used to represent mathematical data in the form of tables and charts. However, information and communication technology is used insufficiently in the course of daily lessons and this restricts pupils' learning of how computers can be used to extend their learning.
7. Pupils make satisfactory progress in science. Pupils have limited ability to undertake and conduct investigations that follow their own lines of enquiry. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a weak understanding of the principles of what a 'fair test' means. By the age of 11, pupils' understanding of different scientific concepts such as forces, light, materials, electricity and living things is weak.
8. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in information and communication technology are below expectations. However, pupils currently make satisfactory progress and when being taught in the school's newly established computer suite, progress is good. By the end of Year 6, pupils can use a word-processor to type up their work and use the features within such a program such as alignment or the use of bullet points to make their work more visibly pleasing. Pupils' ability to use the Internet to research information, or use compact disc software to make enquiries about a topic they are researching are below expectations. Progress is further hampered by the limited opportunities planned by teachers for pupils to use computers in the course of daily lessons. Pupils' limited ability to use their initiative and work independently of the teacher on computers outside classrooms further hinders their progress.
9. At the end of both key stages, standards in physical education and music are in line with national expectations. Standards are below expectations in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. Given the low attainment of



pupils on entry to the school, the high number of pupils with special educational needs as well as the well below average attendance levels, pupils make satisfactory progress in these subjects. Pupils' weak literacy skills as well as their ability to remember and recall what they have learned hinder their progress.

10. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Provision for the pupils is good, and many pupils receive well-targeted and effective support in class. However, this support is not always built on at home as not all parents give further support to their children in order to build on what the pupils are learning at school. The few pupils at the school with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
11. There are few higher-attaining pupils. Those that are, including the few pupils that the school has identified as being gifted and talented, make the same progress as their classmates. Evidence from National Curriculum tests indicates some significant difference between the performance of boys and the performance girls in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6, the boys outperform the girls by a significant margin. This is partly explained by the larger number of boys to the girls in the school. However, the school is aware of this issue and of the fact that at the end of Year 2, there is no significant variation. The school is exploring how different learning styles may be used to support the learning of the girls in order to improve the standards they reach. In physical education, girls and boys are not always given equal opportunities in all elements of the physical education curriculum.
12. The school does set challenging targets for pupils in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 in the National Curriculum tests. While those for mathematics in 2002 were greatly exceeded, in English, they were just missed. The targets that are set are based on a close knowledge and understanding of the pupils and what they are capable of attaining. The school has made good progress in raising standards in National Curriculum tests since the previous inspection and has received a national achievement award in recognition of this fact.

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

13. Pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school. They respond well to the positive environment provided by the school and get pleasure from many of the practical activities provided. Children in the Foundation Stage work hard on what they are asked to do, although their attention spans and ability to concentrate are quite limited. In lessons, pupils at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 work hard, although some have weaker attention spans and need to be reminded to concentrate on what they are asked to do. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to ensure that pupils aim to produce work that is a good reflection of their abilities. As a result, most pupils present their work neatly and take care and attention over what they produce. Many pupils participate eagerly in the extra-curricular life of the school further demonstrating their commitment to the school. The vast majority of parents responding to the inspection survey agreed that their children like school.
14. Pupils' behaviour is good as it was at the time of the last inspection. Children in the Foundation Stage behave well and quickly learn the school's rules and expectations for

their behaviour. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils are well behaved in lessons, at play, and around the school. During assemblies they are very well behaved, contributing well to the singing and showing respect during prayers. In general they respond well to the requests of their teachers and other adults, although there are a number of pupils who have difficulty in managing their own behaviour and need regular reminders about the code of conduct and the impact that their actions have on others. There has been one recent fixed-term exclusion, which was enforced when all other attempts to improve the pupil's behaviour did not succeed.

15. Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils work well together in pairs and groups although some older pupils do not fully understand the benefits to be gained from sharing ideas and discussing things through with others. Pupils have good relationships with teachers and other adults in the school, and many of them adopt the good manners presented by teachers and adults. Through 'Circle Time' and similar activities, pupils are beginning to respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others. There have been no reports of oppressive behaviour in school and no evidence of racism was seen during the inspection.
16. Pupils are expected to undertake minor monitorial roles, which they undertake well, but have little or no opportunity to use their initiative or to take responsibility for their own learning. As a result, pupils' personal development is unsatisfactory. Pupils rely too heavily upon teachers and support staff to help them in their daily learning, and are very closely supervised during play and lunchtimes. On occasions, pupils would cease activities were it not for the prompts of adults. The recent introduction of personal development activities, such as the setting up of a School Council, are welcomed by pupils as opportunities for developing independence.
17. The level of attendance is extremely poor and at a lower level than seen at the last inspection. During the last year the rate of attendance was 91.3% which was well below the national average. This very poor rate of attendance has been the pattern for a number of years, and is affecting pupils' learning throughout the school. In the current year, the attendance rate for pupils in the Foundation Stage is 88% and for pupils in Key Stage 1 it is 89%. These figures are made worse by the high level of unauthorised absences which, at 3.0%, is well above the national average. Pupils' learning is being interrupted by regular absences, condoned by parents, that not only affect the education of those pupils involved, but also detract from the learning experiences of their classmates who must wait whilst the absentees catch up. Older pupils, who do not rely so much upon parental support to get to school, have better attendance rates although these are also well below the national average.

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

18. The quality of teaching is good across the school and much improved since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory. The rigorous monitoring and development programme put into place by the headteacher since his appointment has significantly raised the proportion of good teaching. During the inspection, teaching was very good in seven per cent of the lessons seen, good in a further 76 per cent and satisfactory in the remainder.

19. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and this helps the children settle quickly into school. Both the teachers in the Nursery Class and the Reception class have a good understanding of how young children learn and provide rich and varied opportunities for the children to develop their knowledge and understanding. Good attention is paid to developing the children's speaking and listening skills as well as their ability to work and play co-operatively with one another. Children are assessed as they come into school and at regular points of the school year. From this, children are grouped for different aspects of the curriculum and work planned accordingly. Learning support assistants are fully included in many aspects of planning and supporting the children in daily lessons and as a result, they make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Although teaching is good, the pace of the children's learning does not match the quality of the teaching. This is due to the low attainment of the children and the level of their attendance, which is often extremely poor.
20. The teaching of English is good at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and use the materials in this well to support pupils' learning. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss, for example, the plot of a class story and how a plot or character may develop. This helps to develop pupils' confidence in speaking aloud to a wider audience and many pupils are sensitive to the views of their classmates, appreciating that not all of their friends find it easy to speak to a larger group. Pupils are given good scope to develop their learning that writing is constructed with different readers in mind and teachers have high expectations of pupils in terms of them learning about the importance of neat and well presented work. Pupils find it difficult, however, to produce sustained pieces of writing and their ability to draft and edit their work with a view to producing writing that is imaginative and enriched by the use of interesting and varied vocabulary is limited.
21. The teaching of mathematics is good at both key stages. Of note is the good use that many teachers make of practical equipment to aid pupils' learning of different mathematical ideas and concepts. Many of the pupils find it difficult to grasp new ideas and the effective use of mathematics equipment or games helps the pupils grasp and understand what they are learning. Many teachers make good use of the opening parts of lessons in order for pupils to discuss new ideas or to follow the explanation of a process that is being given by the teacher. Objectives are often made clear to pupils and this provides them with a clear idea of what they have to learn in the time available. In the main parts of lessons, teachers and learning support assistants work effectively alongside groups of pupils gently but effectively probing and extending their learning. Teachers make good use of the concluding parts of lessons to reconvene pupils in order to explore with them what they have learnt or what they may have found difficult. From this, teachers make a careful note of what pupils are saying in order to plan their subsequent learning.
22. The teaching of science is good at both key stages. Teachers are very aware of the limited recall and general knowledge and understanding that many pupils possess and good attention is paid to ensuring that pupils have frequent opportunities to recap on previous learning. Suitable attention is paid to letting pupils explore new scientific ideas through investigation work. However, pupils are highly dependent on adult support to guide them in their learning and their ability to determine the course their science work should take is very weak and this limits their overall progress.

23. The teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory at both key stages, and when pupils are taught in the school's computer suite, teaching is often good. Pupils work hard in the suite and are enthusiastic in using computers to support them in their learning. In one lesson seen during the inspection, for example, Year 5 pupils worked hard as they explored the information in a database about the 1881 census. The challenging questions given to pupils ensured that by the end of the lesson they made good progress in developing their understanding of terms such as 'fields' and 'records' as well as exploring the life styles and occupations of the people who lived at the time. In the main, teachers make too little use of computers to support pupils in their daily lessons. There are missed opportunities to incorporate the use of information and communication technology in literacy or numeracy sessions. This restricts pupils' progress both in the subjects concerned and in developing their understanding of how computers and other related information and communication technology equipment can be used to extend and support their progress.
24. The teaching in all other subjects is satisfactory and in music it is good. The school buys in specialist teaching for music and the co-ordinator takes some teaching of lessons. This is impacting well both on the progress that pupils make and in the contribution it makes to pupils' personal development. In all subjects, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of what they are teaching and plan learning that pupils find interesting and stimulating. Planning is detailed and regularly evaluated in light of what pupils have mastered or have found difficult. Some of the pupils' learning is planned in a cross subject way in order to develop pupils' skills and understanding in more than one subject. While exploring the life and times under the Tudors and Stuarts, for example at Key Stage 2, pupils sketch and construct paintings of the various kings and queens.
25. Other positive features of teaching include the effective management of the pupils. Not all the pupils find the school's expectations of behaviour all that easy to abide by. Teachers ensure that pupils are rewarded with due praise and encouragement where they feel this is justified and this helps to boost their confidence in undertaking their work. Teachers make good use of the good procedures to promote positive behaviour and many classrooms have effective displays that reinforce the importance of success. Relationships are warm and purposeful and where appropriate, a gentle sprinkling of humour helps to cement the strong rapport between teachers, learning support assistants and the pupils.
26. There is good teaching of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers effectively ensure that those with a high level of special educational need are fully included in all activities including physical education work. Teachers liaise carefully with learning support assistants who are well guided on how best to guide pupils in lessons. Pupils' work is carefully broken down into short and manageable steps and this enables the pupils concerned to work at a pace that closely matches their ability. The pupils relate well to learning support assistants and this enables them to make satisfactory progress overall. The overall pace of their learning is, to a certain extent, hampered by their attendance rate. The teaching of the few pupils with English as an additional language is good and they too make similar progress to their classmates.

27. Despite the good teaching seen in many lessons, the overall pace of learning and the level of pupils' achievements remain satisfactory. This is due to a number of factors that impede pupils' learning. These include the level of attendance, pupils' weak literacy and numeracy skills, their capacity to work independently of the teacher and their ability to remember and recall what they have learned at a later date. In addition, few pupils receive regular and full assistance at home which means that they are not given the support to further consolidate what they have learned at school.

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

28. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is satisfactory overall, and there has been good improvement since the time of the last inspection. Despite the emphasis that has been placed on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the school provides a reasonably broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. However, not enough time is given to art and design and design and technology. Although the introduction of various 'focus weeks' gives pupils time to explore themes in more detail, there are long gaps when pupils do not receive any teaching in these subjects with a consequent loss in the continuity of their learning. This has a detrimental effect on pupils' learning in these subjects as they forget what they have learned in between teaching blocks and consequently time is wasted revising topics that have already been covered. Statutory requirements are met in respect of the National Curriculum and religious education, which is taught according to the locally agreed syllabus.
29. The National Numeracy Strategy and the National Literacy Strategy have been well implemented in all classes, and they are having a positive impact on pupils' progress and learning in English and mathematics. Appropriate use is made of the national guidelines for other subjects of the National Curriculum. There are satisfactory school policies in place for all subjects. The curriculum for information and communication technology is now good, but there is still some work to be done in ensuring that information and communication technology is used consistently to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Literacy and numeracy skills are well promoted within other subjects, ensuring that pupils have good opportunities for practising and consolidating their skills. Teachers often create good links between subjects such as geography and history and these links provide a meaningful context for pupils' learning. The use of a specialist music teacher and the school's co-ordinator for music ensures the quality and range of learning opportunities in music are good.
30. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has much improved since the last inspection and is now good and fully reflects national guidance. Children of all abilities take part in a variety of stimulating activities, which successfully promote their learning across all areas of the curriculum. Much of the children's learning is appropriately centred on the use of structured and imaginative play.
31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They have full access to the curriculum and are fully included in all aspects of school life. This has a positive effect on the progress they make. There are good quality individual education plans in place, which set clear and manageable targets for learning. Outside agencies, such as the

speech and language service and the educational psychology service, are involved where appropriate, which effectively supports pupils with additional needs. Annual reviews for pupils with statements of special educational needs are carried out as required and the needs of pupils with a statement are fully addressed. Provision has improved since the last inspection.

32. The school has taken on a good number of initiatives designed to improve the quality of planned learning for pupils. These include the 'Accelerated Learning Initiative' for children in the Foundation Stage. The 'Springboard' project supports work in mathematics and the 'Further Literacy Strategy' is used to support work in English. The school is also an active and focal participant in the 'Leading Learning Link ' project, which seeks to identify the most successful styles of learning for its pupils.
33. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities each week, and most teachers are involved at some point in the school year in helping to organise these activities. Boys and girls are encouraged to take part in football and netball practice, and to join the brass group and choir, which regularly take part in community events. There is a needlework club for pupils in Key Stage 1, a keep fit club is available for juniors, and there is an art club for pupils in Year 2 and Year 3. The maths club is open to all, but the information and communication technology club is limited to 15 members at any one time on a rolling programme. Booster classes in mathematics and English are available for pupils in Year 6 and, although only half of the class attends, those who do find them really helpful.
34. There is good provision for the personal, social, health and citizenship education of pupils. The school has appointed a co-ordinator for the subject and a formal scheme of work is followed throughout the school. The co-ordinator has received specific training in personal, social, health and citizenship education, and all staff have received training in the presentation of circle time which forms an integral part of the provision. Visits to the Nursery class by the school nurse provide opportunities for pupils to learn about healthy eating. There are plans in place for the development of the subject through the introduction of the healthy schools initiative and the development of residential visits. The school's policy for drugs education provides clear guidance on the presentation of the topic. The sex education policy, which is included in the school prospectus, is taught through the school's programme for health education and topic work. The school nurse supports the presentation of the subject to older pupils.
35. The school's links with the community make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. The vicar, who takes assembly each half term, is a regular visitor to the school. Pupils attend services at the local church, which is also used as a resource for the study of art and religious education. A Christian youth theatre also visits each half term to take assemblies and relationships workshops. The school has a thriving brass group that has recently joined forces with another local school to form an area band. Both the school choir and the brass musicians have performed in West Bromwich town hall as part of the Junior Schools' Music Festival. Sandwell Youth Music visits the school each year providing pupils with a wide range of live musical experiences. Visiting speakers from local history associations, theatre groups, and the emergency services expand pupils' experiences of their own culture and help with their personal development. Coaching staff from the local football club encourage pupils to develop

their sporting skills. A visit by the fire officers included a simulated house fire in which older pupils could practice escape procedures without danger.

36. Visiting writers and artists have encouraged pupils to develop their creative skills, and the fruits of their efforts are displayed throughout the school. Pupils have visited the local sports academy for tennis coaching and talks on anti-bullying and this has a beneficial impact on the pupils' social development. Pupils of all ages are involved in cultural visits such as those to the sea life centre and to Birmingham Museum. Older children enjoy problem solving and orienteering at an outdoor activity centre.
37. The school has good relationships with partner institutions. There are mature transition programmes in place with the two local high schools to which most pupils transfer. These arrangements include visits by teachers, pupils and past pupils, which reduce the tensions associated with change. The school belongs to the Sandwell Network Learning Community that provides academic links and opportunities for exchange of good practice. The headteacher also represents the local education authority on a national initiative. The school currently provides work experience programmes for students and pupils from local colleges and schools.
38. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and makes a good contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. This is an improvement on the findings in the last inspection. The school's assemblies meet statutory requirements and provide opportunities for engendering a sense of community within the school and celebrating pupils' successes. In a good assembly during the inspection week, older pupils had an opportunity to demonstrate their musical achievements, which was fully appreciated by the rest of the school.
39. Provision for spiritual development is good. The school has close links with the church and all the pupils know the local vicar. His assembly, during the week of the inspection, was used effectively to provide pupils with opportunities to think about issues affecting their lives and the lives of others. He told a story about a football referee before a match, praying to God for help in making fair and just decisions and stressed the fact that we all sometimes need help in making the right decisions in life particularly if they affect the lives of others. Through religious education lessons pupils develop a good awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs and the school has links with the local mosque and temple. Opportunities in lessons are well used to engender a sense of awe and wonder in pupils. There was a sense of wonderment in a history lesson when pupils uncovered old objects hidden in the sand and when younger pupils examined a collection of old and new dolls. In a design and technology lesson pupils were excited when their electrical circuit worked. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to examine their feelings and emotions through the school's programme of personal, social and health education.
40. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils, including children in the Foundation Stage, respond accordingly. The school has a clear set of values that teach the principles of right and wrong. These are implicit throughout the daily life of the school and are spelt out clearly to all pupils through daily lessons and assemblies. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to each other are good and they are usually well behaved. Sometimes there is good discussion about the wider aspects of morality. For example, pupils in

Year 6 compared and evaluated how newspapers portrayed the same event with relation to the recent conflict between Alex Ferguson and David Beckham. They considered the issue of how people's opinions can be influenced by what they read in the papers and the morality of newspapers when reporting events.

41. There is good provision for pupils' social development. Good opportunities are provided for children in the Foundation Stage to work together on tasks thereby developing their skills of being able to work together in a group. Teachers and all staff throughout the school provide pupils with good role models, which encourage the development of positive attitudes and generally good social behaviour. During the time of the inspection, there were many examples of pupils working and playing well together. In lessons, they share equipment sensibly, co-operate in pairs and collaborate well in group tasks. Relationships within the school between staff and pupils are good which gives pupils the confidence to discuss and voice their opinions on a variety of matters and concerns. There is an elected school council, which meets every half term to discuss issues such as the need for better markings on the playground and equipment to play with. There are a good number of extra curricular activities where pupils can work and play together in a more relaxed way. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for tasks around the school and other good initiatives such as 'playground stops' encourage children to develop a sense of social responsibility towards each other.
42. Provision for the cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. Some of the artwork and music involves reference to famous artists and composers. Religious education and literacy lessons make a suitable contribution towards pupils' cultural development through the study of other religions and a range of literature. History and geography lessons also support pupils' cultural development as they learn about their own past and that of other people, and compare and contrast their environment with that of others. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to visit places of cultural interest such as the Frank Chapman Centre. However, opportunities for pupils to develop a real understanding of what it is like to live in a multi-cultural society are not sufficiently planned for or systematically monitored.

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

43. There are very good procedures in place which ensure the health safety and well-being of all pupils. Teachers and support staff have a very high awareness of pupils' needs, and strive to meet the needs through daily exchanges. The school provides bottled drinking water for all pupils which encourages concentration and reduces the risk of dehydration. The school tuck shop opens well before school starts to enable those pupils who have missed their breakfast to buy a snack. The school has very secure arrangements for ensuring that procedures for child protection are well met. The headteacher has been named to deal with any issues of child protection that may arise and is supported in this role by his deputy and the SENCO. The headteacher has received recent training in child protection, which he has disseminated to all staff. Two members of staff have been trained in first-aid procedures and there are first-aid boxes and instructions in each class. The site manager and headteacher conduct regular risk assessments of the premises for presentation to the governing body. Records show that potential hazards are weighted and dealt with accordingly.



44. Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs are good. The class teacher and special educational needs co-ordinator set appropriate targets for these pupils. The procedures for assessing the needs of pupils with special educational needs are good and are used effectively to address their needs. Individual educational plans are updated regularly and targets for learning modified accordingly. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are well supported by learning support workers and they make suitable progress towards targets set.
45. Pupils are well cared for by all staff, and when misdemeanours occur they are dealt with in line with the code of conduct to which all pupils subscribe. Support assistants help to monitor behaviour in lessons and teachers use this information to develop strategies for good behaviour. During the inspection, in all subjects, the management of pupils was good. The school has a consistent approach to rewarding good behaviour which is recognised and valued by pupils and staff. For serious or repetitive cases of poor behaviour, the headteacher is involved in interviewing the pupils. The deputy headteacher monitors behaviour class by class, and this information may be used when parents need to be involved. Friendship stops, which were instigated by the School Council, provide opportunities for pupils to declare a need for friendship in the playground.
46. The school is involved in a number of initiatives for improving attendance, the procedures for which are good. The appointment of a first response officer helps to identify the whereabouts of pupils who are absent. The computerised attendance data is well used to identify those pupils whose attendance is outside the targets set by the school and the educational welfare officer. Close monitoring of attendance enables the school and the educational welfare officer to concentrate their efforts on a selected group of pupils. Weekly, termly and annual awards for attendance are valued by pupils, but only those above a certain age can influence their own attendance rate. Good attendance is promoted regularly through the prospectus, notices, and letters to parents. Additionally, the school has produced a booklet which provides guidance as to how attendance may be improved.
47. The overall procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good, and they have improved significantly since the time of the school's previous inspection. In English and mathematics the procedures are very good. The overall use made of the information gained from these procedures is satisfactory, and in English, mathematics and science it is good. In these subjects assessments are undertaken at the end of suitable topics or units of work, and teachers keep detailed records of pupils' current attainment, as well as the progress they have made. This assessment information is used effectively to ensure that pupils are provided with work that is suited to their particular needs, with pupils regularly being presented with a varying range of activities, especially in English and mathematics.
48. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress through the school, in English and mathematics are very good. The school possesses considerable evidence about the attainment of pupils, both from its own procedures and through the information provided by the national and optional tests. This information is carefully used to plot the progress that pupils have made. It is also used most effectively to set targets for

pupils in English and mathematics, as well as in some aspects of science, relating to future improvement. Pupils are fully aware of their targets, and the majority are most keen to achieve their current target, so that they may be given a new one!

49. In other subjects of the curriculum assessment procedures are satisfactory. Assessment opportunities are listed in teachers' planning, and suitable activities are undertaken to test pupils' present knowledge, skills and understanding. Careful records are made, to both judge pupils' present attainment and to illustrate their progress. As with the core subjects, suitable use is made of this information to provide pupils with different tasks when appropriate.

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

50. In general, parents have positive views of the school. All parents responding to the inspection survey considered their children to be making good progress. The vast majority of parents believe that teaching is good and the school is well led and managed. They also feel comfortable in visiting the school, believe that the school has high expectations for their children, and think that the school is helping their children to become mature. A small number of parents believe that behaviour could be improved and that the school could work more closely with parents. Some parents do not think that they are kept sufficiently well informed about their children's programmes, and feel that their children are not receiving the right amount of work to do at home.
51. The school provides a satisfactory quality of information to parents. Children starting in the Nursery class have the opportunity to take part in pre-school visits. An induction meeting for parents of all children who are to join the Reception class follows this. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents provide detailed information about how the school functions. Two consultation sessions each year provide parents with the opportunity to discuss their children's progress. Progress reports are generally satisfactory although some comments are about work covered rather than about the progress that pupils may have made. Letters are regularly sent to parents to keep them in touch with day to day events in school, and the headteacher operates an open door policy whereby parents may come into school to speak to him without an appointment whenever possible.
52. Contributions made by most parents to their children's learning at school and at home are unsatisfactory. A significant minority support the school and their children's education but the majority of parents play little or no part. One or two parents provide classroom support by listening to readers and making resources. Very few parents support the school in its drive to raise standards and only a very small number have shown interest in the family learning course currently available. Recent monitoring of the homework policy and practices, by a parent governor, indicated that homework activities are not always supported. All parents have been invited to sign the home-school agreement, but to date only about a quarter have done so. A small group of dedicated parents are effective in organising the Parent and Teachers Friends Association. They help to organise social events, and raise significant funds that help to provide additional learning resources for the school. These include the interactive whiteboard, the multimedia projector, and the screens for the withdrawal area.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership provided by the headteacher is excellent. He has played a significant and pivotal role in the improvement of the school since his appointment two years ago. The school was judged to have serious weaknesses at its last inspection in January 2001. The headteacher has been successful in moulding together a team of staff that works very well together and whose driving desire is to provide the best quality of education for the pupils in their care. The manner in which the headteacher tackles identified weaknesses is impressive. This can be seen in the way in which weaknesses identified at the last inspection were tackled. This has led to an improvement in standards, an improvement in the quality of teaching and improvements in most areas of school life. The headteacher shows a fierce determination to continue to improve the quality of education that the school provides. He is well supported by a committed staff and a supportive Governing Body. Teachers, support staff, parents, governors and pupils recognise and greatly value the excellent leadership that the headteacher provides.
54. The senior management team of the school meets on a regular basis with additional meetings between the head and deputy headteacher. These occasions are used to discuss issues that are pertinent to school improvement. These issues are then discussed at full staff meetings where staff feel fully involved in the decision making process and then put into practice the outcomes of the meetings. The senior management team, rather than simply the headteacher, is beginning to play a more pro-active role in the strategic management of the school and in setting and monitoring progress towards identified educational priorities. The school recognises that there is still more work to be done in further developing the role of the senior management team in order to have the biggest possible impact on helping to raise standards. Change, and the introduction of new initiatives have by necessity been swift. The high quality of leadership and management of the headteacher has however, ensured that the impact of all initiatives has been carefully monitored and evaluated.
55. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, and science, has been effective. These procedures have led to an improvement in standards and in the quality of teaching. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and in some instances, subject co-ordinators, have carried out a number of lesson observations, and the culture of monitoring is firmly established in these subjects. Local Education Authority inspectors have also carried out many additional lesson observations. These procedures have proved effective because formal feedback is given after every observation and any areas for improvement then form the focus of the next observation. Teachers' planning in all subjects is monitored by co-ordinators. Together with the school's senior management team, they have monitored the pupils' work in a number of subjects. These procedures are proving to be effective in helping to raise standards and to monitor the quality of curriculum provision. However, the school has identified the need to continue the rigorous programme of monitoring teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science and to extend and improve monitoring procedures in other subjects. During the next 12 months all co-ordinators of foundation subjects are to be given two days release from class teaching duties in order to monitor teaching and learning in subjects that they are responsible for. If rigorously followed, the established procedures together

with the planned improvements in monitoring procedures should have an even greater impact on helping to raise standards.

56. The school provides good opportunities for the professional development of all teaching and non-teaching staff. This has contributed to the improvement of the quality of teaching across the school. The headteacher has put in place good procedures for the process of performance management. The headteacher and deputy ensure that in-service training is closely matched to the needs of the individual as well as meeting the needs of the school. Non-teaching and support staff are given opportunities to attend appropriate in-service training that they then put to very good use either in the classroom or to assist in the smooth and efficient running of the school. The knowledge and skills that teachers have gained on training courses in areas such as literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology have contributed to the improvements in standards and teaching. Good procedures are in place for the support and induction of teaching and other staff that are new to the school. This means that staff quickly get a grasp of school routines and know precisely what is expected of them. This is helped further by good quality, clear and concise job descriptions, which ensure that everybody is aware of their role in helping to bring to life the school's aims stated in the school prospectus.
57. The vehicle for driving the school forward is the very good quality school improvement plan. It contains an accurate assessment of the areas of school life that need to be developed, clear and concise success criteria, rigorous monitoring procedures, costings and realistic yet challenging timescales. The great strength is that all the initiatives and priorities in the improvement plan are directly linked to the impact that they will have on improving teaching, learning and standards. Since his appointment the headteacher has worked hard to ensure that all staff at the school are provided with opportunities to contribute to school improvement planning. The Governing Body is increasingly recognising the role that it has to play in helping to formulate and identify areas for school development and improvement. The headteacher is keen to involve as many parties as possible in drawing up the identified priorities. This is to include parents and pupils through the School Council, so that they too can take a greater pride and responsibility in the quality of education that the school provides.
58. The role of the Governing Body is broadly satisfactory but there are areas that are in need of improvement. The governors fulfil their statutory duties in an appropriate manner. Under the leadership of the headteacher the committee structure is being used to discuss policies in more detail before they become part of school practice. The headteacher provides very good quality information for governors that includes a very detailed termly summary of all aspects of school life and a very detailed analysis of test and assessment data and what the impact is on how well pupils are achieving. Some governors have good links with subject co-ordinators and have visited school to see the provision that is made in these subjects or in areas such as special educational needs. Co-ordinators have also started to put together presentations about different subjects and aspects of school life to the Governing Body and this helps to give governors a greater insight into school life. However at the present time there is too much reliance on the headteacher in setting priorities and monitoring progress towards them. The governors are not active or involved enough in this aspect of school life and consequently do not sufficiently monitor the work of the school.

59. The headteacher carries out a detailed analysis of test and assessment data in English and mathematics and identifies any areas of the curriculum where pupils may not be achieving as well as expected or any groups of pupils who are not be achieving as well as expected. The school then uses the information in an effective manner to guide future curriculum planning or to target groups of pupils for additional support. These effective strategies together with the challenging targets that the school sets itself in literacy and numeracy contribute significantly to improving standards in the school. The school has accurately identified the need to place a greater emphasis on tracking the attainment of boys and girls as in some year groups there is a significant difference in attainment levels between boys and girls. In some instances this is due to natural ability levels of the different pupils but there are times when boys take a dominant role in discussions and group work with the contributions of the girls not always being as valued as they could be. The school has good procedures in place for tracking the progress of pupils who have not spent their full educational lives at the school. The data clearly shows that pupils who have spent a greater amount of time at the school perform better in National Curriculum tests.
60. The school has made good progress since the time of the last inspection in January 2001. Whilst the school recognises that there is still much work to be done there have been improvements in standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology with the rate of improvement faster than the national trend. Improvements have been made in the quality of teaching and in the amount of time allocated to different subjects of the curriculum. The curriculum provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved significantly and is now a strength of the school. Assessment procedures and the use of the data to guide teaching and learning are another area of school life that have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. Under the guidance and leadership of the current headteacher, the school is well placed to continue its process of improvement and development.
61. The management of special needs provision is very good and helps to ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress. Good quality individual education plans, well targeted support and effective links with outside agencies are all factors that contribute to the high quality of provision for these pupils. The very effective management of support staff, funding and all other available resources help to ensure that pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates and to ensuring that they are fully involved in all areas of the curriculum and that they take a full and active part in the life of the school as a community. The school pays appropriate attention to ensuring that all aspects of racial equality are adhered to when and if the need arises, and school curriculum and other policies actively reflect the promotion of racial harmony. Management of the Foundation Stage is good with the co-ordinators working effectively to ensure that liaison between the Nursery class and the Reception class becomes embedded in school practice to ensure that children move smoothly from one class to the other and that good attention is paid to previous learning.
62. Financial planning is of a good standard. Educational priorities are carefully costed out and there is a good link between school priorities and spending patterns and reflects well the educational needs of the pupils. Specific grants received by the school, such as Neighbourhood Renewal, are used effectively and efficiently and add to the quality of

pupils' learning and to the smooth running of the school. The day to day finances of the school are very well managed by the school secretary. She is very well organised and efficient in organising financial information and receives very good support from the school's budget officer who visits the school on a regular basis and oversees the financial management of the school and provide good quality and detailed information at Governing Body meetings. Appropriate use is made of information and communication technology to support the management of the school from an administrative viewpoint. Office staff are most welcoming and provide valuable and valued help to the headteacher and staff and make an important and significant contribution to the smooth and effective running of the school.

63. The school applies the principles of best value in a satisfactory manner when purchasing goods and services. Comparison is carried out through analysis of test results against all and similar schools. The school is seeking to further develop consultation into its development with plans for parents to be consulted on some major school decisions and the setting up of the school council has provided an opportunity for pupils' views to be taken on board. Commercially, the school is a discriminating purchaser, well aware of the needs for a competitive approach. The surplus budget that the school has is within the usual parameters with the money earmarked for specific projects such as improving the outside play provision for children in the Foundation Stage. The school makes good use of the resources at its disposal, although there are times when more effective use could be made of the computer suite. Support staff are often used very well in lessons and add significantly to the quality of pupils' learning. The unit cost per pupil is high at over £2800. Taking all factors into account, the school is providing satisfactory value for money.
64. The school has a very good match of qualified teachers to meet the requirements of the curriculum. There are 10 full-time teachers including the headteacher who has a teaching commitment. Specialist teachers are well deployed for the teaching of ICT and music. The high number of support staff are very well deployed and make a significant contribution to teaching and learning. Clerical staff provide very good support for the headteacher, staff, pupils and parents. The site manager maintains the school in a clean and safe manner. His additional responsibilities as a governor and lunchtime supervisor demonstrate his commitment to the school community. All adults in school present positive role models to the pupils.
65. Accommodation is satisfactory. Throughout the school high quality displays of pupils' work present a stimulating environment. Classrooms are light and airy, but the uniformity of size means that conditions for older children are cramped. Accommodation for the Foundation Stage would benefit from even better provision and from the development of the outdoor play area. The building is in good condition and is very well looked after. However, there are no ramps to provide access and egress for the pupil who is a wheelchair user. The school offices are very small and there are plans in place for them to be extended.
66. Learning resources are generally satisfactory for all subjects. For English, there is a good range of books and a well-placed library. The information and communication technology suite is a good resource, although there is scope to use this more extensively

to support pupils' learning. A good range of instruments, including multi-ethnic instruments, are available for the study of music.

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

67. In order to improve the quality of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

**1) work closely and develop the relationship with parents in order to:**

- raise their awareness of the importance of full and regular attendance;
- develop the part they have to play in supporting their children's learning.

*(paragraphs 1, 2, 10, 17, 46, 52, 73, 106, 112)*

**2) raise standards in art and design, design and technology information and communication technology, history, geography and religious education by ensuring that:**

- pupils continue to be given scope to develop their literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects;
- pupils have sufficient opportunities to use information and communication technology in daily lessons;
- the time given to subjects is sufficient to enable pupils to explore themes and topics in sufficient depth and gaps between teaching blocks are minimised;
- greater use is made of sketch books as a means of preparatory work;
- pupils are given greater opportunities to evaluate their work in design and technology.

*(paragraphs 6, 9, 18, 23, 24, 61, 99, 106, 110, 111, 113, 115, 117, 129, 132)*

**3) develop ways to enable the pupils to determine the course of their own learning and their levels of initiative and independence.**

*(paragraphs 8, 16, 97, 101, 106, 112, 116, 120, 121)*

**The following less important issues should be addressed as part of the school's action plan:**

- implement the plans to improve outside play provision for children in the Reception class;  
*(paragraphs 65, 72, 87)*
- monitor the differences in attainment between the boys and girls in English and mathematics more carefully.



*(paragraphs 11, 59, 98, 99)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

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

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number		3	32	7			
Percentage		7	76	17			

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

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

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	195
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	95

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	56

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

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

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

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.6

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	3.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	16	14	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	13	12
	Girls	13	12	11
	Total	23	25	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (61)	83 (54)	77 (57)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	12	10	10
	Total	21	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (57)	63 (61)	67 (57)
	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)***

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	16	12	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	14	13
	Girls	7	8	8
	Total	15	22	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54(45)	79(56)	75(88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	12
	Girls	7	8	7
	Total	15	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54(53)	68(63)	68(63)
	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	148	1	
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian	2		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4		
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y 6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	28

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

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	160

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001 – '02
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	£
Total income	515 047
Total expenditure	509 636
Expenditure per pupil	2 378
Balance brought forward from previous year	27 155
Balance carried forward to next year	32 566

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	214
Number of questionnaires returned	45

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	24	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	38	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	38	7	2	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	31	16	2	4
The teaching is good.	61	33	0	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	44	18	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	37	2	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85	11	2	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	43	42	11	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	61	33	2	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	40	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	38	13	2	16

### **Other issues raised by parents**

No other issues were raised by parents.



## **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**

68. Children start in the Nursery class immediately following their third birthday and the vast majority of the children transfer into the Reception class in September of the following academic year. The Nursery class admits children on a morning and afternoon basis, although there are more children in the morning session.
69. The attainment of the children when they start in the Nursery class is well below expected levels and a significant number of the children have poor communication, language and literacy skills. Although the children make good progress in many aspects of their learning while in the Nursery class, many children continue to work at a level well below that expected. Their communication, language and literacy skills continue to remain poor and many have a limited vocabulary and have great difficulty in talking clearly or articulately. Many children need much support in encouraging them to talk, and their limited speaking skills hinder their learning in other areas. Equally good emphasis is placed by the staff in the Nursery class on promoting children's personal, social and emotional development, which is at a very low level when they enter the Nursery class. Although they make good progress, their attainment is below that expected by the time they transfer to the Reception class. In their mathematical development, their knowledge and understanding of the world, and their creative and physical development, children's attainment is well below expectations by the time they move to the Reception class.
70. By the end of the Reception year, children's attainment is still well below expectations in their communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. Attainment in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development is below expectations. Children attain the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development. In all areas of learning children make good progress reflecting the good teaching. There are a higher than average number of children with special educational needs, often in relation to their learning and language needs. In addition, there are a small number of children with a very high level of special educational need and who have a statement. These children are very much included in all aspects of learning and are given very good support. As a result, the children often make as good progress as their classmates. The small number of children with English as an additional language make good progress in their learning.
71. The teaching of the Foundation Stage in the the Nursery class and the Reception class is good overall and is a good improvement on that seen during the last inspection. The school has successfully tackled the issues relating to the Foundation Stage and this has led to good improvements to the quality of pupils' learning. A significant feature of the teaching is the detailed planning that pays very close attention to ensuring that wherever possible the children have opportunities to practise their basic literacy and numeracy skills as well as developing their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Imaginative play is used well in this regard, and teachers plan interesting activities that the children are enthused and motivated by. Teachers and support staff



work very effectively together and the teachers enjoy and have the full confidence of the learning support assistants to whom they ask to work with groups of children.

72. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is well planned and ensures that the needs of the children are well met. Good reference is made to the national guidance given to schools to help plan the learning for children of this age. Good use is made of the local community to extend pupils' understanding of the world around them. While children in the Nursery class have regular access to outside play provision, with a well-equipped and organised play area, the space for the same sort of work for children in the Reception class is more restricted. The school, however, has already identified this as an area for further development and once implemented, the plans offer much scope to enrich the children's learning further.
73. The teachers make regular assessments of the children's progress and use the information well to modify teaching and what pupils are to learn in light of what they have already mastered. Staff in the Nursery class and the Reception class liaise carefully with the parents to ensure that the transfer from home to school is smooth. Regular contact is made with parents at the start and end of the school day and this further helps to keep parents informed about what their children have done well during the day or any difficulties they may have encountered. Some of the parents assist in class, and the school appreciates the efforts these parents make to the school. However, one of the reasons why children do not make even more progress is the very low attendance levels. Data indicates that the attendance levels of children in the Nursery class and the Reception class are extremely poor. As a result, children do not get the opportunity to build on what they are taught and given that many of them also have poor literacy, numeracy and recall skills poor attendance slows down their learning.

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

74. Children of all ages and abilities make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children attain the Early Learning Goals. The teaching of this element of the curriculum is very good ensuring that children have developed a good understanding of the need to work and play co-operatively with one another and many children demonstrate these skills well in their day-to-day relationships with one another. In one Reception class lesson seen during the inspection, the pupils worked in the hall playing with a parachute. They greatly enjoyed working together and activities such as these strongly develop the children's understanding of how important it is to co-operate with one another. When getting changed for physical education work, pupils do so without needing assistance and are aware of the importance of leaving their clothes in a neat and tidy manner so that they can get changed again quickly.
75. Teaching is effectively planned to develop the children's sense of independence. In the Nursery class, children are effectively taught about the importance of personal hygiene and of the need to follow the class routines. Children learn to play co-operatively with one another and behaviour in many lessons is good. In the Reception class and the Nursery class, children are given particular duties such as helping the teacher or taking the school register back to the office. Children undertake these duties with a sense of

pride and these activities help to develop the children's confidence and self-esteem. In the Reception class, children very much enjoy having their name added to the 'Sunshine Tree' when they have been kind and helpful to others in the class. In both classes, the children are taught to use the classroom resources properly and return equipment or books to the correct place once they have finished with them. The Nursery class and Reception class teachers adeptly recognise the need to develop the children's independent learning skills. Despite this, however, few children are at the stage where they can take responsibility for their own learning or make decisions about the sort of equipment they themselves can choose in order to complete the tasks set by the teacher. While teachers make good use of play areas specifically created to promote learning, such as the 'Fish and Chip Shop', children still need much adult reinforcement and guidance to help them in their work.

76. In the Nursery class, children are provided with opportunities to have a drink and biscuit before the end of the session and during these sessions the teacher gives the children a chance to talk about what they have been doing and what they have enjoyed about their learning. In addition, the children are given a chance to eat and chat with one another and this helps to reinforce their early understanding of the conventions of eating as part of a wider social group.

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

77. Despite making good progress in the Nursery class and the Reception class, by the end of the Foundation Stage, children's attainment is well below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Teaching is good with both teachers very aware of the need to provide the children with rich and interesting language based activities in order to extend the children's skills and confidence in using language as a way to learn and to develop positive relationships with others. Pupils' achievements, considering their very low level of attainment when they first enter the school, are good.
78. Despite the good efforts of teachers and support assistants, progress in developing the children's spoken language is often slow. Teachers make every effort to involve children in discussions but the level of response is often so poor that the adults really have to work hard to encourage the children further in their speaking. For example, the teacher after hearing what a child has to say will ask a further question such as, 'What do you mean by the 'thingy?'' Responses from the children are often in the form of very short, stilted answers, and the children often lack the vocabulary to express their thinking. Pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop their speaking skills through the use of puppets, or talking about fruits from observing them and by participating in the structured play sessions in the play areas. Despite this, children still struggle to express themselves clearly and rely very heavily on adult support to communicate their ideas.
79. The children make satisfactory progress in the development of their writing skills, but their attainment is well below expectations of the Early Learning Goals. The children's poor co-ordination skill in being able to hold a pencil severely limits their progress. Children, including higher-attaining children, struggle to produce letters that are uniform in size and even in spacing. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children are at the stage of tracing simple words or phrases that have been written out for them

by the teacher. Many children are highly dependent on an adult who acts as a scribe. Only higher-attaining children are able to write their names or a simple statement without the assistance of an adult. Teachers ensure that many examples of print are on display, such as the children's nametags where they hang their coats and belongings. This helps to demonstrate to the children that writing has a purpose.

80. Attainment in reading is below the expected level by the time the children enter Year 1. Children know that books contain stories and that pages are turned from left to right. They know that the print on the page tells the story and that the pictures are used to help gain a further understanding of what is taking place in the story or what may happen in subsequent pages. Despite the choice of books being well matched to the academic needs of the children few, however, are able to talk about what they have read without the support of an adult. They have difficulty in remembering what terms such as 'author' and 'illustrator' mean, although teachers and learning support assistants regularly reinforce these terms. Few children are regularly assisted in their reading at home and this further restricts their overall progress.

### **Mathematical development**

81. The children make good progress, but by the end of the Foundation Stage, despite much good teaching and the strong emphasis given to promoting the children's mathematical development, their overall attainment is well below the Early Learning Goals. By the end of the Nursery class, children are starting to recognise the numbers 1 – 5, but they need frequent activities to constantly reinforce what they are learning. Children need much practical equipment such as games, sand and water play and construction equipment in order for them to understanding number and shape and space. Few are at the stage of writing numbers, but good use of computers and appropriate software by teachers successfully aid the children's learning of basic mathematical concepts.
82. By the end of the Reception class, the children have successfully moved on in their learning to recognise, sort and name two-dimensional shapes and higher attaining children write out the numbers 1 – 20, although some write numbers the wrong way around. Children are beginning to develop appropriate vocabulary and can identify from pictures of a person who might be 'taller' or 'shorter' than someone else. However, they are not able to give a detailed explanation of what is meant by 'full' or 'empty', because of the limitations of their language development. They are unable to explain, for example, that a cup may be half full. Children are starting to recognise coins up to 5p, but their skills of adding and subtracting from a given amount are very low, although they do understand that money is needed to buy things. Teachers make good use of the imaginative structured play such as the 'Fish and Chip' shop to promote the children's understanding of number through the use of money. Children need some considerable support to write out and solve simple problems such as  $3 + 1$  and the amount of written work that they complete is quite low.

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

83. The children make good progress, but by the time they move into Year 1, despite good teaching, the attainment of the children is below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. When they start school the children have a very limited understanding

of the world in which they live and their ability to remember facts and information is very weak. Few have developed an understanding of the world other than their immediate homes. Teachers are very aware of this and provide the children with a sufficient range of learning opportunities to broaden their understanding of the world around them.

84. Good use is made of the members of the local community to come to school and to talk to the children about the work that they do and the service they play in helping others. Teachers make good use of the fictional character of 'Postman Pat' to develop the children's understanding of how mail is delivered and of the need for letters to have an address in order for them to be delivered correctly, however children's understanding of places and features is weak. During the inspection, the school nurse was invited to talk to pupils about the importance of eating healthy foods and of the need for personal hygiene when eating. The children were provided with a rich array of different fruits, and although at the start of the lesson only a small number of them had an understanding of the names of the more unfamiliar ones by the end of the lesson the children had learned about the differences between fruits and vegetables and which would be considered healthy and which would not. Few children demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the sorts of foods that are considered healthy. Children do know, however, that food is necessary for growth and that all living creatures need food in order to grow and thrive. With support and guidance, the children are able to give some examples of the buildings in the local area such as the nearest supermarket or local newsagents but their breadth of understanding of places or landmarks further afield is very limited. Children are given scope to learn about other people in other countries. Children in the Nursery class have explored, for example, and made their own Mendhi patterns as part of their learning about other customs. However, the children find it difficult to remember what they have learned and this is compounded and weakened further by their very poor attendance.
85. Teachers make good use of the pupils' own birthdays as a way of developing the children's insight into the concept of how people grow older year by year and how these are celebrated. Despite this, the children's understanding of the past is well below expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children make good progress in their understanding of information and communication technology as they move through each of the classes. The children use the school's computers in the computer suite as well as classroom based machines at many points of the day. By the end of the Foundation Stage, many children demonstrate good control when using a mouse and are aware of terms and the functions of a printer or monitor. They are able to use a simple art package to good effect and many children eagerly use the computer and concentrate well when working at the machines.

### **Physical development**

86. By the end of the Foundation Stage, despite good teaching in both the Reception class and Nursery class, pupils do not achieve the Early Learning Goals. Progress, however, is good and this reflects the good teaching that is characterised by the regular scope given to pupils to develop their physical skills in a number of areas.
87. In the Nursery class, children are given good access to the outside play area where they use a range of toys, trikes and equipment that have a beneficial impact on their physical development. The children use this to good effect and they manoeuvre the wheeled toys around obstacles taking careful note also of the space that their friends are using at the same time. The same provision is currently not available for the children in the

Reception class, although they are given opportunities to use the facilities that the Nursery class children have at different times of the week. The children in the Reception class mostly use the small area outside their classroom which they use for catching or throwing small balls, bean bags or hoops. The Reception class children are given regular opportunities during the week for more formal lessons in the school hall. When working there, the children make good use of the space and try hard in what they are asked to complete.

88. Shortcomings in attainment include the children's ability to handle small pieces of equipment such as scissors, pencils, glue sticks or paintbrushes. Many of the children work at a level lower than expected, lack confidence when using such equipment and need much support from an adult in order for them to cut out, for example, templates to stick them to another piece of paper. Many pupils find it very difficult to apply paint in an even manner and in addition, pupils struggle further in holding and handling a pencil in such a way that enables them to write and form letters that are even in size. Teachers provide the children with regular opportunities for them to develop these skills, but for the majority their skills remain below expectations by the time they enter Year 1.

### **Creative development**

89. Despite much good teaching in the Nursery class and the Reception class, by the end of the Foundation Stage, children reach standards that are below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. Children make good progress, however, and very much enjoy many of the creative activities that are provided for them. Teachers give good attention to ensuring that the children develop their creative skills both in their classroom organisation and enabling the children to have teaching by a visiting specialist for music. In these sessions, the children get good opportunities to listen to musical instruments being played by an expert and to take part in singing activities as a member of a wider group. In the Reception class, for example, children have opportunities to pick up and play various untuned musical instruments at different parts of the day and this encourages them to explore how sounds are made when the instruments are tapped or hit in different ways. The children enjoy listening to music and during incidental points of the day are given chance to sing simple songs and nursery rhymes such as 'Ten Fat Sausages' as part of a mathematics lesson.
90. Children are provided with good opportunities to use paint and malleable materials as part of their early understanding of art and design. Good use is made of everyday objects such as fruit and vegetables for pupils to explore concepts such as texture. In one good lesson seen during the inspection children were given good opportunities to cut open fruit and explore what seeds may have been inside. Following on from this, children then used the fruit to make simple prints, thus aiding their early understanding of how prints can be created from a wide range of everyday natural objects. In addition, the lesson made a good contribution to the pupils' greater understanding of the world around them. One of the weaknesses in pupils' attainment is their ability to draw or apply paint evenly. Many of the children's drawings are quite immature for their age and lack a sense of proportion or perspective. Children are given good scope to use everyday materials to make simple models. By using recyclable materials such as cereal boxes and cardboard tubes, children make simple models, of a reasonable quality, such as the van for 'Postman Pat' as part of a theme about the 'People Who Help Us'.

91. Children are given good opportunities by teachers to participate in imaginative role-play. Both the Nursery class and the Reception class have space available for such activities and classrooms are often re-organised to suit the class theme or topic. During the inspection, space in the Reception class allowed for a fish and chip shop (fondly known by the children as 'Jubilee Plaice') to be created in order to for creative play. The children enjoy working in the shop but very much need the guidance and assistance of an adult in order to stimulate discussion and ideas as to what to what to say. Few of the children can initiate their own play or determine how their learning may be developed when working in the role-play areas.

## **ENGLISH**

92. On the basis of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well below the national average in reading and writing and at an average level when compared to similar schools. The results of the the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 were well below the national average in English and average when compared with similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that attainment at the end of Year 2 is well below average in reading and writing and below average at the end of Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 2 are well below average in speaking and listening. At the end of Year 6, standards are below average in all aspects. Taking into account their prior attainment, pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress in Year 1 and Year 2, and good progress in Year 3 to Year 6. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils have very significant language deprivation that hinders their progress. Progress is further constrained by the fact that many pupils are absent from school for considerable periods of time. This results in many opportunities for improving language skills being missed. In Year 3 to Year 6, where attendance is better, and pupils have better basic language skills, they are able to benefit from the good teaching and make better progress. At the time of the school's previous inspection, national tests show that standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 were well below average in all areas of work. The oldest pupils in the school have made significant improvements, therefore.
93. By the end of Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well below average. Pupils usually sit quietly during lessons, whilst listening to their teachers. However, their lack of language skills means that they often do not understand clearly what they have been told. When given the opportunity, a small minority of pupils speak clearly and confidently, and provide extended answers and comments. The majority of pupils, however, speak either in single words or in short phrases, lacking the vocabulary or the confidence to express themselves at length. By Year 6, the standards in speaking and listening are below average. Most pupils listen carefully, and then clearly demonstrate their understanding. A small number of pupils find it difficult to listen and maintain their concentration for any prolonged period of time. A small majority of pupils produce answers and observations confidently and concisely, as well as contributing well to drama activities. A significant number of pupils, however, are not keen to speak at length in front of adults and other pupils, finding it difficult to explain themselves clearly.

94. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in reading are well below average. A small minority of pupils read their texts accurately, introducing some expression into their reading, and explaining what they have read. A number of pupils read their books successfully, but with little expression or fluency. Other pupils read individual words, but often need help in reading a whole sentence. Many pupils have appropriate phonic skills, that enable them to attempt to read words that they do not know. Most of these pupils, however, have limited word comprehension, so that even when they read a portion of text correctly, they are unable to explain clearly the meaning of what they have read. By Year 6, pupils' reading skills, overall, are below average. Whilst a significant number still find reading difficult, many read accurately, with a small number producing most suitable expression into their work. In talking about what they have read, these pupils make appropriate reference to characters and events in their books. Many pupils are able to find information using reference books, with a number having successfully mastered the skills of skimming and scanning, to identify appropriate facts.
95. By Year 2, pupils' standards in writing are well below those expected. Many pupils attempt to write portions of text, including stories, news and poems. A significant majority, however, do not use capital letters and full-stops consistently correctly or independently, to add structure to their writing. Many pupils find spelling difficult, but although only a minority spell their words correctly, the majority usually produce spellings of simple words that are phonetically acceptable. Pupils' handwriting skills are reasonably well developed, although a number of pupils produce letters that are sometimes incorrectly formed and variable in size. A small minority of pupils continue to find this aspect of work difficult, and need adult support to complete any tasks. By Year 6, pupils' writing standards are below average. Most pupils produce both factual and imaginative writing, often producing work of some length. On occasions this work is re-drafted. However, pupils are often inconsistent with their use of punctuation, and many pupils find difficulty introducing enough variety and imagination into their vocabulary to improve the quality of their writing significantly. Higher attaining pupils, though, produce work that is interesting and imaginative, with a thoughtful use of words. Many pupils join their letters in a clear and neat handwriting style, although a significant minority of pupils find difficulty in mastering this skill, often reverting to printing. Many pupils have difficulties with their spelling, but they make regular use of dictionaries, to attempt to improve their skills in this area.
96. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned and well organised, with teachers carefully following the requirements of the national literacy strategy. Teachers have also provided time for pupils to undertake extra work in writing, which the school has identified as an area of weakness, as well as in drama, to help improve speaking skills. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to listen to stories and various forms of instruction, and they make good use of intonation in their voices, as well as humour, to help maintain pupils' interest. On occasions, pupils are also encouraged to speak in class, through well-directed questions. In many lessons, however, teachers do not provide pupils with enough chances to speak, and pupils' attainment in this area is then not adequately tackled. Teachers are careful to provide appropriate reading books for pupils, and nearly all pupils have books suitable to their needs. Careful records are kept of the books read, and pupils are regularly provided

with new ones. Pupils, generally, are keen to read, and even when they find reading difficult they are prepared to 'have a go'!

97. Teachers provide an appropriate range of writing activities and opportunities for their pupils, during lessons in English. Opportunities are also now provided, on occasions, for pupils to further develop their writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum, such as history and religious education. Teachers are most careful in producing neat handwriting on the board, and this leads to most pupils trying hard to follow this good example in their own writing. Pupils respond appropriately to the opportunities provided, in all aspects of the subject, and all pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 make good gains in their knowledge and skills. In Year 1 and Year 2, where pupils have very limited basic language skills, and where the pupils' attendance levels are poor, the good teaching provided is only able to produce satisfactory progress in pupils' learning. Good relationships are developed between teachers and pupils, and teachers provide appropriate support during lessons, as well as adding most helpful comments to pupils' work in their exercise books. Good use is also made of learning support assistants, and they also contribute well to the progress that the pupils make. Pupils' attitudes to English are consistently good. They behave well and set about their various tasks with good concentration. They work well on their own, and in groups when required, and most persevere with the work set. They generally know what to do, but readily turn to adults if necessary. Most pupils are keen to produce a neat and careful standard of presentation in their books, with many taking a pride in the appearance of their work.
98. The school uses the National Literacy Strategy as its scheme of work and all the various aspects of work are suitably covered. The implementation of the strategy has been effective. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator is hard working and well informed, and in studying the results achieved by pupils, she has identified the weaknesses in pupils' work. The resulting strategies for improvement have helped to raise standards, especially in Year 3 to Year 6. The co-ordinator monitors the work in the classrooms, to see for herself the standards being achieved. She is fully aware that girls often do not perform as well as boys, and the school is attempting to address this issue, such as through providing more books and writing topics that are likely to appeal to girls. A very good, and very much improved, range of assessment procedures is in place, and most relevant information is recorded to identify pupils' current attainment. This information is used very well to track the progress that pupils are making, and to help provide targets for further improvement. Resources are good, and the overall provision, including that in the library, is well used both by teachers and pupils. Suitable use is made of information and communication technology, with, for example, pupils in most classes word-processing samples of their writing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

99. The 2002 end of Key Stage 1 national test results show that pupils' attainment in mathematics is very low in comparison with the national average and in comparison with similar schools. The 2002 end of Key Stage 2 national test results show that pupils' attainment is in line with the national average but are very high in comparison with similar schools. Boys did better than girls. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1



have not improved since the last inspection but they have improved at the end of Key Stage 2. The inspection findings indicate that standards are slowly rising in Key Stage 1. However, because children's attainment on entry to school is low and a significant number of pupils have poor attendance, standards are still well below the national average. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress and achievement in relation to their attainment on entry to school. In Key Stage 2, standards for the majority of pupils in Year 6 are below the national average, although pupils make good progress and are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their peers, as do pupils who have been identified as gifted and talented.

100. At Key Stage 2, the school has made good improvement in mathematics since the time of the last inspection, although the same pace of progress has yet to be fully felt at Key Stage 1. The systematic and effective monitoring of teaching and learning throughout the school has brought about improvements. Performance data has been analysed in detail, and changes to the planning and teaching of lessons have been made as a result. All pupils are now set appropriate targets for improvement.
101. Through regular mental arithmetic sessions at the start of numeracy lessons, pupils in Key Stage 1 begin to develop their mental agility. Some pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of number bonds to ten. However, many pupils are slow to answer questions and find it difficult to work out even very simple addition of numbers without the support of apparatus. A few higher attaining pupils are confident in handling numbers. They are able to add two digit numbers to 90 and know there is more than one way of adding and subtracting numbers. They are able to identify odd and even numbers and recognise the pattern they make. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of common two and three-dimensional shapes by the end of Key Stage 1 and some make reasonable attempts at drawing symmetrical shapes. They are given appropriate opportunities to measure length and develop a sound understanding of centimetres and metres. Suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to measure capacity, weight and length using non-standard and standard measures, but standards are still below expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils are able to classify objects using different criteria, such as shapes with curved sides and shapes with straight sides but most find it difficult to collect and communicate information in the form of simple lists and block graphs. Many pupils find it difficult to record their work successfully without the support of adults.
102. By the end of Key Stage 2, the good teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' ability to manipulate numbers mentally and pupils, even lower attaining pupils, are developing confidence in undertaking mental calculations. However, many pupils do not have immediate recall of important number facts and this slows them down when making both mental and written calculations. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6, when working with decimals demonstrated their understanding of what each digit represented up to three decimal places. Very good teaching helped the pupils to really clarify their understanding of place value and to find ways of checking their answers. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 have a satisfactory understanding of shape, space and measure. They know how to classify a wide variety of shapes by their properties. They know the standard units of measure for length, weight and liquids and understand the importance of measuring accurately. Older pupils build on this work although a significant proportion is working at below the expected

levels. Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities for data handling. By the end of Year 6 pupils are able to collect information and present it in a variety of different ways. However, as in Key Stage 1, many pupils rely heavily on the support of adults in all aspects of mathematics but particularly when recording their work and find it difficult to work independently.

103. The teaching and learning in mathematics is good in both key stages. Although this results in good learning taking place in Key Stage 2, in Key Stage 1 the effect of their poor attendance and lack of parental support for many pupils slows the pace of learning which is only satisfactory. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented throughout the school and provides a useful structure for teachers. In both key stages, lessons are well planned and learning objectives are shared with pupils and the progressive development of skills in individual lessons and over time is slowly beginning to impact on raising standards. Teachers make good use of the introductory sessions in numeracy lessons to help pupils to develop their mental agility. As a result by the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2 higher attaining pupils are able to confidently undertake quite difficult mental calculations such as addition and subtraction sums to two decimal places. Throughout the school, teachers place appropriate emphasis on encouraging pupils to use correct mathematical vocabulary as this has been identified as a whole school weakness. This is beginning to have an effect and pupils are becoming more familiar with mathematical terms.
104. Where the best teaching occurs, teachers set challenging tasks targeted effectively at the differing ability levels of pupils. They have high expectations of the pupils and the lessons are well paced. Pupils respond very well when teachers' expectations are high, and are highly motivated in their learning and give of their best. However, occasionally, teachers' expectations are too low for the more capable pupils. For example, sometimes too much time is spent consolidating pupils' skills, which are already secure rather than moving them on to a higher level. Generally, teachers use the end of session discussions well to consolidate pupils' learning especially when reference is made to the initial learning objectives. Overall, teachers manage their classes skilfully, relationships are good and learning support staff are used effectively to support lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs with their learning. Consequently, pupils are generally well behaved and show good attitudes to their work. The marking of pupils' recorded work is good overall. Teachers provide pupils with suitable opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, related to their work in geography, pupils in Year 2 measured different routes from their classroom to the secretary's office and recorded their findings in a table. Mathematics homework is set on a regular basis and is used appropriately to support and extend pupils' learning. There are sometimes opportunities for pupils to carry out mathematical tasks on computers. However, computers are rarely used as a matter of course in classes.
105. The subject co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and provides good leadership and management for the subject. There are clearly focused long and medium term plans for the subject, which reflect the aims and objectives of the National Curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy and these are related to short term planning in the classes. Assessment of pupils' progress is very good, and is undertaken regularly and used effectively to support pupils' learning. Booster classes and additional support for groups

of pupils through the 'Springboard' project have also been effective in improving pupils' progress towards their targets. When required pupils respond well to working together in pairs or groups, which supports their social development.

## SCIENCE

106. On the basis of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was well below the national average and at an average level when compared to similar schools. The 2002 end of Year 2 teacher assessments indicate that attainment is well below the national average. Inspection findings indicate that attainment at the end of Year 2 is well below average and below average at the end of Year 6. These statements however do not paint the full picture. Standards are improving at a good rate. Children start school with a poor knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The quality of teaching across the school is good and by the time that pupils leave school they are achieving well in relation to their ability. This good quality of teaching means that the progress made by pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and the small percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language, is now often good within lessons and over time has been at a satisfactory level. The weakness is that the quality of pupils' learning does not match the quality of teaching that they receive. Pupils are not effective independent learners and rely too heavily on adult support and guidance and it is their learning rather than the teaching that prevents progress and attainment from being stronger. The school is well aware of these shortcomings and is addressing the issue through strategies to increase pupils' ability to take initiative and responsibility for their own learning, through evaluating the learning styles of different pupils and through seeking parents to play a far more active role in supporting their child's education and the work of the school. The school has however made good improvements since the time of the last inspection which has seen improvements in standards and the quality of teaching.
107. Pupils' attainment in the investigative and experimental aspect of science is well below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and is notably the weaker area of learning for pupils by the end of Year 6. In Key Stage 1 pupils have been increasingly provided with opportunities to carry out investigative work such as exploring the habitats of living things and forces but because of their low starting point, attainment at the end of Year 2 is well below expectations in this aspect of their work. Pupils have difficulty in expressing their ideas because their vocabulary is very limited at this stage and also have difficulty working independently of the teacher or other adults in the classroom. There are some opportunities provided for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 to take part in this aspect of the science curriculum, but the emphasis is more on the development of pupils' scientific knowledge. Pupils continue to have limited general knowledge and experiences to which they can refer when taking part in scientific activities. For example, when Year 5 pupils were asked to make parachutes with different size canopies to test out air resistance only a small number of pupils had a secure knowledge of what a parachute was or what it looked like. Pupils lack the necessary confidence and independence to set up investigations for themselves and to identify and pursue their own lines of enquiry. Pupils rely heavily on teachers and support staff, who provide a good range of strategies to help pupils record findings in written or tabular formats. However, the reports of the older pupils are often thin.

108. By the end of Year 2, pupils have only a limited knowledge of living things and what is needed for living things to survive. Many pupils have difficulty in making connections between living things. For example, not recognising that plants as well as animals and humans are living things. Most pupils however know the main parts of the human body and that certain types of food are better than others for a healthy life. As pupils move through Year 3 to Year 6 teaching ensures that a good emphasis is placed on the development of pupils' scientific knowledge. Pupils recollect what they have recently learnt but have more difficulty in recalling work from a while ago. Pupils have a basic knowledge of the human skeleton, but are less secure in their understanding of the main systems of the human body, such as the digestive and respiratory systems.
109. By the end of Year 2, most pupils do not have a sufficient knowledge of materials and their properties. Pupils recognise that certain materials are more suited for some purposes than others, but the lack of a specific scientific vocabulary prevents pupils explaining their ideas clearly. Evidence indicates that few pupils understand that materials can be changed by heating or cooling them and that some changes, such as burning, are permanent. By the end of Year 6 there have been some improvements in pupils' knowledge and understanding but attainment remains below average. Pupils describe differences between the properties of different materials in a satisfactory manner but are less secure when asked to explain how these properties could be used to classify substances such as liquids, solids or gases. Few pupils describe metallic properties, for example, that metals have good electrical conductivity, and use these properties to distinguish metals from other solids.
110. Pupils' attainment in physical processes is well below the expected level at the end of Year 2 and below the expected level at the end of Year 6. Pupils at the end of Year 2 have a basic understanding of processes such as pulling and pushing and know that different surfaces may help or hinder movement but have more difficulty in understanding that some objects may be moved by either a push or a pull. Pupils understand that electricity is a source of power but very few pupils can make the distinction between natural and man made light sources. By the end of Year 6 pupils use symbols appropriately in their circuit diagrams and most understand that a switch can make a break in a circuit. Few pupils go beyond explaining a simple circuit. Pupils' experiences and vocabulary are limited in explaining the impact of forces such as gravity and air-resistance.
111. The teaching of science is good at both key stages and ensures that within individual lessons pupils of all abilities make good progress in the development of their scientific knowledge. However, although the quality of learning is satisfactory, it does not reflect the efforts that teachers put into their teaching. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and teaching has increasingly put more emphasis on pupils taking part in investigative activities, but more needs to be done in providing such activities and in making pupils more independent in their learning. Pupils are keen to take part in science lessons, but often take a passive role in their learning, despite the enthusiastic and interesting manner in which teachers present the lesson. Whether it is making parachutes in Year 5, exploring animal and plant habitats in Year 2, exploring the properties of materials in Year 4 or exploring pushes and pulls in Year 1, teachers put much effort into seeking an enthusiastic response from pupils. Pupils often behave well but are heavily dependent

on adult support when recording their work and when making choices and decisions. Although there is a good programme of revision for the older pupils in school which is helping them to prepare well for the national Curriculum tests, there is a need to ensure that a greater expectation is placed on pupils from an earlier age to instigate their own experiments so that by the time that pupils reach Year 6, work is not merely centred around revision tasks but is also providing more regular opportunities for pupils to put their scientific knowledge to the test in challenging investigations where hypotheses are set and their validity evaluated. There are some good examples of pupils' numeracy skills being put to good use with the recording of findings in both bar and line graphs and in the accurate measuring of temperatures. There is, however, a need to ensure that more opportunities are provided for pupils to carry out independent study and research and for the quality and quality of pupils' recorded work to improve as at times there is not enough. This is often because the pupils lack a sense of urgency despite the constant setting of time deadlines by their teachers. It also means that pupils do not always have a secure point of reference from which to revise previously learnt work. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory and is at its best when it clearly outlines what a pupil needs to do to improve or picks up on consistent spelling mistakes that pupils are making. This practice is not consistent across the school. Pupils are beginning to use information and communication technology more to support their learning in science, and this is an ongoing area of development in the school.

112. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the strengths and the areas for development which include continued development of pupils' abilities to carry out scientific investigations, ensuring that pupils take a greater responsibility and initiative for their own learning and to use computers more to support and enhance pupils' learning. Good procedures are in place for monitoring the quality of teaching. The co-ordinator has carried out numerous lesson observations and regularly monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work. These effective procedures have played an important role in helping to improve standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Good procedures are also in place for assessing pupils' attainment, for setting targets for improvement and for tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school. The school is effective in the manner in which it analyses all available test and assessment data and is increasingly using the data to set individual pupil targets and year group targets and for using the information to identify areas of development for the subject. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. The school has a good number of support staff and they are used most effectively in science lessons and make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The school is rightly seeking ways in which parents could play a more active and telling role in supporting their child's education because at present too few parents do this and this has an adverse impact on standards and how well pupils learn.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

113. By the end of both key stages, standards are below national expectations. Standards have fallen since the last inspection when they were in line with expectations. Over time, the school's other priorities in terms of raising pupils' attainment in English and mathematics have reduced

the time and attention paid to art and design. However, the headteacher has recently taken over the co-ordination of the subject and various measures that have been put into place have considerably raised the status and profile the subject has. For example, a 'Sculpture Week' has taken place and this has given pupils the opportunity to explore and make models using a range of media. As a result, pupils are currently making satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of art and design as they move through the school.

114. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' drawing skills are below the expected level and few have a secure understanding of how line and mark making can be used in different ways to give their work added impact. Pupils make good gains in their learning for their age of the techniques involved in using 'tie and dye' and understand how fabric, elastic bands, marbles and dye are combined in order to create simple patterns. Pupils construct simple models using a range of natural materials such as leaves, twigs and flowers and their work is of good quality. Teachers provide pupils with a suitable range of opportunities to create pieces of art. They are also given scope to learn about the work of famous artists such as Kandinsky, Raymond Briggs and Gerry Baptist and the techniques these artists use in their work. However, despite this provision the pupils' recalling of what they have learned is weak and their low levels of attendance impact significantly on their overall level of attainment.
115. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a limited understanding of the need for using sketchbooks to support their work. Pupils have sketchbooks, but too little use is made of them by teachers in order to extend pupils' understanding of the need for preparatory work, or to use these as a source for their own ideas for their artwork or how sketchbooks can be used to evaluate their work after its completion. Pupils' drawing skills are weak and they have an unsatisfactory understanding of terms such as 'perspective' or 'tone'. Few are able to apply these to their work in order to give it added impact. Pupils have a limited understanding of how different paints can be blended together to make others, and because of pupils' weak retention skills, they are unable to recall examples of secondary colours or other terms such as 'hue' or 'tint'. As a result, pupils do not develop a sufficient and growing awareness of the subtleties of colour or how the application of these can add vibrancy to their work. Attainment by the pupils in terms of three-dimensional work is better. The recent 'Sculpture Week' in school helped pupils to explore the works of Clarice Cliff with a view to making their own sculptures in a similar style. By the end of Year 6, pupils have some opportunities to use information and communication technology to create their images, but these are often at a simple level. The potential for pupils to use computers and other related information and communication technology equipment as a means of extending their understanding of art and design is limited.
116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good features at both key stages. The headteacher's work in raising the profile of the subject across the school has raised teachers' awareness of how art and design can be used to promote and extend pupils' learning in other subjects. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and the recently implemented systematic planning to ensure that pupils learn about the lives of different artists and craftspeople has raised pupils' understanding of the works of artists such as Picasso, Lowry, John Eaves and Clarice Cliff. However, there are some aspects of teaching which could be improved. Too little use is made of sketchbooks and as a result, pupils make too few gains in their understanding of preparatory work and the

importance this plays in producing work of high quality. Pupils are provided with too few opportunities to direct the course of their own learning with teachers providing too many prescribed learning opportunities. As a result, pupils are given limited scope to choose the materials and techniques as a means of developing their self-expression and their creativity is under-developed. At present, some use is made of information and communication technology by teachers to support pupils in their learning, but this is not extensive.

117. The leadership and management of the subject are good resulting in raising standards and the status the subject. The headteacher has identified further ways, such as the more effective use of sketchbooks, as a means of raising standards further. The subject makes an appropriate contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development in that they are given clear opportunities to learn about the work of other artists from other countries including those from the Caribbean and the New Commonwealth. Resources are satisfactory overall, but the organisation of these in classrooms does not make it easy for pupils to develop their skills of self-selection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

118. Standards in design and technology are below national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The quality of teaching and learning are currently satisfactory and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. However over time not all elements of the subject have been covered in sufficient depth. Although this situation has now been rectified, the fact that the subject is taught in blocks with art and design, does not always best suit the learning needs of the pupils who sometimes forget newly learnt skills if they are not taught or refreshed on a more regular basis. Overall however, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory because the subject has been given more prominence, although more is still needed if standards are to rise higher.
119. By the end of Year 2 pupils have had opportunities to take part in food technology activities, design homes, make puppets and make vehicles for use on the Isle of Struay. The drawings that the pupils make are of a basic nature and at times are unrealistic. Some pupils have difficulties labelling their designs. Pupils nevertheless are being provided with good opportunities to explore and examine the different types of materials that they could use for their work and the best way to join the different materials together. The finished products may not be of a high standard but pupils are beginning to understand that different materials are better suited for different purposes and the finished products are increasingly showing signs of originality and creativity rather than them all being very similar. Pupils are being directly taught skills such as cutting and joining but their lack of accuracy and care sometimes prevents their work from being better. Teaching is now placing a greater emphasis on the importance of evaluation with pupils for example asked what would they change on their vehicles the next time to make it more suitable for work on the Isle of Struay. Pupils are beginning to acquire the necessary skills and understanding at a faster rate in Year 1 and Year 2 than has been the case in the past and if these present skills continue to be built on and developed in Year 3 to Year 6 then standards look set to improve by the time that pupils

leave school. However, the present standards at Year 6 are below the expected level because there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills.

120. Through their time in Key Stage 2 pupils are provided with opportunities to continue with food technology and to design and make picture frames, money containers, decorative lights, toys, musical instruments, shelters, fairground rides, and controllable vehicles. As part of a three dimensional week, the pupils have made some Tiffany lamps some of which are of a good standard, although they needed a lot of guidance and support when completing them. Year 3 and Year 4 pupils show little awareness of how different combinations of ingredients can affect the end product and little awareness of food hygiene. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in school are presented with opportunities to make musical instruments but are less secure in how they will join different materials together. Pupils in Year 4 know that decorative lights have to be designed with the particular needs of the user in mind but need a lot of adult guidance in putting their drawings and designs together. Pupils by the end of Year 6 are not confident in making choices and decisions, again looking to adult help for support. Over time, too much emphasis has been given to the making element of the subject and as a result pupils do not readily see the importance of the designing and evaluation aspects in helping to improve their work. However there is evidence, particularly in Year 4 and Year 5, of these elements taking on greater significance and impacting positively on pupils' learning.
121. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and particularly enjoy the making element of the subject. Behaviour in lessons is often of a good standard, although occasionally the behaviour of a small number of pupils is inappropriate but is dealt with effectively by the teacher without causing too much disruption to the rest of the class. Although pupils clearly enjoy the subject they are reluctant to take responsibility and initiative for their own learning. They sometimes lack confidence, despite the promptings of staff, to investigate, to explore or try things out. This on occasions restricts their level of originality and creativity.
122. The quality of teaching is presently satisfactory with some good features and is showing signs of improving further. The emphasis that teaching is now placing on designing and evaluating is helping to improve pupils' learning. In lessons observed in making musical instruments at Year 5 and decorative lamps at Year 4, teachers stressed the need for pupils to pay particular attention and consideration to the type of materials that were to be used and in selecting the materials that would be best suited for the purpose and that the designs should be realistic and bear a good resemblance to the finished product. The teaching in Year 4 also made good links with science through the need to create effective circuits in order for the lights to work well. Teaching in Year 2 is proving equally effective in getting pupils to accurately label their designs and in discussing with pupils at the end of tasks what they would consider improving next time. The weaker elements are that there are still instances where designs are too basic and teaching does not pick up on this. Opportunities are also missed for the subject to be used as a way of enhancing pupils' literacy skills, for example, by writing detailed instructions for a classmate to follow or writing a detailed evaluation at the end of a project. An ongoing area for development in the school is for computers to be more actively used to enhance pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum, such as



design and technology. At present there is not enough good quality computer software to add to the quality of pupils' learning experiences.

123. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a good grasp of the areas for development and improvement in the subject. He monitors teachers' planning and has carried out some limited scrutinies of pupils' work. The subject has not been an identified priority on the school improvement plan over the last 4 years but is to be so within the next 12 months. When this is the case the co-ordinator is to be provided with appropriate release time from his teaching duties in order to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Resources and assessment procedures are satisfactory. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

124. Pupils' attainment in geography is below national expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. However, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. There is an appropriate policy in place and national guidance for the subject has been adopted and overall teaching and learning is satisfactory in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with that of their classmates. More regular time is allocated to the subject and weekly geography lessons are timetabled in all classes. These recent improvements have yet to be reflected in the raising of standards.
125. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in acquiring geographical knowledge and skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils begin to demonstrate an awareness of countries other than their own and to use maps and atlases to locate where they are. For example they find out that Australia is much larger than Great Britain and is a long way away. Linked to work in history on seaside holidays pupils are able to identify the features of a seaside environment. Through their study of stories of Katie Morag in literacy, pupils begin to appreciate and understand how the lifestyles of people who live their might differ from their own such as when making a journey across the imaginary Isle of Struay to one across Tipton. However, many pupils require a high level of support with tasks and do not have the necessary language and literacy skills to talk about their work or record it at a level appropriate for their age.
126. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their geographical knowledge and skills. In a good lesson observed in Year 4, pupils worked well together in groups to discuss what they liked and disliked about their local environment. In Year 6, pupils know how people can damage and improve their environment and how changes can affect the lives of the inhabitants. For example, pupils consider reasons and views for closing the High Street to traffic. However, although they understand the need to employ primary and secondary sources of evidence when undertaking investigations, many pupils have a limited ability to express their findings using suitable vocabulary.
127. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in both key stages, and good examples of teaching were seen during the inspection. Teachers manage and organise

the pupils well, and provide good opportunities for them to work in pairs and small groups on joint tasks, which support their social development. Pupils respond well to this and have positive attitudes to work and generally behave well. Teachers appropriately encourage pupils to ask and answer questions about geographical matters but many pupils find this difficult as they have limited speech and language skills. Learning support staff provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. This has a positive impact on their learning. Work is marked regularly, but the quality of marking is variable and does not always show pupils how they can improve their work. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for promoting pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in geography. Overall, information and communication technology is underused to support pupils' work in this subject.

128. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management for the subject. She effectively monitors colleagues' planning, but as yet has had only very limited opportunity to carry out classroom observations in order to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has identified the need for an increased number of CD-ROM's to support work in geography, but overall resources are satisfactory. Satisfactory procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the subject, but this has not yet been used to guide future planning. The subject is effective in promoting pupils' moral development as they learn how people can cause damage and improvement to their environment, and field studies out of school such as to the seaside and the Frank Chapman Centre promote pupils' social development.

## **HISTORY**

129. Pupils' attainment in history is below national expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. However, recently there has been satisfactory improvement in the subject, which has yet to be reflected in pupils' overall attainment. Teaching is now satisfactory in both key stages, which results in satisfactory learning in relation to pupils' weak general knowledge on entry to school. There is an appropriate policy in place for the subject. National guidance has been adopted to assist in whole school planning and weekly history lessons are timetabled in all classes. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
130. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the past. In Year 1, pupils compare the characteristics of old and new toys. Although they show a great deal of interest, many pupils find it difficult to describe the differences between the old and new toys because of their limited speaking and language skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have some understanding of chronology and how things change overtime such as seaside holidays. They have a factual knowledge of some major events and people they have studied such as Guy Fawkes. However, many pupils are working at a level below that expected for pupils of their age and require a lot of support with their learning.
131. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding of the past through their studies. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' experience of the history of other eras and cultures such as

Ancient Egyptians, Romans, Victorians and World War II is satisfactory. However many pupils find it difficult to discuss evidence about life in the past, at a level appropriate for their age, and have a scant understanding of historical vocabulary and terms such as artefacts and census. Many pupils have difficulty in working independently and finding things out for themselves and rely heavily on the support of adults.

132. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, and during the inspection some good lessons were observed. Teachers are enthusiastic in their presentation of lessons, which stimulates pupils' curiosity and eagerness to learn. For example, in Year 3, related to looking at the work of archaeologists, the teacher generated a high level of interest at the start of the lesson by bringing in a 'lost bag' containing a variety of objects for pupils to discuss who they might belong to. Work in history is used appropriately to develop pupils' literacy skills. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were encouraged to develop their note taking skills by making notes on the importance of the Nile to the Ancient Egyptians. However, only about half the class were able to develop their notes into a sequence of logical sentences. The remainder of the class required a high level of support in order to achieve the task. Throughout the school, teachers place appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary in order for them to extend their thinking and ability to discuss aspects of history. However, many pupils' ability to do this is still below expectations for their age. Teachers usually manage and organise their classes well and pupils respond well to this, although occasionally very minor behavioural issues are allowed to disrupt the learning of the well-behaved majority. Teachers ensure that suitable links are made with other subjects especially geography. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support work in history. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 5 used information from the 1881 census to locate information and answer questions. Learning support staff provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils, which helps these pupils to learn at a rate in line with their peers. The marking of pupils' recorded work is satisfactory overall. The best marking shows pupils ways in which their work can be improved but this is not undertaken consistently in all classes.
133. The leadership and management of the subject by the co-ordinator are good. She regularly monitors colleagues' planning to ensure continuity but has only the occasional opportunity to carry out classroom observations in order to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Although resources are satisfactory overall, the co-ordinator has identified the need for more historical objects to enhance learning. Satisfactory procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the subject, but these have not yet been used to guide future planning. The subject is effective in promoting pupils' cultural development as they learn about their own past and that of people from other cultures and linked with work in geography pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 visit the seaside, which supports their social development.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

134. By the end of both key stages, standards are below national expectations, although they are rapidly improving. This is as a result of the much improved provision for the subject that has taken place since the previous inspection. A new computer suite has been added and teachers' knowledge and confidence in how to use computers to support their learning have been raised. This recent work is impacting well on the progress that all pupils make which is satisfactory. However, progress is hampered because the pupils have too little access to computers to support their learning in daily lessons.
135. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have poorly developed keyboard skills, although they have a satisfactory understanding of the functions of different keys on the keyboard. They understand what 'logging on and off' to a computer means and are sufficiently confident to load programs and retrieve work that they have previously saved. Pupils can use a simple art package to reasonable effect, but have limited understanding of how to use a simple word-processing package to aid their learning. Their weak keyboard skills result in them producing a limited amount of work and only the few higher attaining pupils understand what a font means and how this can be changed in size and appearance in order to improve the quality of their work. Pupils' understanding of how to use electronic encyclopaedias to support them in their work is unsatisfactory. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to enter instructions into a programmable device but their general understanding of how information and communication technology impacts on their daily lives is weak.
136. By the end of Year 6, pupils' keyboard skills are still quite weak and they have little understanding of the part that information and communication technology plays in their daily lives. Few, for example, can give a clear explanation of the Internet and how it can be used to explore and retrieve information. Their understanding of control technology is improving but below the standard expected of eleven-year-olds. Attainment in word-processing is better and most pupils can change the size and appearance of their text, add and manipulate a graphic and can add a bullet point to their writing to give it a more pleasing appearance. Pupils can use a spreadsheet but have a weak understanding of terminology such as 'formulae' or spreadsheets. However, pupils use a graphic presentation program quite ably in order to make a presentation to a wider audience. As they move through Year 3 to Year 6, pupils do not make sufficient gains in their understanding of the terminology often associated with using a computer such as 'icons' or folders.
137. The quality of teaching and learning at both key stages is satisfactory and when pupils are taught in the computer suite, teaching is good. When in the suite, teachers plan interesting lessons and activities are well chosen to promote pupils' learning in other subjects. In one good lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were given the task to explore a database that had statistical information about the 1881 census. Pupils worked well and the teacher effectively ensured that pupils learned the terminology usually associated with using such software such as 'fields' and 'records' The pupils worked well and successfully gained an appreciation of the size of families, life-styles and occupations of people in the Victorian era. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and this is much improved since the previous inspection. The main shortcoming in teaching lies in the insufficient use made by teachers in ensuring that computers are regularly and

consistently incorporated in to their day to day teaching. As a result, pupils get too few opportunities to consolidate and extend what they learn using the computer suite.

138. There is good leadership and management of the subject. The co-ordinator provides clear leadership and has a good understanding of what still needs to be achieved in order to raise standards. Assessment procedures have recently been developed and these are consistently used across the school to build up a profile of what pupils can do and where else they need to improve. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social development, particularly when they are using the computers in the computer suite as they work in pairs or in groups of three to solve particular problems. The quality and range of resources are good and much improved since the previous inspection.

## MUSIC

139. Standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. No difference was noted in the performance of boys and girls. Overall standards have been maintained since the time of the school's previous inspection.
140. By the end of Year 2, pupils readily sing a variety of songs and hymns, with satisfactory control over rhythm and pitch. They put much expression into their singing, they add suitable actions where appropriate and they perform happily together. Pupils sing songs from memory, and they try hard to sing the words clearly. Pupils explore sounds, using an appropriate range of untuned percussion instruments and chime bars, and they confidently compose a short musical sequence, which they rehearse and then play to other members of their class. Pupils in Year 2 recognise a variety of musical instruments, and many are able to explain how they are played as well as describing the sounds they make. By the end of Year 6, pupils sing a range of songs, sometimes in two parts, showing satisfactory control over both breathing and wording. When singing in two parts, pupils are generally confident in maintaining their own parts, and they successfully finish together. Some pupils are confident enough to sing a solo section, when producing the completed work. Pupils readily perform their work from memory. Pupils in Year 6 produce their own musical compositions, and they successfully vary both the texture and dynamics of their work. They perform for each other and then most are able to suggest ways in which their performance might be improved. Pupils readily listen to a range of recorded music. Most have developed a sound musical vocabulary, and although a number find it difficult, the majority are confident in using this to discuss the quality of the work.
141. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, with very good examples also being seen during the inspection. Lessons are well planned and brisk in pace, with a most suitable range of resources being provided for pupils to use. Pupils are kept busy, and this clearly benefits the learning they make. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, with clear instruction and demonstration being provided. This effective involvement of teachers enables pupils to make good gains in their musical knowledge, understanding and skills. As well as joining in themselves, teachers also make effective use of pupils to demonstrate different aspects of work to other members of the class, and this

encourages all pupils to maintain their interest. Pupils join in the activities with enthusiasm and commitment, showing appropriate creative effort where required. Overall, their attitudes are good. They enjoy their music, singing well, playing instruments confidently and working happily with other pupils. They are keen to listen to music, and many are able to offer opinions about what they hear. Pupils are particularly appreciative of the work of other pupils, and they readily applaud their performances. Where teaching is very good, the teachers' subject knowledge is especially secure, they provide a wide variety of stimulating learning experiences, expectations are high and pupils make very good progress during the lesson.

142. The school has an appropriate scheme of work, based on government guidelines, and through careful planning all areas of work are successfully covered. The co-ordinator, who visits the school on a part-time basis, also draws up an overall school plan to ensure this coverage. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator, who is well qualified, enthusiastic and a very good practitioner, sees plans of the work to be covered by her colleagues, and also takes a number of the music sessions herself, to see for herself the standards being achieved. Her expertise has contributed significantly towards the progress that pupils are making. Satisfactory procedures are in place for assessing the work of pupils, and these are helpful in identifying particular strengths and weaknesses in the performance of individual pupils. The school is beginning to make use of information and communication technology to enhance provision in the subject. The hearing of music from different countries helps to extend pupils' cultural development, and the school now has a good array of appropriate musical instruments from other cultures. The school makes good provision for extra-curricular musical activities for pupils.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

143. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is at an expected level. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on attainment at the end of Year 6 as no physical education lessons were timetabled for older pupils in school during the week of inspection. Evidence indicates that a greater emphasis is currently placed on games' skills for older pupils in school at this time of year with less of an emphasis on dance and gymnastics. However, scrutiny of planning shows that over the course of the year all elements of the subject are covered in sufficient depth. Pupils are provided with opportunities to take part in gymnastics, dance and games with the pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 also taking part in athletics and swimming although not all pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time that they leave school and this suggests that standards in swimming are below average by the end of Year 6. Improvement since the time of the last inspection appears to be satisfactory.
144. Attainment by the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations. Pupils show a good awareness of space and the needs of others when they are taking part in physical education activities. Pupils know and recognise the importance of warming up and cooling down activities and that physical exercise is an important feature of a healthy lifestyle. The pupils understand the importance of following instructions and of working as a team to help the level of performance. Most pupils show an appropriate degree of

accuracy in their throwing and appropriate co-ordination when catching a ball or a beanbag. The higher attaining pupils hit quite a small target with confidence and ease but not all pupils have developed a good degree of consistency in their throwing and catching. The older pupils in school take part in inter-school competitions and do so with a degree of success, again suggesting that standards are at an appropriate level. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities which include football, netball and keep fit. These clubs are popular and provision helps to ensure that pupils' skills in these sports and activities are developed in an appropriate manner. Additional coaching has been provided in football by a local professional football club and a professional tennis coach has provided tuition for some of the Key Stage 2 pupils at a local sports centre. The older pupils in school have also taken part in an educational visit where problem solving and outdoor pursuits have been taught.

145. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject. They are keen to take part in activities and show a good awareness of the need to strike the balance between being competitive and the concept of fair play. Pupils put a lot of effort into their work in lessons, behave well and listen carefully to the instructions of the teacher. This means that lessons often have a good learning environment where pupils are always ready to work with a partner or in a smaller group and to take on board constructive criticisms that will help to improve their level of performance. Discussions with some of the older pupils in school show that at times boys do not always value the sporting abilities of the girls.
146. The quality of teaching In Year 1 to Year 2 is satisfactory with good features. Teaching ensures that appropriate attention is given to warm up and cool down activities. Pupils are directly taught the skills of throwing and catching, for example, and this enables pupils to have a good grasp of the techniques that they are to use to be most successful. Teachers often stop lessons at pertinent points to make additional teaching points and this often leads to further improvements in pupils' performance. Teachers often use examples of good performance by pupils to show to the rest of the class but on occasions opportunities are missed for pupils to evaluate their own work and to identify ways of improving it. Teachers throughout the school use national guidance materials to support teaching and learning with planning in Year 3 to Year 6 of an appropriate standard and indicating that teaching is of a satisfactory standard. Discussion with pupils suggests that at times boys and girls take part in different activities in their lessons with the boys often taking part in ball games whilst the girls do other activities which may not require a similar level of physical skill.
147. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has only been in post for a short time but has identified the need for a greater emphasis to be placed on dance. Resources to support this initiative have already been purchased and plans are already in hand for the pupils to work with a group of Bhandra dancers. The co-ordinator monitors colleagues' planning and provides informal guidance and support when required. The co-ordinator is to be provided with two days in the near future to carry out lesson observations, with the headteacher, to assess and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Assessment procedures and resources for the subject are satisfactory and the subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

148. Standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected in the local Agreed Syllabus. However, based on their prior attainment, pupils' progress is satisfactory. This also applies to pupils with special educational needs. Boys and girls perform equally well. During the inspection no lessons were seen in Year 3 to Year 6. Judgements are made, therefore, based on discussions with pupils and a study of their previous work. Standards are similar to those achieved at the time of the previous inspection.
149. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a limited knowledge of three major world faiths, the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faiths. They are able to relate some of the stories of Jesus, and they are aware of some of the important figures in Judaism, such as Moses. Pupils understand that religions have various ceremonies, symbols and special occasions, and they can, for instance, explain why Christmas is important to Christians. They are less confident in discussing these features in other religions. For example, few pupils are able to identify the prayer mat and hajj as important features of the Muslim faith. Pupils in Year 2 are more confident in describing features of the Torah, such as the need for it to be hand-written. Again, however, few are able to relate this book to Judaism. Pupils understand the need to belong to a variety of groups and they recognise in particular the importance of their own family and friends. Pupils can explain the need for caring, both for people and the environment. By the end of Year 6, pupils are aware of a number of world religions, such as the Christian, Hindu, Islamic and Sikh faiths. Whilst some pupils are confident in identifying features of each religion, a significant number of pupils are often confused when explaining these features. For example, most readily name important figures in these religions, such as Mohammed and Guru Nanak, or places of worship, for example, the Mandir and the Mosque, but many have difficulty identifying the appropriate religion. Pupils are well aware of similarities and differences between religions, such as in clothing, food and ceremonial. Most pupils confidently identify some of the requirements for entering religious buildings, such as removing shoes or covering one's head. However, again, pupils cannot always say which traditions are relevant to which faith. Pupils successfully identify the importance of prayer in all religions. They are aware of the need for love and care, in their dealings with others, and they recognise the importance of sharing. Pupils also understand the need to be tolerant of other people's dress, lifestyle and ritual.
150. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Overall, this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Lessons are generally well planned, and thought-provoking ideas are often presented to pupils. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, and through relevant instruction and a careful use of pictures and artefacts, pupils are able to make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding. However, pupils have limited background knowledge about religious education, and on occasions too much fresh information is provided for them in the same lesson. As a result pupils then find it difficult to absorb all these new facts, especially when trying to allocate them to the different faiths. Teachers provide a variety of tasks for pupils, and they make good use of appropriate resources, to involve pupils and to try to make them think for themselves. Most pupils find the subject interesting and, whilst many find it difficult, a number provide thoughtful answers and observations. Just occasionally, a very small minority of pupils show less interest in the work. Teachers are careful to introduce pupils to all the correct terminology used in different faiths, but few pupils show



confidence in using the appropriate terms, although most try hard. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are usually good, and they relate well to both their teachers and to each other. Pupils usually take great care with the presentation of their work, and teachers regularly provide thoughtful comments of encouragement and advice when marking.

151. The school closely follows the locally agreed syllabus, with some further additions being made from the government's guidelines. All areas of work are adequately covered. The school is attempting to develop pupils' understanding of different faiths, and visiting speakers and trips to religious buildings play a significant part in this provision. The work undertaken adequately supports all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. On occasions extended writing activities are provided for pupils, and religious education gives suitable support to the school's initiative in literacy. The school currently makes limited use of information and communication technology, to enhance pupils' learning in the subject. Assessment procedures are improved, and are satisfactory, with suitable information now being available to judge pupils' current understanding. The co-ordinator has only recently joined the school, but she is well-informed and hard-working. She has opportunities to study samples of work, and she is well aware of the main shortcoming in pupils' knowledge and understanding, which is still, as it was at the time of the last inspection, a secure knowledge of other religions. Opportunities for her to observe teachers and pupils at work in other classes are presently being planned.