

INSPECTION REPORT

DEVONSHIRE INFANT SCHOOL

Smethwick

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103943

Headteacher: Mrs Pamela Rosamond

Reporting inspector: Hazel Callaghan
22254

Dates of inspection: January 27th – 30th 2003.

Inspection number: 246328

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Auckland Road Smethwick
Postcode:	B67 7AT
Telephone number:	0121 5581652
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M J Sokhal
Date of previous inspection:	March 2 nd -5 th 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22254	Hazel Callaghan	Registered inspector	Science Geography Physical education	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
10329	Brian Sampson	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21547	Pearl White	Team inspector	English Art and design History English as an additional language Educational Inclusion, including race equality	Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
27899	Georgie Beasley	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Music Religious education	How good are the curricular other opportunities offered to pupils?
20326	Peter Clark	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Devonshire Infants is a large school of its type with a total of 304 boys and girls on roll. There are 80 children in the nursery who attend for either a morning or an afternoon session. Nursery and reception children are taught in four classes that make up the Early Years Unit. The school population reflects the cultural mix of the local community and pupils come from a wide range of ethnic groups. Almost two-thirds have English as an additional language; 125 pupils being in the early stages of learning English, which is a very high proportion compared to that found nationally. The most frequently spoken home languages are Panjabi, Urdu and Bengali. Ten pupils are refugees and come originally from six different home countries. There is a higher proportion of pupils who have entered the school at times other than in the nursery or reception. A local school closed recently and a large number of pupils were admitted to Devonshire Infants. This has increased the number of pupils whose families were originally from Pakistan. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals has risen this year and is much higher than is found nationally. Seventy-seven pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is an above average proportion. Three pupils are receiving support as part of School Action Plus and four have statements of special educational needs. The most common needs are emotional and behavioural difficulties. Two pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The area around the school has been identified as one of the most socially deprived areas in England. Overall, standards on entry to the school are well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that enables pupils of all ethnic groups to achieve well. Good leadership by the headteacher has resulted in the creation of a happy and harmonious school community where all cultures, religions and abilities are valued and respected. Teaching is good overall and staff are constantly seeking ways to improve. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well and most make good progress in their learning in reading and mathematics, religious education (RE) and information and communication technology (ICT). Standards in ICT and RE are above those expected.
- Pastoral care, throughout the school, is very good. Pupils feel secure, respected and well cared for.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good, which promotes good relationships and very good levels of respect and tolerance between pupils of different ethnic groups.
- The quality of teaching is good. It stimulates pupils' good attitudes to work and their desire to do well.
- The leadership and management provided by the headteacher is good.
- Links with parents are good and they are very supportive of the school.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, in writing and in science.
- Pupils' regular attendance to school needs to improve.
- More rigorous use of assessment that focuses on pupils' individual progress in order to raise standards further.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in March 1998. The school population has changed in the last two years and a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs have been admitted to the school. This has had an impact on lowering standards since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching has improved and pupils' achievement is now good. The school has satisfactorily addressed the concerns in the previous report. The roles and responsibilities of the senior management team are more clearly defined and they have a satisfactory input into strategic planning. Procedures for assessment have developed but do not as yet provide sufficient information by which staff can evaluate the school's effectiveness. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is much improved.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
Reading	C	D	D	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	D	E	E	C	
Mathematics	E	E	D	B	

Overall standards on entry to the school are well below those found nationally. There are very few children with above average standards. There is, however, a high proportion of children with well below average standards, particularly in their early language and literacy skills, and in their early mathematical development. Almost two-thirds of the children entering the nursery are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. However, due to the consistent, good quality teaching that children receive, by the end of Year 2 most pupils, including the higher attainers, have achieved well in reading and mathematics. Good attention and support is given to pupils of all ethnic groups and those having English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. This results in their good achievement. In the most recent National Curriculum tests, although standards in Year 2 for reading and mathematics were below the national average, they were above average when compared with schools that have a similar proportion of pupils eligible for school meals. Standards in writing, although improving, are still well below the national average, and broadly average in comparison with similar schools. In 2002, teachers assessed pupils' standards in science as well below the national average, however it was above average when compared with similar schools. Standards in English and mathematics have risen over the past three years. Improvement is at a similar rate to that found nationally, but from a much lower base. During the inspection, standards in English and mathematics were found to be similar to those attained in the National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments. Teachers promote pupils' literacy skills satisfactorily in other subjects, but pupils' speaking and listening skills are not sufficiently a focus of development and standards remain well below the national average. Pupils' numeracy skills are satisfactorily used and further developed in other subjects. Standards at the end of Year 2 in ICT and in RE are above those expected and show pupils' good progress in learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and show good attitudes to their work. They concentrate well and are often eager to show what they know.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils are polite and respectful to adults and visitors. They work effectively on their own and in groups. At playtimes pupils show good levels of care for each other.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils are considerate of each other and show respect for the feelings and ideas of others. There are high levels of racial harmony and tolerance in the school.
Attendance	Below the national average. Too many pupils take extended holidays during term time and this often slows their good progress in learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	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.

Overall teaching is good through the school and this ensures pupils achieve well especially in their personal and social development, in the acquisition of English, in reading, mathematics ICT and RE. Particular strengths of the teaching are the good planning that ensures lessons have a clear purpose and pupils' learning is developed steadily through an effective structure of activities. Teachers manage pupils well. They have high expectations for pupils' good behaviour and participation. Consequently pupils concentrate well and want to be successful at their tasks. Teaching and learning in the Early Year's Unit are good. Staff work well together as a team and ensure that the day-to-day organisation of the unit runs smoothly. They know the children well and this ensures that they all receive the support they need to make progress. This is particularly beneficial to the children who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. The teaching of English is good throughout the school. Opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills, however, are not sufficiently planned and developed to ensure that pupils' skills are further improved. The teaching of mathematics is good through the school and pupils' numeracy skills are developing well. The teaching of ICT and RE are also good which results in pupils' effective acquisition of knowledge and skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and relevant to the pupils' learning needs and this promotes their good achievement. The provision for ICT and RE is well planned and effectively taught. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The curriculum is well planned and enriched through strong links with the local community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported. Learning support staff are effective in their roles, assisting pupils sensitively, ensuring that they make good progress towards their learning targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good in the Early Years Unit. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have insufficient targeted support although all staff give guidance and encouragement. The inclusive ethos of the school ensures that all pupils are encouraged to do their best. They make similar good progress to their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is much improved. Staff successfully use pupils' different cultures and religious festivals to promote the spiritual, social and cultural development of all pupils. Pupils' personal and moral development are also well promoted through thoughtful teaching.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The pastoral care for pupils is very good. Staff are sensitive to the beliefs and cultural traditions of all pupils. The school does not use assessment sufficiently rigorously to monitor pupils' individual attainment and progress, and so identify how to further raise standards.

Parents are very supportive of the school and teachers keep them well informed about the life of the school and their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are good. She is satisfactorily supported by the senior management team, but their management responsibilities are not sufficiently focused on developing whole-school strategic planning and on taking a long-term senior management role.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school benefits from a very supportive governing body. They carry out their statutory requirements appropriately through a suitable range of committees and have developed a satisfactory knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. The staff work well together as an effective team. They are committed to further improvement and becoming more evaluative of their work. The school uses a variety of strategies for monitoring its effectiveness, but some procedures are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure continuing improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Financial management of the school is good. All grants are spent effectively with money for the provision of pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs being well targeted. The principles of best value are being partially fulfilled but monitoring the improvement in the quality of pupils' education is not sufficiently well defined.

The school is fortunate to have very good accommodation which is generally well utilised. There is a good number of well-qualified teachers and learning support staff that promote pupils' learning well. Resources are adequate and used effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • Teaching is good and children make good progress • Behaviour in the school is good • Staff are very approachable and parents feel comfortable approaching the school with suggestions and concerns • Parents feel they are kept well informed • Parents feel the school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents would like to see more extra-curricular activities • A few parents feel that the school does not work sufficiently closely with them

The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the work of the school and have no real concerns. They are generally very pleased with the education provided. Inspectors fully endorse parents' positive comments. Staff provide a good range of additional activities in the lunch hour, which are well attended. There is also a good range of visits provided that enhances pupils' learning. After-school clubs are usually limited to the summer months and designed for the pupils in Year 2. The inspection team feels this is good provision for an infant school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Although standards in reading, writing and mathematics are not yet in line with national averages, pupils make good achievement from a very low base. In comparison with schools that have a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards are average in writing and science, and above average in reading and mathematics. With almost two-thirds of the pupils having English as an additional language this is at least good progress.
2. The great majority of children start school with below average levels of attainment in reading and mathematics. Few children have higher than average ability in these aspects. Due to the proportion of children who start at this below average level, overall attainment on entry is well below average. The children settle quickly to the well-structured routines provided in the Early Years Unit and make good early gains in their personal, social and emotional development attaining the expected levels (the early learning goals) by the time they enter Year 1. This helps them to develop a positive attitude to school and gets them ready to learn. They also make good progress in reading, mathematics and physical development, although, by the end of the reception year, many have still not attained the early learning goals in these areas of learning. Children make satisfactory progress in their speaking and writing skills, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development.
3. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, pupils in Year 2 attained standards that were below the national average in reading and mathematics, and well below average standards in writing and science. In reading and mathematics a similar proportion of pupils attained the higher standard of Level 3 as was found nationally. The factor that reduced the school's overall score was the high proportion of pupils who were not yet attaining the expected standard of Level 2. Over the last five years, standards have been generally improving, but it has been at the same rate as that found nationally and so standards overall have remained almost static. These standards do not reflect that the school community has changed and a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs is now admitted. This is the reason that standards are not as high as was reported at the previous inspection. At that time children's attainment on entry to the school was below average rather than well below, as it is now. Pupils' achievement is now good and an improvement on that judged at the previous inspection.
4. In the end-of-year tests, boys achieve lower standards than girls in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has identified this weakness and have started to develop strategies to promote their greater achievement. Although girls attained higher standards than the boys in the tests, they did not compare as well in reading with the standards attained by girls nationally, whereas boys' attainment was similar to the national standards attained by boys in reading. The headteacher and senior management team had not identified this underachievement of girls as compared with girls nationally and consequently no reasons for this weakness had been considered. During the inspection, inspectors could find no significant variation between the standards achieved by boys and girls, nor in their enthusiasm for school.
5. Over 60 per cent of children have English as an additional language when they enter the school and all staff support them well, so they make similar progress to their peers. Analysis of the test results shows that boys and girls do well. Some pupils from Indian backgrounds attain Level 3 in the end-of-year tests, doing as well as some pupils whose first language is English. In mathematics over half the Bangladeshi pupils and those of Black Caribbean heritage achieve a Level 3. During the inspection there was generally no significant difference in the attainment of pupils from these different ethnic groups. The inclusive ethos of the school ensures that all pupils are encouraged to do their best. The one or two pupils who come to school as refugees from their own country have often moved a great deal, which has disrupted their learning. The majority of parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language are eager for their children to do well and are supportive of the school and this results in their children making good progress.

6. During the inspection, standards were similar to those attained in the National Curriculum tests. In English, pupils' standards in reading are below average. Their speaking and listening skills and their writing skills are well below average. Pupils' weakness in expressive language has an impact on their ability to construct sentences and express their ideas in writing. Standards in mathematics are below average. Pupils' attainment in mathematics has improved over the last two years but the focus has been predominantly on developing pupils' numeracy skills and less has been achieved in the other aspects of mathematics. Standards in science are well below average. The activities provided in Year 2 do not challenge those pupils who are capable of higher standards. Pupils' investigative skills are beginning to be developed but not at sufficient a rate for pupils to achieve well and so attain Level 3.
7. Pupils attain standards that are above those expected in both ICT and RE. Pupils' computer skills are well developed and are used successfully to support pupils' learning in English and mathematics. In RE, teachers help pupils to understand how people from different faiths praise God, and use symbols to show to which religion they belong. The curriculum reflects the religious groups in school and this means that pupils share their experiences. This is helping them to develop a very good knowledge and respect for the religious beliefs of others. Standards in art and design, design and technology, history, music and physical education are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the standards attained in geography.
8. The school has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Taking into account their low attainment on entry, the achievements of these pupils are good. They make good progress towards their literacy targets, set within individual education plans. These plans are generally written in a style that is easy to follow; however, some targets lack precision, making the monitoring of progress difficult.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes towards learning are good, which maintains the situation found when the school was first inspected. Pupils are interested in their lessons and try hard to do well. Pupils ask and answer questions readily and they respond well to the good teaching that is provided for them.
10. Children under the age of five make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. There are clear expectations that the children will do things for themselves when completing the planned tasks or caring for their personal needs. These skills are developing well as a result. The children co-operate very well together when working in small groups and when outside at play. They share the space and toys available sensibly, taking turns to have a go with the bikes and balancing equipment. There is too little opportunity for children to develop independence and to use their initiative.
11. There were many examples during the inspection where pupils' positive attitudes contributed to their progress. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils relished the challenge to read various parts of a story. All pupils were fully involved and listening carefully; enjoying their reading as well as the performance. Similarly, pupils in a Year 1 numeracy lesson were keen to settle down to work and enjoyed using 'number fans'. They displayed initiative in solving practical problems and they listened and concentrated well throughout the activity. Pupils' enthusiasm is also reflected in their active participation in the extra music and computer clubs held at lunchtime. Pupils of all ethnic groups and those having English as an additional language mix well at work and play. They are keen to participate fully in activities and school events. The positive ethos of inclusiveness in the school enables all pupils to become confident and fully integrated. Parents say their children enjoy school.
12. Pupils with special educational needs have similar attitudes and behaviour to their peers. They listen well in lessons and try to answer questions that have been set to meet their needs. In support groups in literacy taken by the specialist teacher, for example, pupils behave very well and pay full attention. Pupils show growing self-esteem and confidence when their contributions

to lessons are sought and valued. They are delighted when teachers and friends celebrate their successes.

13. Pupils' behaviour is good, as it was at the last inspection. The school is an orderly and pleasant community where pupils respond well to the staff's high expectations for their behaviour. There have been no exclusions since the school was inspected previously. Parents are pleased with the behaviour of their children at school. Each class has formulated its own rules to complement the school's rules and pupils look forward to having their successes and good behaviour celebrated at the weekly 'Praise Assembly'. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, boys and girls, play well together, move around the school and grounds sensibly and treat equipment and displays with care. There is no evidence of bullying, but good evidence of sensitive and supportive behaviour, particularly in the playground when pupils are encouraged to take care of each other. Race relations are very good.
14. The quality of personal development and relationships are now even better than they were at the previous inspection. The good relationships that exist in this school are based on mutual respect between pupils, and between pupils and adults. Pupils share equipment very well during lessons and speak politely to adults and each other. They thrive in the caring environment that all adults work hard to create. The committed teamwork evident among all members of the staff means that they set good examples for the pupils to follow. Pupils throughout the school are sensitive and positive about the special needs of some of their classmates.
15. Pupils are developing a sense of responsibility well. In classrooms, pupils take turns distributing equipment and in helping to tidy up. In each class pupils respond well to the extra jobs that are assigned to them, such as taking class registers to the office. Year 2 pupils welcome the added responsibility of setting up play equipment for the younger pupils and getting the hall ready for assembly.
16. Although pupils enjoy school, their attendance is unsatisfactory as it was at the previous inspection. This is a weakness in the school and severely restricts the learning of certain pupils. Despite the school's efforts to improve it, figures for the latest reporting year are still well below the national average for this type of school. There is a high percentage of pupils who take holidays during term time to visit their family's traditional home country. There is also a higher than average number of pupils absent because of sickness. This is a characteristic of socially deprived areas. However, most pupils who do attend regularly come to school on time and the majority of lessons commence promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Overall, teaching is good through the school and this ensures pupils achieve well especially in their personal and social development, in reading, mathematics, ICT and RE.
18. Teaching and learning in the Early Year's Unit is good. Teachers and the early learning practitioners work well together as a team and ensure that the day-to-day organisation of the unit runs smoothly. Staff know the children well and this ensures that they all receive the support they need to make good progress. This support is particularly beneficial to the children with special educational needs, whose particular needs are monitored closely by all staff. All adults working in the Unit have a good understanding of the way young children learn and this helps to build good relationships as soon as they start in the nursery. Activities are practical and interesting, and based on the children's personal experiences as far as possible. The adults' positive approach and gentle encouragement mean that the children soon grow in confidence and want to have a go at new things. However, lessons are sometimes too structured. Although planned for, the children are not given enough opportunity to play or to choose what they want to do for themselves. Activities with sand and water play are usually only offered at the end of sessions, so there is often no time left for the children to enjoy them. There are missed opportunities to develop the children's speaking skills, because specific activities are not identified in planning. Resources

are used effectively to help children understand the English language. This is especially helpful and supportive for children who are at the early stages of learning English.

19. Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 1 and 2. Particular strengths of the teaching are the good planning that ensures lessons have a clear purpose and pupils' learning is developed steadily through an effective structure of activities. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils and they manage them well. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' good behaviour and participation. Consequently, pupils concentrate well and want to be successful at their tasks. Teachers usually identify the new vocabulary to be introduced in the lesson and pupils have good opportunities to see, hear and discuss the new words. This is very supportive of all ability groups and of particular help to pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs.
20. Teaching in English is good and pupils achieve well in lessons, as well as over time, especially in reading. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and appropriate time is now set aside to concentrate on developing pupils' writing skills. In the best lessons, a lively pace is set which often excites pupils and elicits very good behaviour and application to work. The way in which teachers question pupils ensures that boys and girls, those of differing ability and those with different ethnic backgrounds are challenged to think, developing their ideas and understanding. The school has recognised the need to promote pupils' speaking skills and most teachers encourage pupils to discuss their ideas with a partner. There are also many opportunities for pupils to work in mixed ability groups and this provides good role models for those pupils with English as an additional language or having special educational needs. These strategies are positive, but there are too few activities and other strategies planned to further develop pupils' speaking skills across the curriculum and consequently this aspect of pupils' learning is satisfactory. Pupils' weakness in expressive language also has an impact on their ability to construct sentences and express their ideas in writing.
21. Teaching in mathematics is also good. The pace of most lessons is brisk and this stimulates pupils' interest and motivation. Teachers have high expectations both of the way pupils respond to activities and their ability to think mathematically. They use resources well to enhance the quality of good learning. All staff appropriately support pupils who are in the early stages of learning English, but there was no specific targeted support for these pupils in Years 1 and 2 to further develop their speaking and listening skills. However, in reading and writing their needs are appropriately met in small groups with the learning support assistants, where the opportunity to focus on basic skills with intensive teaching has good impact. In Years 1 and 2, learning support assistants are well briefed about the planned tasks so good support is generally provided within the context of mainstream activities, particularly in English, enabling pupils to have full access to the curriculum. A good example of this was seen when the learning support assistant worked with group of young Pakistani children explaining carefully words that were used by the teacher.
22. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall. However, it is inconsistent and the quality of pupils' learning varies from lesson to lesson, especially in Year 2. A weakness in the lessons observed was the lack of extension provided for pupils capable of more challenging work. There was no evidence of more searching questions to further extend pupils' understanding, especially those capable of more advanced scientific concepts. Pupils' past work shows that some teachers' expectations of pupils' work is unsatisfactory, as what is achieved is of a lower standard to that already accomplished when they were younger.
23. Teaching in ICT is good. All teachers have undergone the recommended government training and are well supported by the experienced and enthusiastic co-ordinator, who leads many of the lessons. Pupils are eager to learn. Many do not have computers at home and they 'soak up' the new skills and knowledge with delight. A particularly strong feature in the teaching in RE lessons is the emphasis on developing the skill of reflection. This makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual development and their cultural awareness and tolerance. It helps them to focus not only on what they have learnt about a particular religion, but also what they have learnt from this in terms of the way we lead our lives and behave towards one another.

24. Throughout the school, staff are aware of the different needs of all pupils. Boys and girls of all ethnic groups and abilities respond well to the good levels of support provided by teachers and classroom assistants. There is good support for pupils who are fluent bilingual speakers and they learn well. The externally funded teacher, who often speaks to them in their own language, satisfactorily supports the children who are new to English in the Early Years Unit. In the end-of-year tests, boys achieve lower standards than girls in reading and writing, so the school is taking steps to improve their attainment by introducing electronic books to develop their interest in reading, and work in targeted groups to improve writing. The headteacher and senior management team had not identified the underachievement of girls in reading compared with girls nationally and consequently no action had been considered.
25. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. The part time support teacher in Years 1 and 2 has well-established routines, and pupils know what they have to do in lessons. The linking of individual education plans into teachers' planning is less well defined, and the school is aware that this requires greater rigour to ensure consistently good learning. In the best lessons seen, pupils were given tasks that were tailored to meet their individual needs, but in some lessons teachers did not have a secure knowledge of the range of alternatives that might be adopted for these pupils, for example the use of practical counting equipment.
26. Teachers use ongoing assessment satisfactorily to ensure future activities build on what pupils already know. It is not always successfully used to ensure good progress in some lessons in science. Teachers throughout the school give pupils lots of praise and encouragement. Not all give effective feedback on how pupils can improve either through marking or personal comments.

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

27. The quality and range of opportunities provided for pupils' learning are good overall. It provides for pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Curricular planning is now more effective than at the previous inspection and ensures that all subjects meet the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study and the locally agreed syllabus for RE. The school has good provision for personal, social and health education and this is directly related to the good personal development of the pupils.
28. The curriculum for children in the Early Year's Unit is satisfactory and based on the recommended areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. There is a useful scheme of work and this helps teachers plan a satisfactory range of suitable activities. These are at times too structured and narrow in the way children are expected to learn. The use of the outdoor area has improved since the previous inspection, and there is a good range of toys and equipment available to develop the children's physical skills. Although the area is used effectively as a space for learning, it is not yet fully used as a learning resource. There are weaknesses in the provision for pupils' creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
29. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactorily broad and well balanced and ensures that all pupils, regardless of ethnic background, ability or gender, are given equal entitlement to learning. The inclusive ethos of the school ensures that all children are valued, included and involved in everything in school life. The school has a good understanding of the need to respond to the recent requirements to ensure that the school includes all groups of pupils in its provision. Governors have taken care to provide well for pupils with disabilities, those from different ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language. The school takes good steps to see that these pupils are not treated in any way differently to others.

30. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects, with particular strengths in ICT and RE. Pupils' achievements today are better than they were at the time of the previous inspection, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. This reflects the sound cohesion within the curriculum, especially between respective classes in year groups, an area of weakness identified in the previous inspection. A comprehensive programme has been introduced for the development, monitoring and reviewing of all areas of the curriculum resulting in appropriate plans that have guided good improvement. Policies and schemes of work have been written for most subjects; however, a number of these are still at the discussion, not implementation, stage. The schemes of work implemented reflect recent government guidelines and include pupils' social and health education and citizenship.
31. The national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been implemented soundly across the school and these have had a positive effect on raising standards. Satisfactory links are made between subjects, and pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used and further promoted in other lessons. For example in a numeracy lesson, teachers used a range of questions requiring pupils' effective listening and understanding about the proportions of a variety of shapes. 'Does it have four corners?' 'What can it be?' Having identified the shape, pupils then grouped these into squares, triangles, rectangles and circles before entering this information onto a simple block graph using a computer program. This good practice supports efforts being made to raise standards in English, mathematics and ICT.
32. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall, and they enjoy access to the full curriculum. For those who need individual or group work in order to improve their basic skills in reading and writing, this is organised in a way that is least likely to cause disruption to learning and the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, are successfully integrated into groups within the class, for example in the computer suite, pupils with confident keyboard skills assist those pupils who are slower at following instructions. However, there are times when groups of pupils are withdrawn for long periods from literacy lessons which reduces their opportunities for sharing whole class activities.
33. Extra-curricular provision is good for an infant school. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection where provision was said to be limited. There are lunchtime activities including computer clubs, choir and arranged playground activities plus a jigsaw and 'colouring in' club. In the summer months, games and athletics activities are provided for pupils in Year 2.
34. The school has very good links with its community and these enhance the children's learning considerably. This aspect has improved greatly since the previous inspection and is now one of the school's many strengths. Many of these links are arranged through the Sandwell Business Partnership, for example producing a big book, with the help of the local professional football club, on their history and using it as a literacy teaching resource. Staff and pupils have also been to a local chocolate factory, Soho House and Wightwick Manor, the latter to study wallpaper by William Morris. The vicar of the local church comes in and takes assemblies and also demonstrates the baptism ceremony to the children. The pupils regularly support various charities such as the local Edwards Trust, and a local brass band uses the school for its rehearsals. The school also works very closely with other local schools and colleges. Links with the adjoining junior school are well developed and a group of Year 2 pupils said how confident they are of moving there. Devonshire Infant School is part of a local cluster of schools and receives work experience students on a regular basis from secondary schools and colleges. There are also arranged placements for National Vocational Qualification students and trainee teachers from local universities.
35. The curriculum ensures that pupils develop a good understanding of spiritual, moral and social issues, with a good awareness of their own and other cultures. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school aims to ensure that everyone is fully included and valued. This contributes well to the spiritual ethos of mutual respect. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is much improved since the last inspection. Opportunities for spiritual development are evident in the planned programme for the daily act of worship. Music is carefully used to create an atmosphere of reverence, and periods of quiet allow time for reflection. Visitors to

assemblies, such as the local vicar, help pupils to recognise the major Christian festivals as well as to appreciate the celebrations of other faiths. Pupils participate fully in assemblies. Religious education lessons make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development as they are introduced to the beliefs of other religions, developing a growing awareness of, and respect for, different faiths. Pupils are learning the meaning of religion. Teachers seize opportunities for fostering a sense of awe and wonder in other curriculum areas. In a Year 2 class, for example, pupils were entranced and engrossed when looking at beautiful objects from the natural world.

36. Teachers are successful in extending pupils' moral awareness through discussions both in assembly and in class. They make a point of underlining how pupils can provide help to those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are encouraged to raise funds for several local and national charities and are in touch with a school for children with visual impairment. They contribute to the drawing up of their own class rules and readily accept the principles embodied in them. Teachers make sure that pupils understand right from wrong and follow the code of conduct expected by the school. Many teachers use and value 'circle time' where pupils sit in a circle and discuss freely matters which may be troubling them. It is used effectively as a way of helping pupils to explore moral issues and come to decisions.
37. The school promotes social development well. Pupils respond to a clear behaviour policy with understanding. They know what is expected of them and how to behave appropriately. Pupils have a variety of opportunities for taking responsibility, for example putting out play equipment for the younger pupils and taking turns to be responsible for the 'friendship stop' in the playground for younger pupils who are lonely or unhappy. In the Early Years Unit good manners, such as remembering to say 'Please' and 'Thank you', are emphasised by all staff. There are good caring relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves. Lunchtime is a pleasant communal occasion. The effectiveness of the provision is seen in the good standards of behaviour in class, around the school and in the playground. The range of school trips and cultural activities helps to support the pupils' good levels of personal development.
38. The school promotes the cultural traditions of its own area well. Celebrations of religious festivals such as Eid, Diwali and Harvest are seen as important occasions in the school year. They provide very good opportunities for pupils to learn about a wide range of cultural activities. Teachers draw on the experience of pupils and parents to help to add a personal dimension to their understanding. For example, a Sikh parent enthralled the children when explaining the importance of the '5 K's' in her religion. Opportunities within subjects of the curriculum, including art and design, literacy and music, are successfully exploited to enhance pupils' understanding of cultural beliefs and traditions within this country and others. For example, the creation of Mehndi patterns for Diwali, visits from an African drum group and a local storyteller capturing children's interest with tales from other lands were all used to further enhance pupils' learning. Pupils participate in extra-curricular activities that promote their interest in cultural festivals. Bhangra dancing, for example, was enjoyed as pupils practised for a special Diwali assembly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school has very good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of its pupils. These procedures have improved since the previous inspection and are now a major strength of the school. Overall, the school provides a caring and safe environment, within which, the children develop and learn successfully.
40. The headteacher is the named and very well trained child protection person and is very ably supported by an experienced governor. The headteacher has ensured that all staff are well briefed on their relevant responsibilities. The school has its own policy based on that of the local authority. Separate incident books are maintained and there is very good liaison with all local child protection teams. Any relevant documentation is securely locked away ensuring confidentiality.

41. The headteacher is also the named health and safety person, ably helped by the relevant governor and maintenance manager. They work well together to ensure that all possible action is taken to maintain the health and safety of all using the premises. There is a very clear, detailed written policy and all risk assessments are up-to-date. The school has caring and efficient accident procedures and those for the administration of medicines. Several staff are trained first-aid personnel and the specific medical room is a useful aspect of the accommodation. The pupils have very good support and supervision at break and lunchtimes.
42. The school makes very good use of outside professional help, such as the police who talk to children about 'Stranger Danger', drinking and driving, road and waterways safety. The school nurse visits regularly and talks about 'Good and Bad Medicines' and healthy eating. Various other specialists, such as the educational psychologist, therapists and behavioural support personnel, visit as required.
43. The school has very good procedures for monitoring attendance, which include a whole range of realistic strategies, implemented in liaison with the local education welfare officer. However, despite these procedures attendance has not improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are encouraged to attend regularly and enjoy receiving certificates for good attendance. The effect of these very good strategies is diminished by the fact that the school authorises the extended holidays taken in term time by many of the families. Consequently, procedures for promoting attendance can only be said to be satisfactory.
44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and those for eliminating behaviour of an oppressive nature are both good. The school has well-written policies with realistic rewards and sanctions, which are used consistently by staff and of which pupils are well aware. Pupils know that they will be kept in class at playtimes if they are naughty, but can gain awards towards 'going for gold' if they are good. All teachers have received behaviour management training. Pupils are encouraged, through personal, social and health education lessons and 'circle time' discussions, to report any bullying incidents to an adult. All the staff are experienced at recognising incidents of developing inappropriate behaviour and 'nipping potential situations in the bud'.
45. The school has good procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development. Staff know the pupils well and the school's very effective personal, social and health education helps the pupils to become future, responsible citizens. Details of their progress is recorded in their personal files and the annual report to parents.
46. All pupils are treated as individuals and care is given to identifying specific needs and providing support. The progress of pupils with special educational needs in literacy and numeracy is monitored well by the teachers, including the teacher responsible for special educational needs, and by other professionals involved in their care. There are suitable informal procedures for identifying pupils in the reception and Year 1 classes. The school is aware of the need to reduce the number of targets written in the pupils' individual education plans so that teachers and pupils are able to focus more clearly on the priorities for development. Targets do not sufficiently focus on improving pupils' speaking and listening skills.
47. The school is in the early stages of monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils with English as an additional language. In the Foundation Stage, the nationally recognised guidelines are used to assess the stages of children's development of English as an additional language and these are used satisfactorily to monitor their progress and assess their needs. However, these guidelines are not always sufficiently followed in Years 1 and 2 to ensure maximum learning for these pupils.
48. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress across the curriculum are satisfactory overall. There are detailed records of pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, which give satisfactory guidance about how well they are doing. Teachers use this information when planning future lessons to make sure that the work is suitably matched to individual needs. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing attainment in speaking and listening, and science, but the information is not used effectively enough to identify the skills and knowledge the pupils

will learn next. Consequently, lessons are planned for coverage of subject content and knowledge, rather than developing pupils' weaker speaking skills in all subjects, and enquiry skills in science. Procedures in other subjects are satisfactory but the information is not used to help teachers match learning to individual need. Careful analysis of the pupils' answers in mathematics national tests has led to appropriate changes and improvements to the curriculum in this subject. This, and the introduction of targets, has led to higher standards in mathematics, especially for higher attaining pupils.

49. There are useful portfolios of pupils' work in some subjects, which help to guide teachers' assessments and to monitor the progress of individual pupils. Writing assessments carried out every term note the new learning and skills the pupils have reached and the unaided piece of writing done at the same time shows clear progress in this aspect. The 'I can' statements form the basis of targets for pupils and these are usefully shared with parents. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully against these. However, there is no overview of how well pupils are doing in regard to whether they have made enough progress, as tracking procedures are currently unsatisfactory. The procedures allow the school to monitor how much progress the pupils have made, but not whether they have made enough. Targets are identical for all pupils regardless of their ability and are therefore too broad. There are no targets for improving pupils' specific speaking skills and this is an area of weakness.
50. Analysis of test results are carried out regularly to monitor how well the school is doing when compared to schools locally and nationally. This indicates that achievement is good. However, there are no analyses of the attainment of different groups of pupils, including different ethnic groups and ability groups, so the school does not know clearly enough whether one group is performing better than another. Baseline assessments are used effectively to identify those pupils who are likely to underachieve and effective strategies are used to support groups of pupils and enable them to attain the expected standards in English and mathematics. The school has identified that boys do less well than girls and have started to develop strategies to promote their greater achievement. The headteacher and senior management team had not identified the underachievement of girls in reading compared with girls nationally. During the inspection, inspectors could find no significant variation between the standards achieved by boys and girls, nor in their enthusiasm for school. The school is not yet monitoring pupils' attainment and progress over time to evaluate teaching and pupils' learning. Consequently, this is not considered sufficiently when planning the curriculum and ensuring that standards continue to rise.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. The school has good links with its parents. These have improved since the previous inspection and help considerably towards the success of the children's learning.
52. From talking to parents at the pre-inspection meeting and during the inspection, and from comments on returned questionnaires, it can be seen that parents think that this is a very good school. Specifically, parents state that their children like the school, the teaching is good, the school is well led and managed, and that the school expects their children to work hard, achieve of their best and become mature and responsible. They also add that behaviour is good and their children are making good progress. Generally they think that the school works closely with parents and they are kept well informed of how their children are getting on. Most parents would not hesitate to approach the school with a question or problem. However, a few parents would like to see a greater range of activities outside of lessons. Whilst inspectors agree with the parents' positive views, they felt that the school does provide a good range of additional activities out of lessons. Most are in the lunch hour as staff feel that pupils are still rather young to be out after school especially during the dark winter months. The regularly run computer club, choir and puzzles club and, in the summer, games and athletics for Year 2 pupils, is a good range in an infant school.
53. The quality of information provided for parents is good. Induction procedures into the nursery are good. There is an open week to which parents and carers are invited to attend at any time

during the week. This gives them and their children opportunities to play together using the different toys and equipment, and to experience the range of activities the Early Years Unit offers. A formal invitation during the first two weeks in September means that parents can meet their children's teacher individually. Simple information is collected about what each child likes and dislikes, about any special educational needs or health requirements, and whether they speak English or another language at home. A bilingual home-school liaison teacher is available in school to talk to parents who have limited English and help keep them informed about school activities. Engaging and involving parents in their children's education is a key element of her work. She organises a range of courses and activities for parents, and has made a number of games that parents of bilingual children can borrow to play with their children at home.

54. Each family through the school receives an up-dated copy of the prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report to Parents. Both of these comply with all statutory requirements. The pupils' annual reports cover all subjects and are clear for parents to understand. They say what the child can do and, in most cases, give general targets for improvement. Each class has its own very informative newsletter for parents. There are three parent meetings a year with one specifically to discuss the annual report. Where necessary all documents are provided in the parents' mother tongue. The school has an open-door policy for parents which many take advantage of both in the morning and at going home times.
55. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to attend reviews of individual education plans and progress. However, they sometimes fail to attend and are not sufficiently involved in setting new targets or supporting their children's progress towards achieving them. Satisfactory information about pupils' progress is given to parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs, and copies are available on request to parents.
56. Most parents make a good contribution to their children's learning. Some parents have either trained as or are waiting to become learning support assistants. Others are parent governors. Several parents come in and help by listening to children read. The parents of children in the Early Years Unit are made very welcome and have almost become part of the system. Last year parents held a Father Christmas competition and the school is proud of the stage mural constructed by the hardworking team of pupils and parents. At home most parents are very keen to hear children read and they find the home/school books a good two-way communication with the school.
57. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. Although the school does not now have a constitutional parent teacher association, whenever fundraising is required the school is never short of ready volunteers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The leadership and management in the school have been strengthened since the previous inspection. The leadership of the headteacher is good. The headteacher promotes a clear educational direction for the school and manages finances effectively to support school developments and improvement. The good leadership provided by the headteacher ensures that all staff work well together to create a harmonious and happy community. The aims and values set out in the school prospectus are very well promoted by all staff and can be seen clearly in all its work. The overall management of the school by the headteacher and her senior management team, however, is satisfactory and this has resulted in only satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.
59. The headteacher is well supported in the day-to-day management of the school by the senior management team. There is no one person holding the post of deputy headteacher and the senior teachers rotate these responsibilities over the year. The headteacher and the three senior managers work very closely together and consequently all have a good level of awareness of the immediate management and organisational issues facing the school. Their wide range of expertise and interest are the strength of this arrangement, but the termly rotation of the deputy headteacher's

roles means there is little opportunity for major developments to be led by anyone other than the headteacher. This is an unreasonable load as, as well as promoting the educational direction of the school, she continues to bear many of the significant tasks usually delegated to a deputy headteacher. All members of the senior management team have a valuable and important role in managing aspects of the school. They are responsible for co-ordinating a year group or the Foundation Stage. They are also co-ordinators for English or mathematics, or science and ICT. With the current delegation of responsibilities to individual members of the senior management team, it would be difficult to alter the balance without overloading them. A concern at the previous inspection was that the role of the senior management team needed reviewing so that there was a better focus for the development of the school. Although improved, this still remains a concern.

60. Another concern at the previous inspection was the lack of monitoring of the quality of teaching. The procedures for monitoring introduced have had a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching. The procedures have worked well, but they do not have the rigour to ensure teaching and learning continue to improve. There is now a comprehensive range of procedures that provide a well-structured system by which the headteacher and co-ordinators monitor the work of the school. However, not all the subject co-ordinators are as yet using the full range of strategies, partly because of their inexperience in the post and partly because there is insufficient opportunity for them to have time from their own classes to work alongside other staff. Consequently, many co-ordinators are not secure in their knowledge of standards, or of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. The management of English, mathematics, RE and ICT are good. This has had a significant impact on the raising of standards, and on the quality of both teaching and learning in these subjects.
61. Curricular planning has significantly improved. All staff, under the leadership of the headteacher with the senior management team, have effectively moved this aspect of provision forward. Procedures for assessment have also improved but not sufficiently to ensure the school has a secure system by which the achievement of all pupils is recorded and evaluated. The headteacher has a good oversight of the performance of groups and effective strategies have been implemented to support pupils who are likely to underachieve. This has resulted in pupils' good achievement in reading and mathematics. There is, however, no whole-school system of assessment and recording by which pupils' learning and therefore the effectiveness of the teaching can be evaluated so that standards continue to rise. The design and implementation of such a system would be time consuming and a significant responsibility. At present there is no one with the responsibility for whole-school assessment procedures.
62. The management of special educational needs is effective, but not as efficient as it could be as it is shared between two people. The official role of special needs co-ordination is undertaken by a member of staff in the Foundation Stage who, by the nature of her teaching role, is extremely busy. Another member of staff, who is employed as a part-time class teacher and part-time special educational needs co-ordinator undertakes the general management of special educational needs and the writing of all the individual education plans. However, in a school with so many pupils requiring additional support, it really requires one person to undertake assessments and to be aware of all the factors concerned with pupils with special educational needs. It is not sound management to give the job to two teachers who are involved in so many other important issues.
63. The teacher responsible for special needs support in Years 1 and 2 ensures that individual education plans are in place and are monitored and evaluated termly. However, there are some weaknesses in the management and administration of special educational needs and the school is aware of the need to implement the new Code of Practice, including a review of its formal procedures for identifying pupils in need of special help and support. The school has recognised the need for further training, as not all teachers are aware of how to link individual education plans into their teaching, and staff have limited knowledge about methods to be used for pupils with more specific needs relating to language and writing, so that standards raise.
64. The management of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. The school has considered carefully the way in which it is to meet pupils' needs and

- has targeted resources mainly to the Early Years Unit to ensure children make appropriate progress. However, the provision for pupils who are new to English in Years 1 and 2 is only satisfactory as there is no specific targeted language support identified for these pupils. To improve the attainment of minority ethnic pupils is a priority this year in the school development plan.
65. The school development plan provides a secure management tool by which all staff are made aware of the priorities for improvement and the areas of focus in each subject. Co-ordinators draw up their own action plans based on their annual review of their subjects. Targets are effectively based on the agreed strategies for monitoring, but success criteria often lack the rigour that will enable the co-ordinators to judge the effectiveness of their actions. Only one action plan, that for mathematics, clearly links improvement with raising standards. Governors, with the support of the headteacher, monitor the progress of the school development plan. They are not active in its planning or in the development of school priorities for improvement.
66. The school benefits from a supportive governing body that carries out its statutory responsibilities effectively through an appropriate range of committees. Many governors visit the school regularly. Some work in the school and so are well informed about the day-to-day life of the school. Governors with responsibility for English, mathematics and special educational needs also meet with the co-ordinators to keep up-to-date with developments. Generally, the governing body is kept well-informed by the headteacher's regular reports. They are not formally monitoring the work of the school and evaluating the improvement in the quality of pupils' education is insufficiently well defined.
67. The financial management of the school is good. This is partly due to the close and effective monitoring of the school budget by the local education authority and the headteacher. Recent auditor's recommendations have been fully implemented, and this is now reflected in good office systems that ensure each part of the school's finances is clearly and meticulously recorded. Satisfactory use of office computer systems enables easy access to check on expenditure and the existing budget surplus. The headteacher has a good strategic view of how to maintain an appropriate budget surplus and to ensure that each pound is spent wisely. Documentation provided by the local education authority enables spending comparisons with local schools to be undertaken effectively. However, the governing body has yet to establish a strategic overview of spending and its effect on raising standards. Governors know the limitations of the budget and use all available data to predict income and expenditure over the next six years. All grants are spent effectively with money for such things as special educational needs being well targeted, for example employing additional teaching and learning support assistants.
68. There is a satisfactory number of staff to teach the curriculum. Teachers and pupils are well supported by a good number of learning support staff through the school. Learning support assistants in the Early Years Unit work well with class teachers. They attend regular training to keep up to date with the latest thinking and to get new ideas to make the curriculum more interesting for the children. They take full responsibility for some aspects of learning for the younger children and make a valuable contribution to children's learning. Learning support assistants in Years 1 and 2 are mostly effective in helping small groups and individual pupils in lessons with their learning. The arrangements for teachers' performance management are satisfactory. However, teachers' targets do not focus improving pupils' progress and so raising standards. Induction procedures are good. There is a comprehensive staff handbook, which guides new members of staff through day-to-day procedures and outlines clearly what is expected of them. New staff are provided with good levels of help and support. All staff work well together as a team. Lunchtime supervisors organise games for pupils at lunchtime play and this encouragement helps pupils to develop good relationships with each other. Office staff work well together and provide an efficient and friendly welcome to parents and visitors.
69. Resources, overall, are satisfactory. They are good in the Early Years Unit, physical education, and mathematics. Resources for ICT are very good and effectively used to promote pupils' skills and knowledge. Resources in the Unit have been thoughtfully chosen to provide visual stimuli to

the children's learning. This is particularly helpful to the children who are at the early stages of learning English when they start in the nursery.

70. The accommodation is very good, clean and well maintained. It has improved since the previous inspection and is now a strength of the school. Spacious classrooms, a hall and a new computer suite allow the curriculum to be taught well. The pleasant, clean dining room is utilised well by the school and there are also separate medical and special educational needs rooms. However, currently, the library is still part of the ICT room and is not used effectively. The playgrounds are well surfaced, secure and large enough for the numbers of pupils accommodated. The pupils take advantage of a pleasant outdoor green area and also the shared use of the adjoining junior school's playing field. The courtyard area in the Early Years Unit is not a suitable size for all nursery and reception children to play together as there is too little space available for the children to gain full benefit from the toys with which they are playing.
71. Taking into account pupils' achievement, good quality teaching and learning, average unit costs per pupil, positive attitudes, good behaviour, good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the good improvements since the previous inspection, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

72. The governors, headteacher and staff now need to:
1. Raise standards in pupils' speaking and listening skills, in writing and in science. (Paragraphs: 1-6, 85-89, 98-99)
 2. Further raise standards in all subjects through the more rigorous use of assessment by:
 - identifying a designated person to be responsible for assessment;
 - tracking the achievement of individual pupils and of groups more closely to assess whether they are making as much progress as they should;
 - identifying the needs of all pupils with English as an additional language, especially those in Years 1 and 2, and carefully monitoring their progress so that support is given effectively;
 - developing and implementing assessment procedures for all subjects where none have been introduced to ensure the steady progress of pupils' knowledge and skills.
(Paragraphs: 26, 47-50, 51, 61)
 3. Improve pupils' regular attendance to school. (Paragraphs: 16, 43)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	24	19	4	0	0
Percentage	0	13	45	35	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y1 – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	38	266
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	120

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y1 – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	77

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	234

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	34
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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	42	46	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	30	34
	Girls	38	37	39
	Total	70	67	73
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (81)	76 (76)	83 (77)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	32	32
	Girls	36	37	36
	Total	67	69	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (81)	78 (76)	77 (81)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	53	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	6	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	125	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	49	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	11	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.27
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	29.3

Education support staff: Y1 – Y2

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	338

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery and Reception

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	215
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002
	£
Total income	842,636
Total expenditure	795,811
Expenditure per pupil	2,280
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,505
Balance carried forward to next year	13,856

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.67
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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Number of questionnaires sent out	304
Number of questionnaires returned	129

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	26	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	40	2	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	38	1	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	41	6	2	2
The teaching is good.	57	38	0	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	39	6	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	28	8	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	31	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	48	42	7	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	55	36	1	2	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	35	4	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	32	13	4	19

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

73. The provision for the youngest children in the Early Years' Unit is good and they achieve well as a result. There are currently 80 children in the nursery who attend for either a morning or an afternoon session, and 88 children in the reception year. There are four classes organised into family groups so that younger children can join their older brothers and sisters when they first start nursery. This helps them to settle quickly and gain in confidence to join in with activities. The children generally stay with the same teacher throughout their time in the Early Years Unit so they, and their parents, get to know one adult particularly well. Children move to different activities during each session and this means that they get to know all the adults who work there, and confidently approach any of them if help is needed.
74. Assessments of children's attainment when they first start school shows that the great majority of children have below average levels of attainment in reading and mathematics. Few children have higher than average ability in these aspects. When the proportion of children who are in the early stages of speaking English as an additional language is taken into account, and the higher than usual proportion starting school with below average ability, attainment on entry is judged well below average overall. The information from these assessments is used effectively to organise the children into ability groups for which they follow the recommended areas of learning. Targets for children's future learning are identified in communication, language and literacy and mathematics, and these are shared with parents. The target sheets are identical, so do not identify precisely enough what each child will learn, although higher attaining children have additional targets to extend and challenge them further. There are few targets identified for developing the children's speaking skills, despite this being a priority in the unit. Parents are invited to contribute to their children's assessments during home visits through the school reading diaries and by adding to the big assessment books. Reception children take part in literacy and numeracy activities and this helps them to get used to learning in more formal situations. Overall, the children make good progress, although only a few attain the early learning goals (the expected levels of attainment) in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. Teaching in this aspect is good and this enables all children to make good gains in their learning. Teachers' high expectations that the children will learn to do things for themselves, means that the children take care of their own needs as soon as they start nursery. By the time they are in reception, they do this well. When going outside, they are all able to find their coats and many put these on with little or no help. Planned activities, which take place outside, result in the children learning to get along together well. They play with the equipment sensibly at playtimes and when working in small groups. Squeals of delight from the nursery children reflected the enjoyment they got from the parachute game. During one activity, they co-operated together to lift the parachute high into the air, shooting the ball upwards and taking it in turns to retrieve it from underneath the parachute where it rolled when it landed. The children are involved in the weekly celebration assembly, and this helps them to gain confidence when in a much larger group. They receive their awards with pride, pleased to get the recognition for doing something particularly well. Self-confidence and self-esteem is further nurtured by the positive approach from all the adults who work in the unit, praising children consistently when they have done something good for them or when they have remembered their manners. Most children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

Communication, language and literacy

76. Pupils start school with below average levels of speaking skills. They make good gains in their conversational language and by the time they are in reception, many are beginning to talk to each other about what they are doing. Lessons are often too directed and so, although the children learn to follow instructions, they are not given enough opportunity to try to talk about what they

are doing. The structured lessons planned to develop specific vocabulary are good, but the skills learnt are not always transferred to other situations. There are targets to improve the children's early reading and writing skills, but precise targets to improve specific speaking and communication skills and vocabulary are missing.

77. The children start to develop their early reading skills as soon as they start in nursery. The children handle books with care and enjoy listening to their favourite stories in lessons and assemblies. These are brought to life, and vocabulary is supported well by the use of appropriate resources. For example, when listening to a story about a bear that could not sleep, the teacher had thoughtfully provided the teddy bears and lanterns of the correct colour and size to act out the different parts of the story. As a result of this good teaching, the children could remember the sequence of the story when responding to direct questions. By the time the children are in reception, they are beginning to read some familiar words and most have learnt the letter sounds. When writing, the higher attaining children have a suitable pencil grip and write their names and some simple words for themselves, forming most letters correctly. This is because of the emphasis given to this particular task. The teaching in this aspect is good overall and children make effective progress in their learning, especially in their early reading skills. By the end of reception the children are still below expected levels in reading, but they are well below in their speaking and writing skills.

Mathematical development

78. Most children start with below average attainment in mathematical development. Teaching is mostly good and children make good progress in counting and recognition of numbers because of the practical activities in which they take part. This gives purpose to what they are doing and keeps them involved. When outside, the children ordered carpet numbers in a line and enjoyed jumping from one to another, calling the names of the numbers as they landed on each one. Adults place particular focus on the children learning number rhymes and songs and this gives the learning a context for them to practise their counting skills. The children in reception learn how to add by counting through practical activities. For example, in response to the rhyme, five speckled frogs, the children make pairs of numbers to make five, rearranging the frogs to make the sums. As a result of these practical activities, by the end of the reception year, most children count and order numbers to ten with confidence.
79. The children's knowledge and understanding of shape and measures are not so well developed. This is because their understanding of the language involved is not yet fully developed. The lessons, which focus on these aspects, do not always identify the language adults want the children to learn and therefore there is not enough emphasis on developing the correct vocabulary. There is a missed opportunity for the children to learn about shapes and how to measure in their mother tongue and thus take learning forward at a faster rate. By the end of the reception year, most children are still at an early stage of learning about shapes and measurements.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80. Overall teaching in this aspect is satisfactory. ICT skills are developed well. The activities help the children to develop specific skills as well as giving them the freedom to use their imagination to make their own pictures. Nursery children control the mouse well to paint squiggles on the screen and with help print out their work to take home. By the time the children are in reception, most are designing recognisable pictures and, during the inspection, they all managed to draw butterfly shapes with some accuracy, add patterns and colours from a palette and print their work independently by clicking on the print icon on screen. The remote controlled cars were a particular favourite. Teachers use the digital camera regularly to take photographs of visits and other activities and this is raising the children's awareness of how ICT can be used.
81. The theme room is a particular favourite of the children. When this space is used for its planned purpose, the children gain a lot from exploring and experiencing a range of materials found in their world. This was evident from the photographs of the children paddling in the water,

walking on shingle and playing with sand when the room became a seaside. During the inspection, a small group of children were exploring the Space room with torches. 'The light makes the stars sparkle' one reception boy exclaimed. On questioning, it was evident that he could begin to explain what may be happening, but this opportunity was missed because speaking and language development opportunities were not identified on the planning. There are similar opportunities missed for the children to learn about the world in which they live in their mother tongue, thus increasing the rate of progress in this aspect.

Physical development

82. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and promotes children's physical development through a suitable range of activities. When the children start nursery, they run and jump with satisfactory levels of control, and move safely when outside at play. They continue to make satisfactory progress in this area of learning and attain the early learning goals, the expected levels by the end of the reception year. There is a suitable range of wheeled toys to help them improve and practise their skills, and regularly planned opportunities to throw, kick and catch a range of balls and beanbags in small groups helps develop these skills further as well as the children's hand and eye co-ordination. The times when the children in the Early Years Unit go outside to play together is too crowded for these skills to be practised in a meaningful way.
83. Although satisfactory emphasis is given to developing the children's dexterity skills, assessment information is not always used well enough to match tasks to the children's prior learning and attainment. In one activity, nursery children were cutting out circles, with the aim of learning to follow and cut round a curved line. While this activity was suitable for two of the five children involved in the activity, three children could not hold the scissors correctly and were still learning how to open and shut the blades to cut. Therefore the task was inappropriate to their needs. However, because adults expect the children to do things for themselves, by the time the children are in reception, most can use scissors with suitable control. Eight of the ten children seen in one lesson successfully cut around a circle to make a lion face or a spiral to make a snake without the need of support. The children regularly take part in making, drawing and painting activities and these help to develop their skills to a satisfactory level.

Creative development

84. Children start school with below average creative development. They make satisfactory progress overall, due to the sound teaching. Children's development, however, is restricted because the planned activities are often too directed; the children are not given enough opportunity to use their imagination in art and role-play activities, or to respond to pieces of music. This means that their imaginative language skills are poor. Paints are often already mixed so, although the children are learning how to use a paintbrush and explore with a different medium for making pictures, they are not learning the necessary skills of mixing colours. Dance opportunities help the children to develop good levels of co-ordination. In their recent spring concert, they performed a line dance with good levels of skill and enthusiasm. However, this is planned and directed by adults and, although the children are developing their physical skills when copying and following the precise instructions, they are not given enough freedom to develop their own ideas in dance. In music activities, adults expect the children to copy what they do, and children do not have enough opportunity to explore how sounds can be changed and used to make sound effects to accompany a story, poem or song. By the end of the reception year, most pupils are not attaining the expected levels.

ENGLISH

85. Although standards are well below the national average in many elements of English at the end of Year 2, they are in line with those of similar schools. Standards in reading are higher, being below the national average and above average compared with similar schools. Over the last few years, there has been an increasing number of pupils who enter school with special educational needs so, even though they make good progress in their learning, standards are not as high as

they were at the last inspection. All pupils, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or social circumstances, achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Lessons are planned to ensure all pupils are well catered for. Boys and girls who are fluent bilingual speakers do well, with some pupils from Indian backgrounds reaching Level 3 in the end-of-year tests, as well some pupils whose first language is English. Boys achieve lower standards than girls in reading and writing, so the school is taking steps to improve their attainment by introducing electronic books to develop their interest in reading and working in targeted groups to improve writing.

86. Standards in speaking and listening are well below average for the majority of pupils. However, in Year 2 higher attainers, many of whom who are fluent bilingual speakers, speak with developing confidence. For example, when discussing the ending to a story, these pupils express themselves clearly and quite concisely when contributing a range of their own ideas to the discussion. Although average attainers' grasp of Standard English remains quite weak, with appropriate prompting they too make an effective contribution to discussions. Lower attainers receive good support and encouragement from teachers and other staff. For example, when describing characters from a favourite book they are encouraged to reply using whole sentences. Throughout the school, boys and girls mainly listen well and with interest. Occasionally, however, they spend too long sitting and listening, and not enough time being active; as a result, some become a little inattentive. Teachers create frequent opportunities in class discussions for pupils to discuss in pairs and to answer questions. There are, however, too few opportunities to enrich and develop pupils' vocabulary through well-developed role-play and specific teaching activities.
87. Boys' and girls' standards in reading are below those found nationally, but are above those found in similar schools. A high priority for the school is the teaching of reading, which is good, so helping standards to improve. Targeted pupils, who have been identified as needing additional support, receive valuable assistance in sessions with trained learning support assistants who take pupils through the Early Literacy Programme. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported both in class and when withdrawn for specific focused sessions, developing their recognition of words and sounds well. However, at times they are withdrawn for too long or miss the introduction to lessons and the sharing of the 'big book', so this limits their involvement in whole-class learning. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of how to introduce new letter sounds and to reinforce those already known. As a result, pupils make good use of letter sounds to work out unknown words when they read. In a good lesson in Year 2, pupils of higher attainment, many of whom are fluent bilingual speakers, used letter strings such as 'wh' with confidence to read unfamiliar words and establish meaning. The majority of pupils in Year 1 know the letters of the alphabet. Most know how to sound out and build up words, with average attaining pupils recognising and using consonant blends such as 'gr' and 'br' when reading a favourite story. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 work hard during the part of the lesson when letter sounds are taught, and join in with enthusiasm when the whole class is reading. Staff monitor the progress of pupils' skills effectively through shared reading activities and maintain good records of the reading books covered. Throughout the school there is a home-school reading programme and pupils change their books regularly. Comments in pupils' diaries indicate that a great number of parents support the programme. However, good practice in school ensures that the learning support assistants listen to pupils who are not heard read at home. Although pupils do read non-fiction books and know, for example, what an index is, they have insufficient access to reference books in the library.
88. Standards in writing are well below those expected nationally but are in line with similar schools. For the majority of pupils, expressing ideas and thoughts in writing is a difficult task as they are just developing their skills of speaking English. However, the school is focusing on encouraging pupils to become confident and keen writers, providing appropriate extra support for the higher attaining pupils to extend and improve their skills. One Indian pupil wrote an invitation that was of a high quality for his age. Pupils have a good attitude to writing and respond well to the effective opportunities provided so they gain an understanding of how to develop a story sequence. In a good lesson in Year 2, higher attaining pupils, the majority being fluent bilingual speakers, wrote appropriately, recalling simple stories and describing the events and characters in lively language. Pupils with limited language worked well together using word lists to write

simple sentences. There are, however, limited opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other areas of the curriculum, such as history and geography. Overall, standards in spelling are still low but teachers and learning support assistants provide good strategies to encourage pupils to write using the sounds they know to approximate spellings. The school now has an agreed handwriting policy, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Most pupils form letters correctly, and presentation in books is satisfactory. However, in Year 2 a small number of pupils with lower attainment do not control their pencils well enough to form letters at a standard one would expect.

89. Teaching is generally good and at times very good so ensuring pupils learn well. Planning is good and detailed for all groups of pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and appropriate time is now set aside to concentrate on developing pupils' writing skills. In the best lessons, a lively pace is set which often excites pupils and elicits very good behaviour and application to work. The way in which teachers question pupils ensures that boys and girls, those of differing ability and those with different ethnic backgrounds are challenged to think, developing their ideas and understanding. The introduction to lessons is always good with teachers giving all pupils appropriate opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills well. However, when pupils are working independently, although activities are well planned, there is not always sufficient monitoring of groups to ensure all pupils make good progress. Pupils who are in the early stages of learning English make good progress, benefiting from the help given to reinforce language skills, for example by giving clear explanations of the meaning of new vocabulary. Teachers make good use of the learning support assistants with all staff appropriately supporting these pupils. However, there is no specific targeted support to develop their vocabulary and understanding in Years 1 and 2. Teachers mark work carefully and many provide comments which praise achievement, but there are limited targets set for improvement. Good use is made of ICT. Pupils use wordprocessing to write their own sentences, and a range of programs are used to develop skills in spelling, reading and punctuation.
90. The management of English is good with the co-ordinator having time to observe and support colleagues as well as to monitor planning. This has had a positive impact on developing the curriculum and implementing the National Literacy Strategy. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there was no scheme of work. Good systems of assessment have been put in place, and these are used well to plan work and future provision. There are, however, no specific procedures in place to monitor the language learning needs of pupils who are not fluent English language speakers. The school analyses National Curriculum test results and sets clear objectives to try to improve aspects such as writing and boys' reading. However, all staff are not yet fully aware of pupils' level of attainment in reading and writing in relation to the National Curriculum so as to decide in detail what they need to do next to achieve the higher level. The co-ordinator has worked hard to implement the improvements recommended at the last inspection. She is aware that there is now a need to identify more clearly the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language especially in Years 1 and 2 and to plan an intervention programme to improve speaking and listening skills throughout the school. The library is now part of the new Learning Resource Centre which also houses the computer suite. There are a sufficient number of fiction and non-fiction books, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils use this regularly to borrow books for home reading, however they are not using it to research for information.

MATHEMATICS

91. Standards in mathematics are below average at the end of Year 2 and reflect the impact of many children entering school with standards well below those expected for their age. However, pupils of all ethnic groups, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, make good progress and achieve well in relation to their prior learning levels.
92. Although standards in the 2002 National Curriculum tests are still below those expected nationally, when compared with similar schools they are above average. The proportion of pupils

now attaining the higher standard of Level 3 is broadly in line with that found nationally. The good improvement in pupils' achievement since the previous inspection, and in the standards attained by higher attaining pupils, is based solidly on the sound implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy throughout the school. Staff have received training and are now familiar with its recommendations. The subject co-ordinator, who is a leading numeracy teacher within the local education authority, has worked well to improve the standards. She has monitored teaching and leads training for staff, as well as setting a good example to staff because of her own good mathematics teaching.

93. By the age of seven, higher attaining pupils successfully apply their good grasp of number to solve problems involving money and measurement. Pupils work at a brisk pace and their mental recall of multiplication facts is good. Pupils of average attainment have a secure understanding of number patterns and a satisfactory recall of addition and subtraction facts. Lower attaining pupils count accurately up to 30, divide objects into equal halves and give the correct change when purchasing items that cost up to 20 pence. During lessons, there appeared to be no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls throughout the school.
94. The mental quick thinking oral sessions introducing each numeracy lesson are well taught. They are appropriately paced, with teachers using a variety of methods to keep pupils alert and interested. The strategies pupils use to find their answers are often discussed. However, the school is aware of the need to develop the plenary session as a means of identifying what has been learnt during the lesson as opposed to the teachers telling the pupils what they think they have learnt. It would also promote pupils' speaking skills, an aspect of development that all pupils need to improve.
95. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed, an improvement since the previous inspection. All lessons are planned well and the teachers identify clearly what they want pupils to learn. This is always shared with the class at the beginning of lessons so they can focus on what is to be achieved. Very good teaching in Year 1 enabled pupils to work confidently with numbers up to 100. Pupils displayed high levels of sustained enjoyment and motivation as they suggested numbers in an attempt to guess the number the teacher had in mind. In a good lesson in Year 1, pupils were required to name shapes by touching them in a 'feely' bag. After most pupils confidently identified properties of their shape, 'My shape has four sides, all the same length', pupils suggested its correct mathematical name. Higher attaining pupils correctly described the properties of an oval. When good opportunities for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills are well planned and led by the teacher, they positively enhanced pupils' learning at a good rate. The additional adult support has a positive effect on pupils' learning as all adults have high expectations both of the way pupils respond and their ability to think mathematically. Teachers make good use of well displayed mathematical vocabulary that often forms part of the 'maths corner' in each classroom. All teachers have good relationships with pupils and use resources well to enhance the quality of good learning.
96. The less exacting lessons observed lacked sustained pace and challenge, with good learning subsiding during the later stages of the lesson. Pupils enjoy mathematics and always behave well in every lesson. The overuse of worksheets, especially in Year 2, that only require the insertion of a number, restricts that mathematics 'sparkle'. As a result, the systematic development of pupils' practical numeracy skills is inconsistent between year groups, with basic addition and subtraction tasks often repeated at the same level. There was little evidence in the inspection to suggest that pupils are given enough opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills to solve everyday problems. ICT is used well to support pupils' learning and this reflects the subject's developing high profile. In almost every lesson observed during the inspection, pupils were using computers. Programs were carefully selected to help pupils develop their mathematical skills. However, only limited opportunities are given for mathematics to be used across other areas of the curriculum, for example measuring in design and technology. Ongoing assessment is usually effective, although in some cases marking is minimal and does not support pupils in the next stage of their learning development.

97. The overall quality of the leadership and management of the subject is good because the co-ordinator has analysed recent test results to indicate strengths and weaknesses for future development. Good assessment procedures have been introduced and, on the whole, are used effectively to check and record school and individual performances and to set appropriate targets for improvement.

SCIENCE

98. Standards in science are well below those expected nationally at the end of Year 2. This is a decline in the standards attained at the previous inspection when standards were judged as broadly in line with those found nationally. Pupils in Year 1 make generally good progress building effectively on the knowledge and experience gained in the Foundation Stage. In Year 2, however, pupils' achievement is inconsistent across the classes and they make less progress than they should. Pupils' overall unsatisfactory progress in Year 2 is due to the low expectations for higher attaining pupils in many lessons. The activities do not sufficiently challenge pupils' thinking nor extend their understanding. Consequently, there are too few opportunities for pupils, whatever their ethnicity or gender, to attain the higher standard of Level 3 by the time they transfer to the junior school at seven.
99. In the most recent National Curriculum assessments in 2002, teachers judged standards in Year 2 to be well below that found nationally. This decline in standards is due, in part, to the greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs now in the school and in part to the lack of challenge for pupils capable of attaining the higher standards.
100. In Year 1, pupils have good opportunities for investigating properties of materials and consequently their ability to recognise different materials, such as metal, glass, plastic and wood, is improving. Pupils are developing a satisfactory awareness that the properties of materials make them suitable for one task but not for another. Pupils in one class, for example, clearly explained that you could not have a bicycle made of glass because it would break and hurt you. Another said windows could not be made out of cardboard because you could not see through them. Pupils in Year 1 have good opportunities to record their ideas and findings. They record information on simple grids, such as that recorded as a weather diary. They label pictures to show information, such as the names of different parts of the body.
101. In Year 2, pupils work mainly in mixed ability groups, which is very supportive for those pupils with special educational needs and those having English as an additional language. They gain from working with pupils who have a wider vocabulary and who are able to suggest methods of completing the task set. The more capable pupils often act as the group scribe recording ideas and findings. This arrangement considerably speeds up the process of recording, but does not give pupils of average or lower attainment opportunities for developing their own recording skills and further promoting their written language skills. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a satisfactory awareness of the differences and similarities to be found in human beings. They sort people into groups using simple criteria, but do not have opportunities to explore more challenging criteria, using combinations of characteristics such as boys/girls and glasses/no glasses. Pupils in one class are beginning to realise that some things about our appearance can be changed and some not. The high levels of tolerance and understanding between pupils enabled pupils in two of the lessons observed to discuss freely differences in colour of skin and cultural differences in hair arrangements.
102. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. From the scrutiny of work it can be seen there are differences in the expectations of teachers in Year 2 as to the quality of work pupils are to achieve. Some group tasks are poorly presented and diagrams fail to show the information required. For example, inaccurate and careless colouring covered the drawing showing how batteries should be placed in a torch so it works. There are also differences in the range of opportunities provided for pupils to extend their individual recording skills. A strength of the teaching in all classes is, however, the opportunity for pupils to share ideas with a partner, as well as in groups and with the whole class, so developing pupils' speaking skills when trying out

ideas and explanations. For example, an effective use of a game of 'Who's Who' stimulated pupils' ability to devise questions to help them eliminate pupils until only one is left. A good range of big books for science promotes pupils' reading skills and effective opportunities are provided for all pupils to see, hear and discuss new vocabulary. This enables pupils with English as an additional language to satisfactorily develop a range of appropriate scientific language.

103. A weakness in the lessons, especially in Year 2, was the lack of extension provided for pupils capable of more challenging work. There was no evidence of more searching questions to further extend pupils' understanding, especially for those capable of more complex scientific concepts. The mixed ability grouping stimulates good co-operative skills and, as already stated, it supports lower attaining pupils and those with English as an additional language especially as there is no additional support for these pupils in science. Pupils' mathematical skills are satisfactorily promoted in the collection of data, which is presented as a tally chart and sometimes as block graphs. ICT is not at present successfully used to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding in science, as there are very few programs in school to support the subject.
104. The curriculum covers the expected range of knowledge set out in the National Curriculum. Teachers plan lessons together but fail to consider whether the activities effectively build on what pupils already know and can do. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop the skills of investigation. For example, last year pupils in Year 2 looked at the conditions required for plants to grow and survive. Their investigations appropriately considered how to make a fair test and they used a satisfactory form of recording, combining diagrams, drawings and text. This standard of work is not apparent from the activities completed so far this year. Many examples of work from one class in Year 2 are not appropriate for pupils of this age, requiring very little more than cutting and sticking skills to match pictures of young animals to their respective adults. This level of work may have been suitable for pupils with special educational needs, but not for mixed ability groups.
105. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment but this information is not being used effectively to ensure all pupils are achieving effectively and that higher attaining pupils, whatever their ethnic group, are attaining the standards of which they are capable. The co-ordinator has led the subject well, giving support to new staff and giving guidance on activities that promote pupils' investigative skills. In the last year, however, the monitoring of the quality of work and progression of skills has been unsatisfactory. She is also the co-ordinator for ICT and a senior manager with two new members of staff in her year group that she supports. One term in every three the co-ordinator is also the acting deputy headteacher. These responsibilities are a heavy load and the management of science has suffered. Her attention recently has been on co-ordinating ICT through the school and, consequently insufficient attention has been given to the effectiveness of teaching across the school and to standards attained in Year 2.

ART AND DESIGN

106. The attainment of boys and girls at the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those from different ethnic groups, those with English as an additional language and those having special educational needs, make satisfactory gains in their learning. During the inspection only one lesson was observed. Judgements are, therefore, largely based on evidence from work displayed around the school, teachers' planning and interviews with pupils.
107. By the time pupils enter Year 1, they are able to control scissors and use glue with satisfactory accuracy. Further skills development of cutting and sticking is demonstrated in a Year 1 classroom by an attractive butterfly frieze on display. Painting skills were satisfactorily developed when pupils enjoyed painting characters from their favourite stories linked to their literacy work. Some good close observational artwork in pencil inspired by the work of Van Gogh is well displayed in the corridor, showing that higher attaining pupils make accurate observations in terms of shape and texture. Lower attaining pupils designed cards satisfactorily

in their sketchbooks. The school has made good links with a local secondary school, which has enhanced pupils' three-dimensional artistic skills. With their support, all pupils designed and created their own plaques made out of clay that were of a high standard.

108. Teaching and learning is generally satisfactory across school. A strength of the planning is the variety of activities that are successfully linked to the pupils' cultural traditions, such as the painting of the Muslim prayer mats, the decorating of Gudwara temples and the making of divas for Diwali. These activities make a good contribution to both pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Teachers motivate pupils well through careful guidance and support; consequently pupils' response to art is good. This was particularly evident when higher attaining pupils in Year 2 were keen to talk about how they mixed colours when studying the style of Claude Monet. They also remembered with pleasure the printing work they had undertaken when making calendars for their parents. In the one lesson seen, teaching was good and made a positive contribution to pupils' physical and social development. When beginning a topic on lines, pattern and texture, pupils had the opportunity to cut carefully and to learn how to weave, before experimenting with a variety of materials. One pupil with special educational needs concentrated well, cut carefully and was delighted when she successfully completed weaving her mat. ICT is used satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 to support pupils' development in art and design. They use a painting program to create a variety of pictures. Many pupils' learning needs may be met to a greater degree if there were more opportunities to experiment for themselves when mixing colours, to use a greater variety of printing materials and to critically evaluate their own work.
109. The subject is managed satisfactorily and the co-ordinator has introduced the nationally recommended scheme of work, which has gone some way to improving teachers' subject knowledge. It also provides an effective structure for teachers' planning which was missing at the previous inspection. Work is monitored through a portfolio of pupils' work; however, there are limited opportunities to monitor the teaching of art and design so as to raise the standards. There are no assessment procedures being used to monitor pupils' attainment and progress and to ensure consistent development of skills across the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. Standards attained in design and technology at the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations, broadly reflecting the standards indicated at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities and ethnic groups, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding of design and technology. They learn at a satisfactory rate. Pupils enjoy learning design and technology and develop a satisfactory understanding of the process of planning, design and evaluation. In recent years, the school's priority has rightly been to improve literacy and numeracy, but sound leadership has secured a rightful place for design and technology within the curriculum.
111. Only two lessons were observed in Year 1, however a scrutiny of photographs in the co-ordinator's subject portfolio gives evidence of satisfactory teaching throughout the school. Pupils have manufactured a good range of moving 'pop-up' cards. The quality of their designs and the final decoration was good. Pupils' cutting skills were developed from the need to cut very accurately along straight lines in readiness to accommodate the moving parts, often through windows and doors that opened. In discussion with inspectors, Year 2 pupils indicated their enjoyment for these activities, and the fact that they would take the finished models home after completion.
112. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In Year 1 during the manufacture of a mask, pupils were given effective guidance in developing and improving their knowledge of materials. Lessons are planned with suitable attention to the development of basic cutting and sticking skills. Teachers manage pupils well and their behaviour is good. Pupils share their equipment sensibly and safely. The highlight of both lessons observed was the efficient manner

in which pupils cleared away, with the minimum amount of time being lost because of the use of well-organised routines.

113. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory overall. The curriculum is broad and balanced, but the overall scheme of work has not been updated to reflect recent government guidelines. Though some form of informal monitoring of pupils' work does occur and teachers meet the requirements to report to parents on pupils' annual reports, there are no formal assessment procedures that monitor and record pupils' attainment and progress. As a result, work is not sufficiently matched to individual needs. In Year 1, for example, the task set was too challenging for pupils whose cutting skills were less well developed. This had a negative effect on learning for the lower attaining pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

114. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 2. Very little evidence of pupils' work in Year 2 was available during the inspection. Geography was not taught last term and the current unit of work has only just started, consequently very little work appropriate to Year 2 had been completed by the time of the inspection. Standards at the end of Year 1 are below those expected for pupils' age. Pupils' general knowledge of the world around them is weak and the depth of knowledge and skills accumulated over one term's unit of teaching have not been able to redress the balance.
115. In Year 1, pupils study their immediate surroundings. They have considered what they would like to do to improve their playground, but their experiences are rather limited and so their ideas do not reflect the range and imaginative responses seen in many schools to this activity. Pupils in Year 1 have a satisfactory awareness of where they live in relation to the school and draw simple pictures showing the buildings and other features they pass on their route. By Year 2, most pupils can recite their addresses. They understand that the postcode is useful to the postman so he knows where to deliver letters, but are not sure what 'Smethwick' means in their address. The higher attaining pupils, with a great deal of support, suggested that Birmingham is a city. Pupils were able to find where they live on a map of the locality and trace their journey to school, considering where they cross roads and turn corners. Many, however, find difficulty in recounting their journey as they do not have a secure recall of which is left and which is right. Pupils delight in exploring globes and maps, as was seen in the short lesson observed. Pupils were learning how to locate the British Isles on a world map, but most have not yet grasped the names of the countries that make up these islands. Most pupils understand that the blue on maps represents water, but are not sure which is the largest, an ocean or a sea. Pupils with English as an additional language have difficulty with many geographical terms, but in discussion with groups of pupils, they successfully explained the differences in hills and mountains. None of the pupils in the group knew the term 'valley'. Pupils in Year 2, however, have a good knowledge of different places around the world. Many have visited the country of their parents or grandparents' birth. They can name different places around the world where some of their relatives live. In the lesson observed the teacher made positive references to all these experiences, including a brief discussion about the home country of a refugee pupil in the class. In discussion with the inspector, pupils knew that you had to travel by aeroplane to many of these places because it was so far, between England and India for example. Those pupils who have visited India, Bangladesh or Pakistan know that England has a different climate from these countries and that this has an impact on the types of clothes worn.
116. Only one brief lesson in geography was observed as no full lessons were planned during the time of the inspection. From this lesson and the limited range of pupils' work available, teaching is judged as satisfactory overall. Teaching needs, however, to be good if standards are to match those expected nationally at the end of Year 2, because of the below average knowledge pupils have on entry to Year 1.
117. Teachers' effective planning ensures that the required elements of the National Curriculum are taught. A recommended scheme of work underpins teachers' planning. This is an improvement

from the situation seen at the previous inspection. Teachers make satisfactory use of pupils' own experiences to promote their interest and to stimulate their greater awareness of the world. They use pupils' artefacts, photographs and other items to satisfactorily celebrate pupils' family heritage and diversity. Resources, such as globes, maps of many kinds and photographs of the local area are used effectively to stimulate pupils' curiosity and investigations. No additional support is available in geography lessons for pupils with special educational needs or for those having English as an additional language, and so pupils work mainly in mixed ability groups. This is a positive strategy by which higher attaining pupils provide support for others with less understanding of geographical terms and weaker comprehension of the English language. There is very little evidence of how teachers challenge the thinking and understanding of pupils capable of higher than the expected standards.

118. There are no whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' knowledge and skills and, other than the end-of-year report to parents, there is no formal record of pupils' attainment and progress. Consequently, very little information is available to evaluate the development of the curriculum so it is more relevant to pupils' needs. There is no procedure that ensures the steady progress of pupils' geographical skills. The co-ordinator for geography has only recently taken up post. She has started to monitor aspects of the curriculum, but has as yet no overview of the quality of teaching or of pupils' learning to enable her to move the subject forward.

HISTORY

119. Pupils attain the expected standards for their age by the end of Year 2. Their attainment has been maintained at a satisfactory level since the previous inspection. Pupils develop an interest in events of the past and are learning to appreciate the distinction between past and present. During the inspection, only one lesson took place and evidence is based on examining teachers' plans and pupils' work and from discussions with teachers and pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and they provide activities that build on what pupils already know so they move on with their learning at a satisfactory rate.
120. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of how things change over time and they identify people and toys from different periods in history. All pupils, including those of lower attainment, understand that we find out about the past in a variety of ways. They understand that they can acquire historical knowledge by examining artefacts and looking at pictures and videos. A discussion with a group of higher attaining pupils in Year 2, which represented the main ethnic groups in the school, demonstrated that they can find information from simple sources. They understand how this information can be used to identify similarities and differences between their lives and times in the past. They know the problems Florence Nightingale had in setting up hospitals in the Crimean War and were able to relate this to the life of Mary Seacole. Pupils' learning in history makes a good contribution to their social and cultural development. Pupils expressed the opinion, for example, that Mary Seacole was not allowed to go to the Crimean to nurse because she was black, showing that they are developing an insight into the difficulties and prejudices that she faced.
121. Teaching and learning is generally satisfactory across the school. In the one lesson seen, teaching was good and made a positive contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills. Every pupil, including those who have English as an additional language, were encouraged to speak with confidence about toys. Boys and girls were able to sort toys into old and new, having an appropriate understanding of materials used, saying that 'new toys are made of plastic and are bright and colourful'. Teachers motivate pupils well through careful guidance and support, and pupils' response to history is good. This was particularly evident when Year 2 pupils were keen to show the time line and give information about people from the past, discussing the importance of the clothes that were worn and placing famous singers in chronological order. The use of artefacts helps pupils' learning effectively, but they have limited opportunities to develop research skills by consulting a wide range of books. There is good support for all pupils to take part in the work, which promotes the progress of those with special educational needs and those

for whom English is an additional language. Pupils' needs may be met to a greater degree by providing more opportunities to develop their writing skills in history.

122. The long-term planning, based largely on national guidelines, provides teachers with clear indications of key aspects and skills to be developed and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Work is monitored through a portfolio of pupils' work, however there are limited opportunities to monitor the teaching of history so as to raise the standards and, at present, there are no assessment procedures to ensure consistent development of skills across the school. There is a new co-ordinator who as yet has had limited time to have an impact on raising standards and developing the curriculum further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

123. Standards in ICT are rising quickly, and are now above average for pupils at the end of Year 2. Since the previous inspection, when standards were judged as satisfactory, improvement has been good. Much of this improvement has come in the last two years when developing provision in ICT has been a priority for the school. The school is a member of the Smethwick Learning Network, which is a community-based network where 16 primary schools and two high schools along with six community centres are linked with the main aim of raising educational standards in numeracy and literacy along with an improvement in computer skill levels. The Network has provided good levels of support and guidance in the improvement of ICT resources at the school and the links have had a marked effect on raising standards throughout the school.
124. By the end of Year 2, most pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, attain standards above those expected nationally. Pupils confidently use the mouse and keyboard accurately, quickly acquiring a new range of skills at a good pace. The majority of pupils have limited access to computers at home; therefore achievement over time for the majority of pupils is good. Pupils sensibly work in pairs and are very keen to reinforce their knowledge and understanding, as was observed during a lunchtime computer club session. Appropriate links are made with mathematics, for example, pupils in Year 1 extract data, and then interpret the information by using their keyboard skills to answer suitable challenging questions.
125. Pupils in Year 2 continue to develop basic skills well, viewing a range of generated print styles, adding capital letters at the beginning of sentences and inserting letters where necessary. When editing a story, higher attaining pupils understand the need to highlight sections clearly before moving text to its rightful position in the document. In the computer suite, pupils concentrate hard and support each other very well when working in pairs.
126. Teaching is good. Teachers are always very supportive and encouraging, qualities that have a good effect on pupils' enthusiasm and good behaviour. Pupils are proud of their achievements and enjoy learning, which is made fun. In a good lesson observed in Year 2, pupils confidently used a CD-Rom to search for information using a menu. The activities were challenging and pupils responded well to the tasks. Working in pairs, pupils were required to select key words illustrating factual information stored in a variety of forms. The task required the pupils to share the pathways they took to find the necessary facts. The teacher then successfully introduced the vast amount of information that can be attained from the Internet. Less confident pupils had been partnered thoughtfully with more confident pupils, contributing to pupils' personal development as well as their computer knowledge. Most teachers are committed to improving provision within the subject, and recent government training has had a positive effect on their confidence in teaching new skills. The school is aware of the need to extend pupils' skills to link with other subjects. The ICT action plan appropriately reflects this intended development and the need to purchase additional software.
127. The subject is well managed by a highly enthusiastic co-ordinator, who is ably supported by a knowledgeable technician. She provides consistent good support for colleagues and has overseen major improvements in developing the equipment and resources that are now very good. Years 1

and 2 have a good sized computer suite and in the last few weeks a smaller computer suite has been completed in the Early Years Unit. The subject co-ordinator is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject, but, with her enthusiasm and expertise, the school's capacity for continued improvement is very good. New monitoring and assessment procedures are now in place, with pupils aware of their own skills and areas for further development, for example by answering statements such as 'I can now do ...', 'Next, I need to do ...'.

128. All classroom displays are enhanced by the use of the digital cameras and pupils' captions describing the event. For example, work in science related to living and non-living things involved pupils taking photographs of plant and animal life in the school grounds.

MUSIC

129. Standards in music are in line with those expected nationally at the end of Year 2 and have been satisfactorily maintained since the previous inspection. Achievement for most pupils from all ethnic groups is satisfactory. Higher attaining pupils achieve well because of the additional activities in which they choose to take part. The breadth of the curriculum is satisfactory, although recorder clubs and a choir make a good contribution to extending the skills of those with higher musical ability and enthusiasm. Pupils' learning is further enriched by visits from dancers and instrumentalists. These are often linked to particular celebrations in school and make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural development.
130. Pupils sing well when performing as a school. They are confident and tuneful. The words are sung with precision so that they are heard clearly by the audience. They listen carefully to the piano accompaniment and therefore are guided to crisp and precise rhythms in the range of songs they sing. The choir is particularly good. Pupils enjoy this activity and were very pleased to perform to new audiences during the inspection.
131. A recorder club gives those pupils who want them, good opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument. Lessons are fun and focus well on developing musical expertise. As a result, pupils are developing a feel for the rhythms and melodies in tunes. During the session observed, pupils automatically added an extra note to the improvised tune, reflecting an inner understanding of the way tempo and rhythm works in tunes. Careful assessment of how well pupils play the recorders leads to quiet but knowledgeable direction from the teacher on how they can improve the quality of the notes. For example in the session seen, pupils all played the notes B, A and G with good tone once it had been explained how to cover the middle hole firmly. Pupils are introduced to formal music so that they are beginning to recognise some notes for themselves. Composition skills are developed through improvisation games and this makes sure that potentially higher attaining pupils who take part in these activities achieve well and make good progress. Both clubs are attended by an equal number of boys and girls, and they achieve as well as each other.
132. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan lessons which develop relevant skills and knowledge of the way music works. Activities are suitably practical so pupils are developing satisfactory performance skills. Although teachers often talk about how well pupils are doing and why in lessons, opportunities for pupils themselves to talk about their work are limited. This does not help them to develop speaking skills to a high enough level for them to evaluate their own performance and those of others. In some lessons, learning support assistants give good support to pupils who find it hard to concentrate. They give gentle encouragement and talk to them about what they are doing so that they stay fully involved in all the activities. In some lessons however, supporting adults are not always available, or used as effectively as they could be, to support pupils individually with understanding musical vocabulary or to help in group composition activities. In some lessons, learning is unsatisfactory because information on what pupils already know and can do is not used well enough to plan tasks which challenge and extend pupils' learning. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language and those with lower or average ability make satisfactory rather than good progress.

133. A visiting musician teaches each year group each week for one term each year. The quality of this teaching is good, due to their musical knowledge and expertise and it has a positive impact on raising standards. Activities are practical and involve pupils in performing and composing their own tunes and rhythms. All pupils are therefore involved in lessons and concentrate well throughout. In one lesson seen, pupils in Year 1 showed a satisfactory understanding of fast and slow. They successfully composed a short piece of music to depict the movement of a snail, using their knowledge of short and long sounds to choose and play percussion instruments in a particular style. Their understanding was reinforced through well-chosen extracts of music, which were played in fast and slow styles.
134. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There is a detailed scheme of work, which outlines learning precisely and this gives suitable guidance to teachers. Learning outcomes are identified and these form the basis on which assessments of pupils' standards are measured. The information gained is not used effectively enough to match the level of activities to pupils' prior learning and skills, however, and is a weakness in provision. Teaching is not monitored closely enough, and weaknesses in the lack of challenge in some classes have not been identified.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. Standards by the end of Year 2 are generally in line with those expected nationally and have been satisfactorily maintained since the previous inspection. From teachers' planning it can be seen that pupils have an appropriate range of opportunities to develop satisfactory skills and knowledge in dance, games, gymnastics and athletics over the year. During the inspection, because of timetable constraints, it was only possible to see lessons in dance and games.
136. By the end of Year 2, pupils of all ethnic groups exhibit a good awareness of the space around them and use it satisfactorily when running, jumping and dodging in their warm-up sessions. Pupils are developing satisfactory control of handling balls of different sizes. In Year 1 pupils bounce large balls accurately and mostly catch the ball with ease. They work well with a partner, carefully bouncing and catching the ball as they send it towards each other. In Year 2 this satisfactory control and effective hand and eye co-ordination has further developed so pupils aim a small ball fairly accurately into a box held by a partner. Some pupils make good progress in this skill as they quickly judge the trajectory required for the ball to drop into the box without bouncing out again. In dance, pupils in Year 1 show satisfactory balance and control of their bodies when moving in response to music. They use different levels of movement and different speeds as they characterise searching at the back of cupboards, down low in the bottom drawers or stretch high to reach the very top. They enjoy the range of music provided and show satisfactory awareness of rhythm and speed, adapting their movements as the music changes tempo and mood.
137. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The structure in most lessons is good providing a steady development of the skills. Teachers develop pupils' co-operation skills well by giving many opportunities for them to work with a partner or in groups. A weakness in one lesson, however, was the narrow range of strategies used. All the activities were developed within a team game structure and this resulted in many pupils not being actively engaged while they were waiting their turn. This resulted in a few pupils losing concentration and their progress was diminished. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and they use commercial resources such as music and movement tapes to support their teaching effectively. At its best the teacher controls the tape to highlight skills that need greater improvement or to celebrate good effort. Teachers do not always, however, evaluate the planning provided in some commercial schemes to ensure that it builds effectively on what pupils can already do. In one lesson the teacher's lack of confidence resulted in pupils continuing to consider how to improve what they could already do well. This slowed the lesson and reduced the opportunities for greater progress. Teachers use pupils' demonstration effectively to raise pupils' awareness of the ways they can improve. Pupils are keen to use these ideas and try hard to further develop the skills they are practising.

138. The co-ordinator for physical education provides good leadership and guidance for colleagues. She has compiled a good range of resources to support their planning. She has also developed with co-ordinators from other schools a simple but effective system for recording teachers' assessments of pupils' knowledge and skills. The system has not yet been introduced, but is likely to give a simple yet effective means by which pupils' progress can be tracked. The co-ordinator has started to monitor the quality of teaching, pupils' learning and curricular planning, which is beginning to provide an overview of standards in the subject and provides the basis for her action plan for further development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Standards have risen and are now above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2. The co-ordinator has dealt with all the weaknesses identified in the previous report systematically and conscientiously. There is a detailed action plan, which identifies targets that result from a careful evaluation of the subject's performance. It focuses appropriately on improving the quality of learning for all pupils. As a result, all pupils achieve well. Lessons are supported by a range of religious artefacts and books, and these help the pupils to understand how people from different faiths praise God, and use symbols to show to which religion they belong. The curriculum reflects the religious groups in school and this means that pupils can share their experiences with each other in lessons and when celebrating festivals. This is helping them to develop a very good knowledge and respect for the religious beliefs of others. Visitors and parents share their knowledge and expertise and this makes learning more meaningful for all pupils in the school.
140. The quality of teaching and learning are good. A particularly strong feature in lessons is the emphasis on developing the skill of reflection. This makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual development and is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Every lesson finishes with two minutes thinking time, when pupils consider carefully what they have learnt. This helps them to focus not only on what they have learnt about a particular religion, but also what they have learnt from this in terms of the way we lead our lives and behave towards one another. Lessons are practical and this engages the pupils' interest and motivates them to take part. In one lesson learning about the 5 Ks in Sikhism, Year 1 pupils listened to one boy's account of his visit to the Golden Temple in India and how important this was to his religion. A visiting parent explained what each item was and how it was used, and used simple vocabulary so the pupils understood the importance of these to Sikh people. The practical use of artefacts is particularly supportive to pupils who speak English as an additional language because they gain an understanding through watching as well as listening and speaking. Role-play is used effectively in some lessons to make learning fun and more meaningful. The importance of Baptism was reinforced successfully when pupils were involved in acting out the ceremony, following the local vicar's guidance for accuracy of the event.
141. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator provides clear direction for the subject and has been instrumental in organising the practical activities and visits which bring learning alive. Assessment procedures are still developing and although there is a useful portfolio of pupils' work, because lessons are practical, this does not contain as yet much information about pupils' achievement. The co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils' work well. She talks to pupils to make sure they have suitable levels of knowledge and understanding about the religions studied. However, she relies too much on teachers' perceptions on how well a lesson has gone, as formal monitoring of teaching and learning has not been planned. There are clear plans for the future use of ICT to support pupils' learning which is likely to further strengthen the provision.