

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **RYDERS GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

West Bromwich

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103979

Headteacher: Mr M S Hibbert

Reporting inspector: Mr C Kessell  
20695

Dates of inspection: 16<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> September 2002

Inspection number: 246335

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Claypit Lane West Bromwich West Midlands
Postcode:	B70 9UJ
Telephone number:	0121 553 0658
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Rock
Date of previous inspection:	12 <sup>th</sup> - 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20695	Mr C Kessell	Registered inspector	Physical education	Information about the school The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19697	Mrs J Moorhouse	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18709	Ms N Bee	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Geography History Religious education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
22805	Mrs J Greer	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
12172	Mrs W Knight	Team inspector	English Music Special educational needs English as an additional language Educational inclusion	How well pupils are taught
19897	Mr A Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>30</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Ryders Green Primary School is above average in size with 333 full-time pupils (196 boys and 137 girls) aged between four and eleven. There is also a designated nursery offering 60 part-time places. This community school serves the West Bromwich district of Sandwell. The community is recognised as having high levels of social and economic disadvantage. The school is part of the Greets Green urban regeneration project. The attainment of the pupils when they start school is very low, particularly their skills in language and communication. The majority of pupils are of white ethnic heritage although many other ethnic backgrounds are represented, including Black Caribbean and African, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi. At 27 per cent, the percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high. About half of these pupils are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Twenty-two per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is above average. The majority of these pupils are identified as having learning and behavioural difficulties. Four pupils have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is 50 per cent; this is well above average. The proportion of pupils who leave or join the school during the academic year is much higher than that found in most other schools. A number of senior staff left the school during the last academic year, and the school now has a number of temporary teachers.

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

The school is providing an acceptable education for its pupils but standards in English, mathematics and science are still too low. It provides a caring environment and is very well managed by the new headteacher who has a good understanding of how to develop and continue improving the school. He is well supported in this aim by his senior staff and governors. There is a commitment to improvement amongst the staff. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and consistently good in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>. The pupils make sound progress. The behaviour of the pupils is good; however, some of the older pupils in the school have become disaffected with education and do not always have positive attitudes to learning. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The headteacher is a very good leader. The school is moving well in the right direction.
- The quality of education provided for the children in the reception and nursery classes enables them to make good progress.
- The care provided for the pupils is good.
- Most pupils behave well because of the good quality moral and social development provided for them.

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

- Standards, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The use of assessment information and the provision for lower attaining pupils, pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language, particularly in literacy.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to the parents and carers of all pupils in the school.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Improvement since the school's previous inspection in June 2000 has been satisfactory overall. There have been some improvements in English, mathematics and science standards and the school has received two achievement awards. However, standards are still not high enough. The improvements in provision in the nursery class have been very good. Children now get a good start to their education and make good progress in both nursery and reception. The school has developed a broad and

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<sup>1</sup> The reception and nursery classes

balanced curriculum and there are now policies and schemes of work for all subjects. These will also be reviewed during the current academic year. On occasions, some of the curriculum experiences offered to pupils are not as relevant as they could be, given many of the pupils have limited language and communication skills. Although the school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance, there is considerable room for improvement in terms of attendance and punctuality.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	D	B
Mathematics	E*	E*	E	C
Science	E	E	B	A

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Results of the 2001 national tests indicated that standards in English were below the national average and standards in mathematics well below. Standards in science were above average. Previously, standards in mathematics in years 2000 and 1999 were very low, within the bottom five per cent nationally. When compared to schools of a similar nature, standards in 2001 were above average in English, average in mathematics and well above average in science. Up to 2001, the school's trend of improvement was above the national trend. National comparisons were not available at the time of the inspection, but the 2002 results at the end of Year 6 show that the percentages of pupils that achieved the expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science were not as high as the previous year. However, there were improvements in the 2002 national test results at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.

Standards are currently well below average in English and mathematics in Year 2 (the end of Key Stage 1) and Year 6 (the end of Key Stage 2). Standards in science are well below average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. With the exception of some areas of physical education, standards are not high enough in the other subjects of the curriculum. Much of this is due to the pupils' limited language and communication skills and the negative impact that this has on other subjects. Standards are low in ICT because the subject was not taught during the last academic year as a result of equipment and resources being stolen. Pupils' achievements in the Foundation Stage are good and currently achievement is satisfactory through the rest of the school. However, there is evidence of some pupils underachieving in previous years. Pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress overall. The school did not achieve its statutory targets for 2002 in English and mathematics. They were unrealistic.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory overall. However, some older pupils show negative attitudes to learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. This is particularly noticeable in the playground and when the pupils move around the school. There is very little oppressive behaviour and pupils of different backgrounds and cultures get on well together.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. Personal development is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy responsibility but their use of initiative is more limited.
Attendance	The attendance rate is very low when compared to other schools and a number of pupils arrive late in the morning. Not all parents are helpful in trying to improve the situation and some do not fulfil their responsibilities by ensuring that their children attend regularly and arrive on time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is judged to be satisfactory. However, it is consistently good in the nursery and reception classes. Many lessons in the nursery class are very good. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching was less than at the time of the previous inspection. Literacy and numeracy lessons are satisfactory overall with basic skills being taught well in Years 1 and 2. Work is better matched to the pupils' individual needs in numeracy. In some literacy lessons pupils are given inappropriate work which results in them failing to understand the task and then losing concentration. This also applies to other subjects. Better use could be made of day-to-day assessment, to ensure pupils' learning in lessons has been effective. Lessons are thoroughly planned and the control and management of the pupils is good overall. Better use is now made of non-teaching assistants. They make significant contributions to the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Most pupils are willing to make an effort but when work is too hard or not sufficiently interesting, pupils lose interest and become confused.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage are good. The curriculum for Years 1 to 6 is broad and balanced and statutory requirements are met. On occasions, the curriculum provided is not appropriate for lower attaining pupils. The range of activities outside lessons is less than one would normally expect to find in a school of this size.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The new national Code of Practice is currently being adopted and school policies are being revised. Teachers' planning does not always reflect the needs of these pupils as identified in their individual education plans.



Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory overall. School practice is now being formalised starting with children in the Foundation Stage. Their competency with the English language is being assessed so individual language plans can be developed. Older pupils are provided with effective support from non-teaching assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. The pupils' moral and social development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Very good procedures are in place to ensure the monitoring and promotion of good behaviour. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is not well developed.
Partnership with parents	The parents' views of the school are positive. The school's links with parents, in terms of the information provided for them and their contribution to pupils' learning, are satisfactory.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The new headteacher is an experienced school manager and is ensuring a very clear educational direction for the school to continue to raise the quality of education and standards. Since his arrival, he has identified important areas for development. He is well supported by the deputy and senior members of staff. Losing a number of key staff during the last academic year has resulted in some subject areas having temporary or less experienced co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and offer effective support. They fulfil statutory requirements and are satisfactorily involved in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation are at the early stages of development. Target setting for pupils is planned, which will enable the school to monitor progress more effectively and some analysis of national data and assessment information has been undertaken. The use of performance management is a strength.
The strategic use of resources	Staff and resources are appropriately deployed. From September each class has had its own non-teaching assistant and this is a good level of support staff. Resources to support pupils' learning are satisfactory overall. As school numbers are falling, careful attention is paid to ensuring that the financial resources available to the school are used soundly.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a nice atmosphere.</li><li>• The staff are friendly, approachable and co-operative.</li><li>• The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li><li>• Children make good progress in school.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information on how children are getting on and working more closely with parents.</li><li>• The amount of work to do at home.</li><li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li></ul>

The views above are taken from the pre-inspection meeting that was attended by six parents and the 75 responses to the parents' questionnaire. The inspection team supports most of the parents' positive views. The information provided for parents is satisfactory and the majority of parents are pleased with the school. The amount of homework provided for pupils is also satisfactory. With regards to the range of activities outside lessons, the inspection team would agree that more could be done for the pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 By the end of their time in reception the majority of children reach levels well below those expected nationally in all areas of learning. This is similar to the previous inspection. The levels the children achieve are hindered because, although teaching is good, many children enter the nursery with very poor levels of communication, literacy and language skills. However, children are now getting a better start to their education than at the time of the previous inspection. Attainment on entry to reception is well below average but is higher than it used to be only a couple of years ago. The school is confident that the good start that children now get in the Foundation Stage will eventually improve standards further up in the school. The converse of this is that many pupils who are now in Years 4, 5 and 6 joined the school with very poor levels of attainment.

2 The children enjoy coming to school in the Foundation Stage<sup>2</sup> and show positive attitudes to learning. The majority have very weak speaking and listening skills and this poses difficulties when adults try to encourage discussion. Behaviour is good overall, although one or two pupils have difficulty concentrating. As the children progress through the Foundation Stage they become more adept at listening to stories and then talking about them, but communication remains a difficulty and affects standards in other areas of learning. Children in reception start to record their ideas and experiences but at a level much lower than one would normally expect. To reinforce their mathematical development children in nursery and reception sing number rhymes. As they get older, children begin to develop a very basic mathematical vocabulary. The children have a limited understanding of the world around them, although this is well promoted. The children learn about their senses and identify the names of colours. However, they have limited opportunities to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. The children's physical development varies. They use wheeled vehicles and climbing apparatus but are less confident and proficient with smaller equipment such as crayons, pencils and scissors. The children show enjoyment when they sing and learn songs. They begin to use paints with more control and develop their own ideas and feelings in the designated play areas.

3 The National Curriculum test results for 2001 showed that the pupils in Year 6 achieved standards that were below average in English, well below average in mathematics and above average in science when compared nationally. In comparison to similar schools, standards were above average in English, average in mathematics and well above average in science. The school's trend of improvement over five years up to 2001 was above the national trend. At the time of the inspection, there were no national comparisons available for the 2002 results. However, the percentage of pupils that achieved the expected level 4 in English, mathematics and science was lower than the previous year. There is also evidence that a number of pupils from this year group underachieved in relation to their prior attainment.

4 National Curriculum test results in 2001 for pupils in Year 2, were very low in reading, writing and mathematics and in the bottom five per cent nationally. When compared to similar schools, standards were well below average for these areas of learning. The results for 2002 showed an improvement in the percentages of pupils achieving the expected level 2 in all three areas.

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<sup>2</sup> The nursery and reception classes

5 Even taking account of the challenging circumstances in which the school operates, standards are not high enough. Standards are improving at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) as a result of better Foundation Stage provision. At the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6) the school still has to compensate for low levels of attainment that pupils achieved when they were younger. There is also some disaffection with learning, as a result of the poor quality of education that these pupils originally received. However, unless the quality of teaching and learning improves beyond satisfactory, these pupils will not make significant gains in their education.

6 Although pupils' achievements are currently satisfactory, there are some inconsistencies. Where teaching is good or better, the pupils make better progress. At Key Stage 1 the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively and this is helping the pupils to improve their skills in English and mathematics at a better rate than found in the rest of the school. Unfortunately, the pupils' poor language and communication skills slows their progress in other subjects as does the inappropriateness of some of the curriculum. When looking at the performance of boys and girls over the three years from 1999 to 2001 there are some differences and the school is at the early stages of trying to develop strategies to prevent significant differences in gender performance. The school's statutory targets for 2002 were not achieved, as they were unrealistic. The targets for 2003 are more realistic but offer an element of challenge.

7 Pupils with special educational needs generally make satisfactory progress because learning support assistants focus support on these pupils during activities in lessons. This enables them to tackle the tasks set for the class. However, planning does not regularly focus on needs identified in pupils' individual education plans, which means that pupils are not building confidently on what they already know and can do, so progress is not always consistent.

8 The school has recently identified a need to develop provision for pupils who have English as an additional language. Plans are rightly addressing pupils from the Foundation Stage first, and their language competency is currently being assessed so that individual language plans can be written, and support focused on precise needs. This is beginning to work effectively so that nursery and reception children receive good support. In Years 1 to 6 pupils who use English as an additional language receive the same level of support as peers with special educational needs. The additional input of learning support assistants ensures they make progress on class tasks, but not necessarily on specific aspects of language acquisition.

9 Standards are currently well below average in English, mathematics and science in Year 2. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are weak and inhibit their learning in all areas of the curriculum. Many pupils listen passively and are not confident in volunteering answers to questions. Although the pupils are enthusiastic readers, many can only manage simple texts. Writing has improved since the previous inspection but it is often only the higher attaining pupils who consistently write in sentences using capital letters and full stops. The pupils' handwriting is consistent and similar to that expected for pupils of this age. They do not confidently recall addition and subtraction facts to 10 and some of the lower attaining pupils still have difficulty in reading and writing single-digit numbers. Pupils' mathematical language is underdeveloped and many find it difficult to explain their answers to questions. Their limited understanding of the world around them inhibits the development of scientific concepts. The majority of pupils have a weak scientific knowledge and understanding and have difficulty in recording their work. Only the higher attaining pupils achieve the levels expected for pupils of this age.

10 Standards in English and mathematics are still well below average in Year 6. Standards in science are below average. The pupils' speaking and listening skills continue to

be weak, as does their reading. They are not familiar with strategies to work out unfamiliar or difficult words nor are they able to locate information effectively using books. Their research skills are at a very basic level. As one would expect, writing skills are also limited, with very few pupils being able to write at length or in an interesting way. In mathematics, very few pupils are able to develop their own strategies for problem solving and their understanding of place value and the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages is at a low level. The pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding is better, although still below average. They demonstrate an understanding of animal and plant habitats and some are able to identify what constitutes a fair test. However, there are still a significant number of pupils who require support with their activities and are unable to think scientifically.

11 Standards are not high enough in the remaining subjects. Much of this is due to the pupils' weak language and communication skills and their limited general knowledge, particularly amongst the youngest pupils. Sometimes the curriculum is not effectively adjusted to take this into account. Although no longer an issue, the quality of education that some of the older pupils received in the past, accounts for the low standards and the pupils' limited progress over time. In the case of ICT, the subject was not taught at all during the last academic year as the school's computers were stolen. In some elements of physical education, the pupils achieve an appropriate level, for example in games. However, by the time they leave the school the pupils have not achieved the expected levels in gymnastics or swimming.

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

12 Overall pupils' behaviour and their relationships with each other and the adults who help them are all good. When responding to the parents' questionnaire, 89 per cent of parents agreed with the statement that behaviour is good.

13 All children settle into the nursery and reception classes well, and enjoy coming to school. Behaviour is good in the Foundation Stage and the children develop good relationships with the adults who work with them. During their time in the nursery the children begin to develop good relationships with each other and as they get older these relationships are strengthened. Most children show positive attitudes to learning. When given the opportunity the children develop independence skills and begin to tidy up at the end of sessions.

14 Pupils' attitudes to school in Years 1 to 6 are satisfactory. In lessons where teaching is good pupils' attitudes to activities are better. In these lessons there is a constructive atmosphere in the classrooms with pupils being keen to learn as they enthusiastically respond to the teachers' questioning. Examples of pupils showing good attitudes to school were seen in a Year 3 and 4 literacy lesson when pupils used whiteboards confidently as they showed their teacher how well they were doing learning their spellings. A significant number of pupils at the lower end of the school are hesitant to relate to adults because they have limited language skills; however they are generally interested in what they are doing and listen carefully and courteously to teachers. On the occasions where teachers' expectations are low or tasks are not accurately matched to the needs of all pupils in the class a few are sometimes disrespectful and openly fail to listen or pay adequate attention to what they are being told. This was clearly seen in a geography lesson in Years 3 and 4 where the teacher did not promote listening skills well and the task was too difficult for some to complete. When teaching is stimulating and pupils are totally absorbed in what they have to do, as seen when pupils in Years 5 and 6 thought about the use of prayer within worship in a religious education lesson, attitudes and behaviour are very good. The previous inspection reported that most pupils had positive attitudes to their work and this has been maintained.

15 Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is good. All adults have worked successfully on the development of good behaviour in classrooms, in the playground, when moving about the school and when eating their lunch. Pupils are rewarded for good behaviour and most respond positively to this. The headteacher has identified a minority of older pupils that are disillusioned and disaffected by school and learning.

16 Throughout the school, the majority of pupils are polite, friendly and well behaved. It was refreshing to see how very well behaved the children in the reception class were in the daily assemblies. Boys and girls of all ages and backgrounds get on well with each other, showing respect for the feelings of others. Break times are pleasant social occasions where the pupils behave well, playing together without any sign of bullying or other anti-social behaviour. The headteacher has no recent reported incidents of bullying. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 speak knowledgeably about what they have been taught to do if there are any incidents of bullying. The school regularly invites a specialist in to talk to the pupils about bullying issues and gives them opportunities to talk confidentially to her if they have any problems.

17 Pupils generally understand and accept the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. There is no evidence to suggest that when minor misbehaviour does occur it is oppressive, or that there is vindictive bullying or sexism within the school. There were seven fixed term exclusions in the year preceding the inspection.

18 The provision for pupils to develop personally is satisfactory. Pupils are identified in all classes to take responsibility in completing daily classroom routines such as taking the register back to the office and sharpening the pencils. Even the young children in reception are encouraged to take the register back to the office after previously being shown the way. Pupils are conscientious in fulfilling their classroom and school responsibilities. However, there are fewer opportunities provided for them to assume responsibility than one would normally expect to find in a school this size and with the age range of pupils.

19 Inspectors support the view of the large majority of parents that the school helps its pupils to become mature and responsible individuals. Pupils respect the values and beliefs of others and this is apparent in the way the majority relate to each other both in lessons and elsewhere.

20 Pupils' attendance is very low and continues to be an issue from the previous inspection. There is no evidence of truancy, but many pupils arrive to school late each day. The school has worked hard to develop strategies to improve the attendance rate but parents are not always supporting the school or their children's learning when they do not get them to school on time.

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

21 The quality of teaching has slightly improved since the previous inspection with less unsatisfactory teaching during this inspection. Ten per cent of teaching was very good, 37 per cent good and 48 per cent satisfactory. Five per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The best teaching is now in nursery and reception, and the proportion of good teaching was less in Years 5 and 6 than observed previously. Expectations are now often unrealistic and work is not so well matched to pupils' needs. Non-teaching assistants are better used and make a significant contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language, although some are still underused during whole class introductions. When responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, 83 per cent of parents judged teaching to be good.

22 Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in the nursery it is sometimes very good. A very good system has been developed to plan for lessons. Most activities are interesting and relevant to the needs of the children. Information on individuals that is collected on a daily basis is consistently used to move individuals or groups of children on to the next step of learning. Speaking and listening skills are well promoted in all areas of learning. Adults interact within groups well, and opportunities are not missed as the teacher reinforces skills and basic vocabulary previously taught.

23 The teaching of English is satisfactory overall with strengths in promoting basic skills in Key Stage 1. It is clear to pupils what they are expected to learn because in each lesson the objective is shared and discussed at the end. Regular work on words assists the reading and spelling of the words met, while the study of a longer text introduces pupils to different types of writing. However, the work is not always accurately planned to build on existing skills and matched to the different needs of pupils, which results in lack of understanding and failure to sustain concentration in many lessons. While in the best lessons questioning is effective in developing pupils' language, on too many occasions pupils are not being helped to develop their speaking skills.

24 Mathematics is also soundly taught. As in English, pupils know what they are learning through explicit sharing of lesson objectives. Lessons are conducted using the National Numeracy Strategy framework with effective 'short burst' activities, a main focus and a plenary session. The main focus regularly uses recommended strategies such as involving pupils in working examples on the board, using pupils' errors to help them understand better and sharing different ways of calculating to give them a range of methods. Work is more often appropriately matched to different needs and as a result pupils are more productive when working independently. A range of methods including practical tasks, games and puzzles provide interest and variety to help pupils sustain their concentration.

25 Most teachers ensure that pupils pay attention in lessons by firm control, but regularly praise their efforts to encourage them to keep trying. Teachers clearly plan what they expect to cover in each lesson, and apply the practice of sharing objectives with the class in other subjects too. Expositions and instructions are usually clear and relevant and essential information is regularly recapitulated and reinforced to assist pupils in remembering it. During the inspection week many different methods were used to engage and sustain pupils' interest. At best, lessons are briskly conducted to allow pupils to learn in different ways and provide a range of experiences. In a Year 2 art lesson, for example, pupils explored a variety of natural objects by feeling them before describing these feelings to the class, then seeing examples of the work of famous painters before observing and drawing one at a time themselves. They later had opportunities to see each other's work before appreciating and appraising it. Under these circumstances pupils sustain concentration and are productive for extended periods.

26 Short-term targets and time deadlines set in lessons are often effective in ensuring pupils share and extend particular knowledge as seen in a Year 5 and 6 science lesson when pupils brainstormed particular habitats. Not all teachers adhere to deadlines they set, though, and pupils' concentration wanes. In many lessons the pace is not brisk enough to ensure that pupils work hard all the way through, or it slows after a purposeful start. For instance, after a pacy warm up to a Year 2 gymnastics lesson in which pupils moved energetically in a variety of ways, pupils queued for a turn to use mats on which they practised and improved their rolls. In this lesson use of resources had an adverse effect on learning, and this is not uncommon. While resources are often well used in mathematics and history, with a variety of practical apparatus, historical objects, videos and tape recordings being regularly deployed, they are less well used in other subjects. In a Year 2 religious education lesson on Buddhist stories, for example, the lesson relied on oral input only. In many lessons where literacy skills are required pupils are not given aids to key words they might use which reduces their

productivity. Worksheets and activities do not always ensure pupils focus sufficiently on what they need to learn. For example, in a Year 3 and 4 literacy lesson pupils only had a small space in which to draft the beginning of a story so most pupils just listed the names of a few characters. In a Year 1 music lesson pupils had to wait to experiment with making sounds using everyday objects when all pupils could have done so simultaneously.

27 In many subjects relevant technical vocabulary is introduced and used by teachers so that pupils are familiar with it. In mathematics, during a lesson on subtraction Year 3 and 4 pupils explored the terms 'difference', 'take away' and 'less than'. However, when too many different ideas are introduced in the same lesson pupils become confused if teachers move on before the meanings are fully absorbed. In the Year 1 music lesson previously mentioned, pupils could not distinguish between loud and soft, low and high and fast and slow because they were all mentioned during one activity. Similarly, the best questioning elicits better formulated and full responses from pupils, but on too many occasions pupils offer single word answers and it is teachers who translate these utterances into a reason or a suggestion. In a Year 5 and 6 design and technology lesson pupils made contributions to ways of testing materials for water resistance in preparation for selecting one for making an air raid shelter. However, their suggestions were focused on seeing if water would seep through a given material and it was the teacher who developed their suggestions into an actual test that enabled comparison. When lesson content is more closely related to pupils' personal experience discussion is more fruitful. In a Year 5 and 6 religious education lesson pupils shared feelings about Islam and Christian prayer and extended their understanding of why people pray.

28 When pupils fail to understand and learning is limited it is most often because elements of the work are not well matched to pupils' needs or prior attainment. Unrealistic expectations are one of the weaknesses in literacy lessons, especially for pupils in lower and average attaining ability groups. Pupils who have limited reading skills, for instance, in Year 3 and 4 are asked to locate exclamations and questions in a text, but most pupils just identify the associated punctuation marks, not advancing their expressive reading of such elements in the text. At worst, teachers do not know enough about pupils in their classes to organise them in suitable groups. When pupils' attainment is accurately judged they can apply existing skills as seen in a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson where various written methods of multiplication were revised and further ones developed. Those pupils identified from marked work as likely to experience difficulties were given additional support by the class teacher and all made progress.

29 If support is specifically targeted in this way, pupils' learning is often good, but on too many occasions it is not as well focused. Learning support assistants are expected to support pupils who use English as an additional language and special educational needs during lessons. They are often effective in ensuring pupils tackle the work set for the class, but their roles are not always defined in relation to specific identified needs such as individual education plan targets, with the result that pupils are not building consistently from secure knowledge and understanding. Learning is generally satisfactory, but not always as good as it could be. Better use could be made of ICT, particularly in supporting pupils with special educational needs.

30 Relevant homework to support work done in class is regularly set. Rewards are often given for its completion, but a low proportion of pupils actually do the tasks on time.



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

31 The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is good. It is organised in accordance with national guidance and activities are systematically planned for the children's different abilities. There are regular opportunities for structured outside play. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

32 The overall curriculum is broad and balanced but not always relevant. This is different to the previous inspection when it was judged to meet the specific needs of all pupils. The curriculum meets statutory National Curriculum requirements and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. National strategies for promoting literacy and numeracy skills are in place. A structured scheme for teaching ICT is only just being introduced; the subject is not yet properly integrated into other subjects. The promotion of literacy and numeracy skills across the whole curriculum is underdeveloped. Speaking and listening skills are also not well promoted.

33 Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. Senior staff and subject co-ordinators regularly monitor the curriculum. Although generally sound, the schemes do not take sufficient account of the very limited attainment level of many pupils in Key Stage 1 or for less able pupils and those with special educational needs. The staff is aware of this mismatch. As a result there is a rolling programme of curriculum reviews in place to reconsider the schemes.

34 Some subjects are enriched by good links with local industries, organisations and visits, such as the promotion of food hygiene with Burger King and the trips to the local art gallery. Personal and social development is soundly promoted through the whole curriculum and in specific lessons. A good provision is the residential visits for pupils in Key Stage 1 and older Key Stage 2 pupils. Education for sex, health and drugs awareness is taught appropriately through science topics. There are fewer opportunities for curriculum enrichment through out of school clubs than in many schools.

35 Relationships with the partner secondary school are at an early stage of development. Both headteachers have been appointed recently. They have developed good links to ease the transfer of pupils from Year 6 to Year 7 both socially and academically. An introductory meeting between all staff of both schools has taken place, but detailed meetings to consider the transition of work in each subject area are not yet planned. There are no curriculum support or discussion groups with other local primary schools.

36 The school's intention to ensure pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language have full access to the same broad and balanced curriculum as all the other pupils is met by allocating learning support assistant time throughout the school day, but there are weaknesses. This arrangement does ensure that all pupils participate fully in all lessons, although there could be greater involvement with the identified pupils during whole class sessions in some classes. Proposed developments intended to focus learning support assistant time to specific identified needs are beginning to have a positive impact in the Foundation Stage which augurs well for the future support of all pupils.

37 Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory; this has been maintained since the time of the previous inspection. The standard of provision for moral and social development is good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when moral and social development were reported as satisfactory. However, all four aspects are not suitably promoted through a range of planned activities

across the curriculum although the school is working towards them becoming an integrated part of whole school life.

38 The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The main sources of spiritual development are collective acts of worship and teaching in religious education. Inspectors saw acts of worship of good quality led by the headteacher. Acts of worship are of a broadly Christian character but include stories and celebrations from other faiths. Assemblies are planned around a series of themes that reinforce sound moral teaching and introduce pupils to the traditions of Christianity and other world faiths. Festivals such as Harvest and Diwali are celebrated and pupils are encouraged to think about and reflect on the theme of the day, for example making new starts and friendship. There are insufficient opportunities within the subjects of the curriculum for pupils to gain spiritual development through reflection on aspects of their work. However, inspectors saw spiritual development enhanced in a religious education lesson when pupils were involved in a discussion on prayer and during a 'cool down' at the end of a physical education lesson when pupils listened attentively to a story told by the teacher. Pupils are well behaved as they enter and leave the hall while music is playing.

39 The provision for moral development is good and has improved since the time of the previous inspection. Moral issues are regularly explored in assemblies and right and wrong actions are recognised through a very clear behaviour policy. School rules are displayed clearly in all classrooms although without appropriate variation for different age groups. Teachers adhere closely to the behaviour policy and issue rewards such as house points, details of which are displayed in all classrooms and the school hall. Awards and certificates are publicly acknowledged in the weekly 'praise assembly'. While independence is fostered by giving pupils jobs around the school, there are few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own work and the potential for allowing pupils to show initiative is not fully explored.

40 Provision for pupils' social development is good and this is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. Inspectors saw pupils working co-operatively in pairs and small groups during lessons in mathematics and ICT. In a Year 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were successfully working with a 'maths buddy', the pairs comprising one pupil more able at mathematics and one needing more help. There is a newly formed school council and each class has chosen two representatives. The pupils have begun to discuss issues related to the school environment such as having a part of the playground designated as a 'football free zone'. Opportunities for interaction outside lessons are provided through after-school clubs and a programme of visits to places of interest such as a canal heritage centre, a local urban regeneration centre and the Walsall Art Gallery. Residential visits for older and younger pupils provide an additional opportunity for social development.

41 Pupils' cultural development is satisfactorily promoted. Through their religious education lessons pupils learn about the beliefs, traditions and values of the major world faiths. However pupils do not benefit from a wide range of visits to places of worship and visits from people of different ethnic groups. During a Year 2 art lesson, inspectors observed pupils given an opportunity to observe and appreciate examples of work by Monet, Manet and Van Gogh. However, art and music are not playing an important part in the cultural life of the school. There is a sound collection of resources to promote cultural development including religious objects and musical instruments.

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

42 The school takes good care of its pupils. The procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good and the school takes care to ensure all staff are aware of

named personnel and procedures. There is evidence of thorough and careful monitoring by the deputy headteacher that is effective in providing good conditions for pupils to learn. Policies are in line with local procedures. One member of staff is the named co-ordinator for looked after children. The school has two members of staff qualified in first aid and first aid procedures are displayed in classrooms and around the school. All the necessary procedures are in place for dealing with minor accidents or incidents. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy following local guidelines. The governors' buildings and premises committee are involved with monitoring health and safety procedures and carry out regular general audits with the school's site manager. Governors are aware of the need to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils and staff. There are satisfactory procedures to prevent pupils accessing inappropriate Internet information.

43 Supervision at lunchtime is satisfactorily organised through a team of supervisors. Supervisors working with younger pupils in the dining room are kind and sensitive towards the needs of those children at the beginning of their time in school. Members of the lunchtime staff are aware of the school's code of conduct and reward good behaviour, sensible play and good manners by selecting their 'class of the week' that is mentioned in praise assembly. As a result, lunchtimes are happy, orderly occasions that make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

44 The school has good procedures for monitoring absence and lateness and has adopted several appropriate strategies for encouraging those pupils who are persistently absent or late in arriving. However, during the inspection these strategies were having limited success. Attendance and punctuality have not improved and are having a negative effect on pupils' learning. The school's secretary follows up unexplained absence by telephone on the first day. The headteacher monitors attendance and lateness carefully and an education welfare officer has been involved in visiting families that are a cause of concern. Parents are informed of their responsibilities through the school's prospectus that emphasises the need for good attendance and punctuality and advises parents on the undesirability of taking their children out of school for holidays during term time. Good class attendance is rewarded on a weekly basis with a class prize and there are termly certificates and a yearly trophy for pupils with attendance above 90 per cent.

45 The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Good behaviour is publicly recognised during 'praise assembly'. Rules are consistently displayed throughout classrooms and around the school and pupils were involved in their development. Most staff have a good understanding of the fundamentals of the systems of the behaviour policy and consistently apply the rewards and consequences. Inspectors saw good behaviour recognised and rewarded with praise and house points. Bullying is not an issue in this school.

46 Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are well supported through consistent use of the school's code of conduct and are usually well-integrated into lessons. Good liaison arrangements ensure pupils with special educational needs are provided with necessary support or advice by reference to outside agencies when needed.

47 The school fully complies with the requirements to administer statutory tests at the end of the key stages and these results are beginning to be analysed. All pupils are now tested at the end of each year in Years 3 to 6 but these procedures have not been in place long enough to have had an impact on standards. The co-ordinator is working towards the better use of data collected to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils in order to move them forward. The idea of target setting has been discussed and some pupils have English and mathematics targets although they are of a broad nature. There are no consistent procedures across the school for target setting.

48 The previous report indicated that the school had made reasonable progress in addressing the issue related to the use of assessment in ensuring pupils' education was continuous and progressive. Evidence from this inspection shows that assessment procedures are satisfactory and in the process of development. Staff training by the co-ordinator has improved practice in assessment and she is aware of the need to continue to develop assessment procedures and to monitor practice carefully. Procedures for assessment in mathematics are satisfactory and have begun to give a clearer picture of pupils' progress. In English, science and other subjects, teachers are not regularly assessing to identify what pupils have learnt or keeping records of what individuals can do. In the majority of subjects the school plans lessons using the national subject guidelines but has yet to implement the assessment procedures recommended for these subjects.

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

49 There is a satisfactory partnership between parents and the school. At the time of the previous inspection the school had made reasonable progress towards restoring the confidence of parents and developing a full partnership with them. The school continues to work towards promoting an effective relationship with parents. Parents' opinions of the school are largely positive. A majority of parents responding to the questionnaire agreed that the school works closely with them although a significant number did not and the school could usefully investigate the reason for this dissatisfaction. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting found staff friendly, approachable and co-operative. There is a well-written and informative school prospectus containing all necessary and relevant information including the admissions procedures. Letters to parents are well presented and informative. A questionnaire on a range of issues including quality of education and communication between home and school was returned by one third of parents and contained largely positive responses. The contribution of parents to children's learning is limited. A very small number of parents have helped in school and been involved with listening to children reading.

50 The majority of parents responding to the questionnaire feel well informed about how their child is getting on at school. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting were happy with the three parents' meetings each year and the reports they receive at the end of the summer term. However, they did feel that on occasions more notice of events would be helpful and a diary of events a useful addition. Parents receive information in advance about what their children are going to be learning in the classroom and this is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. Reports scrutinised during the inspection contained a thorough and systematic record of work pupils had undertaken and some information on personal and social development. Targets of a broad nature for the next school year are included.

51 A significant number of parents responding to the questionnaire disagreed with the statement that their child has the right amount of work to do at home. The school does not have a policy for homework. Parents are not notified about the arrangements for the setting of homework or the type of tasks that their children may be expected to do at home. Inspectors saw homework being set but found evidence of reluctance amongst pupils to complete tasks. There was no evidence of topic work being undertaken at home by older pupils.

52 Parents are involved at an early stage if their children encounter any problems with learning or behaviour. Formal reviews and regular parents' meetings are arranged to discuss the progress of pupils with special educational needs in addition to those with class teachers, and further meetings are offered if necessary. If parents do not respond to written communications about proposed meetings and reviews, every effort is made to contact them so that they are fully involved.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53 The new headteacher is a very good leader who is providing very clear educational direction for the school focusing on improving the quality of education and standards. The 'strong, purposeful leadership' identified at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. The majority of parents think that the school is well led and managed. The headteacher is an experienced practitioner who quickly identified priority areas for development on his arrival last term for consideration by the staff and senior management team. These included formalising and developing school policies and procedures for pupils who use English as an additional language, reviewing the curriculum and its appropriateness with a particular focus on ICT and improving the school's assessment and target setting processes. With regards to the latter, the headteacher has good experience and expertise. His first priority was to develop a whole school teaching and learning policy in an attempt to bring more consistency to the quality of education provided by the school. It also provides support to new and temporary teachers who replaced a number of more experienced staff at the end of last term. Establishing a stable staffing structure has also been identified as a need for the school. The headteacher has also recognised that many of the older pupils have gone through their education at times with the school in turmoil, receiving a poor quality education particularly earlier on in their school lives. This has led to disaffection and underachievement that the school is now urgently trying to redress through staff development and training and a whole school focus on the issue. One of the first exercises undertaken by the headteacher was to revisit the school's aims and objectives with staff and governors to ensure that everyone had the same understanding about what the school was trying to achieve. Consequently, the shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed are good. It was very noticeable during the inspection how motivated staff were to improve their practice and listen to new ideas.

54 As at the time of the previous inspection, the headteacher is well supported by the deputy head and senior management team (SMT). Particular mention should be made of the deputy head who has successfully managed the school as acting headteacher and the teacher in charge of the Foundation Stage, an area of the school that has developed significantly since the previous inspection. The SMT meets fortnightly to identify the current key issues affecting the school's performance and to share responsibility for moving the school forward. The role of the subject co-ordinator is satisfactory overall. Some teachers are new to their subject responsibilities and a number of curriculum areas are being managed by the headteacher in the absence of permanent staff. However, staff have been asked to produce a curriculum development plan for their subject in response to the overall review of the curriculum and this is good practice. All curriculum co-ordinators monitor medium-term planning and there have been some observations of literacy lessons. The school is focusing particularly on numeracy at present and for that reason the deputy head has taken over the co-ordination of the subject. The headteacher has observed all teachers teach as part of the development of the school's teaching and learning policy and has given particular support to new teachers who have recently joined the school. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall, but is at a fairly early stage.

55 Provision for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily managed. The new Code of Practice and registering arrangements are currently being adopted, and a draft of a revised policy is being presented for ratification this term.

56 There is a newly appointed co-ordinator for English as an additional language who is taking on the role of developing provision for pupils whose home language is not English. She has a good understanding of the needs of these pupils and provision is becoming more effective although there is still a long way to go.

57 The school governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They also have a clear view of what has developed well over the last few years and what still needs to be done. The governors would accept that they have developed and matured as a group since the school was originally placed into special measures. They are proud that the governing body represents much of the ethnic make-up of the community that the school serves. The governors fulfil most statutory requirements including a race equality policy that is now an agenda item for all future full governing body meetings. However, at the time of the inspection, the numbers in the reception class exceeded the statutory limit. Although the governors claim ownership of the current school development plan which identifies appropriate priorities for development, many of them were not involved in its formation and would agree with the headteacher that development planning requires restructuring to allow progress in recognised priorities to be more easily monitored. The governors' role in shaping the direction of the school is currently satisfactory.

58 There is an understanding that standards have to improve and the school and governors review their performance against all schools nationally and similar schools. Governors are less effective at identifying the school's performance against pupils' prior attainment. Consultation was undertaken with parents when the new headteacher arrived and the newly formed school council will allow the pupils to be consulted and have a voice in the running of the school. With regards to major spending decisions, value for money is considered with a number of suppliers and providers expected to provide quotations in full for their services so these can be evaluated. However, the governors do not have any processes to evaluate whether major spending decisions have improved standards or the quality of education for the pupils. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily. The school and governors do not have a 'best value' statement.

59 Educational priorities are supported through satisfactory financial planning. The school cannot continue to function at its current spending levels because local demographics have led to a fall in the number of pupils joining the school. This in turn has led to a fall in funding which has been exacerbated by the number of temporary and supply staff that have to be employed by the school because of the recruitment difficulties that are found nationally. Whereas the school's spending on permanent teaching staff in terms of percentage of total income is well below that found in the majority of schools, the spending on supply and relief teachers is well above average. The school has done well in recent years to turn round a negative carry-forward and the governors are very aware that they have some difficult financial decisions to make in the future. The finance committee has already looked at three possible options for the future using information provided by the local education authority's finance officer attached to the school. The specific funds element of the school's finances and other additional funding is well targeted and enables the school to provide a non-teaching assistant for each classroom as support to pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language.

60 The school is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified teachers and learning support assistants. During the inspection, there were three supply teachers and three teachers new to the school on the staff. There is no written policy for the induction of these teachers, though, in practice, procedures are satisfactory. Performance management is very well established. All the permanent teachers, except for the newly qualified teacher, have some curriculum responsibility. Administrative staff, midday supervisors and the site supervisor provide good support and ensure the smooth running of the school.

61 The accommodation is adequate to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and there is good access for pupils with severe mobility problems. Classrooms are adequate in size. Wide corridors accommodate coats and storage bins and there is plenty of room to display pupils' work. The school benefits from two halls for physical education, assemblies

and dining, and two easily accessible libraries. A very small ICT area has just been developed and there are plans to convert two spare classrooms into areas for special educational needs (SEN), music and ICT. The building is clean and tidy, though in parts it needs some redecoration. There is good separate accommodation for the nursery children. The school lacks a sports field, but has two adequately sized playgrounds. The surface of the playground for reception and Years 1 and 2, however, is uneven and most of the markings for creative games have faded. Nevertheless, this playground has the benefit of a new seating area. There is a separate play area for the nursery children. The playground for Years 3 to 6 is marked out soundly for games, but it lacks any seating areas. The school suffers from vandalism and there is considerable litter just outside the school's boundaries.

62 Overall, there are adequate resources to support teaching and learning. In history, music, art and the Foundation Stage resources are good, but in English, they are unsatisfactory. Many fiction books in the libraries are very dated. The organisation of non-fiction books in the libraries is unsatisfactory. Insufficient use is made of the library to aid the development of literacy and research skills among pupils in Years 3 to 6. There are no specific resources to enhance the learning of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Much ICT hardware and software has been purchased only recently and this will enable the pupils to experience the full ICT curriculum, which hitherto has not been the case.

63 With the very good leadership and management, the good behaviour of the pupils, the care provided by the school and the commitment to improvement by the staff and the good start that children now get to their education in the Foundation Stage, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

64 In addition to the work already undertaken, to further improve standards and teaching and learning the headteacher, staff and governors should:

### **1) Raise standards across the school but particularly in English, mathematics and science by:**

- developing literacy and numeracy skills more effectively across the curriculum including:
  - developing reading skills in Years 3 to 6 including an improved and better use of the library; (Paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 28, 62, 79, 80, 81, 85, 86 and 88)
  - providing planned opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills; (Paragraphs 9, 10, 23, 27, 32, 78, 79, 86, 88, 99, 116, 117, 120 and 138)
  - promoting the skills of writing more effectively across the whole of the curriculum. (Paragraphs 23, 26, 82, 83, 88, 116, 121, 134 and 136)
- and as a specific part of this key issue:
  - ensure better use of assessment to provide a better work match including target setting and staff development in this area. (Paragraphs 23, 29, 36, 47, 48, 86, 87, 94, 96, 97, 103, 104, 110, 115, 117, 120, 123, 128 and 130)

### **2) Raise standards in ICT by:**

- providing further staff development; (Paragraphs 127 and 128)
- ensuring that ICT supports other areas of the curriculum; (Paragraphs 88, 94, 104, 110, 113, 119, 123, 127 and 140)
- developing a full range of skills including using the Internet and e-mail; (Paragraph 126)
- using ICT to support SEN and Foundation Stage pupils through specific programmes for learning. (Paragraphs 29 and 70)

### **3) Ensure that all of the curriculum is relevant to pupils in the school by:**

- planning work that allows lower attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language access to appropriate experiences in subjects such as science, geography, history and music. (Paragraphs 7, 8, 32, 36, 99, 100, 103, 116, 120 and 130)

65 Other issues which should be considered by the school for inclusion in the action plan:

#### **Attendance.**



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

60

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

29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	22	29	3	0	0
Percentage	0	10	37	48	5	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17	333
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	165

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	74

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	90

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	51
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	53

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.8
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	31	20	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	19	22
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	26	33	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	51 (63)	65 (60)	73 (74)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	29	21
	Girls	13	16	14
	Total	30	45	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	59 (60)	88 (75)	69 (65)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	26	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	17	24
	Girls	14	13	22
	Total	35	30	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (64)	57 (43)	87 (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	17	19
	Girls	9	8	16
	Total	17	25	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	32 (62)	47 (67)	66 (73)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (89)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
155	3	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
8	2	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
32	0	0
28	0	0
47	0	0
2	0	0
20	1	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
8	0	0
0	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	29

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

Total number of education support staff	12.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	323.5

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5.6

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	964111
Total expenditure	933003
Expenditure per pupil	2399
Balance brought forward from previous year	-6066
Balance carried forward to next year	25042

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

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
<hr/>	
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	3.6
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)	2.6

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	403
Number of questionnaires returned	75
Percentage of questionnaires returned	19

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	20	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	37	5	3	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	35	8	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	28	16	8	5
The teaching is good.	59	26	8	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	36	8	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	27	7	8	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	29	1	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	39	35	13	5	8
The school is well led and managed.	47	30	11	1	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	30	4	5	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	21	15	11	11

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

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

66 Children are admitted to the nursery at the age of three. During the week of the inspection there were 30 part-time children in the nursery. Most of these children transfer to reception at the beginning of the year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection there were thirty-four children in the reception class. In both classes a number of children have been identified as having special educational needs and using English as an additional language, and these children are well supported. The headteacher is aware of the need to address the issue of class size in the reception class, as it does not meet statutory requirements regarding the ratio of teachers to children.

67 The school has developed good procedures for introducing the children into school, and these have resulted in all settling in quickly and happily. The nursery teacher has identified the need to develop procedures so that more information can be collected on children before they arrive in the nursery. Attainment on entry to nursery is low, particularly in relation to communication, literacy and language, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. This reflects the standards reported during the previous inspection. Although learning is good in the Foundation Stage, the information collected when the children enter the reception class shows that standards are still well below average. Links between the nursery and the reception class are satisfactory and profiles on all children are sent up when they transfer. The nursery teacher is in the process of developing these further.

68 Provision for the Foundation Stage is good and this shows very good improvement since the previous inspection when provision in the nursery was judged to be unsatisfactory. The school has worked very hard to develop the provision according to the most recent national guidance. Staffing levels have been improved with the appointment of a teacher in the nursery. Clear documentation has been produced which enables adults to produce very good planning which results in a curriculum that is well suited to the needs of these young children. All children are well supported by the adults who continually act as good role models. In both classes the adults work consistently at promoting the development of basic communication, literacy and language and the children's personal and social skills. There are good opportunities for children to begin to develop confidence when speaking during class discussions, for example when they recall what they have done at the end of sessions. Mathematical skills are similarly well promoted, as when counting skills are developed in the reception class, when, for example, children are encouraged to remember how many children are present after the teacher has called the register.

69 The curriculum is well planned on the basis of the national early learning goals. Profiles on individual children have recently been revised in all areas of learning and will clearly show the progress that the children make. Learning resources are good to promote all areas of learning inside and outside the classroom. In the nursery the children have daily opportunities for structured outdoor sessions where there are opportunities for physical development using wheeled toys, climbing apparatus and small apparatus such as bats, balls and hoops. There are also satisfactory opportunities to develop other skills outside such as sand and water play, drawing and writing skills. Reception children have regular opportunities to use the apparatus in the main hall, and daily opportunities to develop physical skills outside.

70 Teaching is good. In the nursery it is sometimes very good. The children are well managed and adults have high expectations regarding the children's behaviour and response to the activities they are given. All adults interact well with groups of children, and

opportunities are not missed to reinforce skills and develop vocabulary. This was done particularly well during a cooking activity when vocabulary such as 'flour', 'sugar' and 'eggs' was developed well with nursery children as they made gingerbread men. Children were given good opportunities to recall what they had done as they mixed the ingredients together. This resulted in very good learning because the children concentrated well, listened carefully and worked with obvious enjoyment. In both classes the use of the listening centre is well promoted but children in the nursery have too few opportunities to develop keyboard skills because of lack of computers. The good teaching influences learning throughout each day. It results in good and sometimes very good progress by all groups of children, which is a very good improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers' planning is very good and accurate day-to-day assessments help to move the children on to the next stage of learning. Detailed notes for all adult focused activities clearly show how assessment procedures inform teaching and learning well.

### *Personal, social and emotional development*

71 Teaching is good and sometimes very good in the nursery. Adults in both classes promote basic social skills well, which results in most children developing good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them. Progress is good in this area. Most children show positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school but many children have weak speaking and listening skills, which hinders progress at times. For example, in both classes a number of children have difficulty conversing with adults and each other because their language skills are weak. Behaviour is good although a few children have difficulty in concentrating and listening and shout out during class discussions. However, all adults work hard at developing acceptable behaviour. Personal independence is consistently developed during drink and snack times in the nursery when the children are taught how to say 'please' and 'thank-you' and at break time when they put on their coats to go outside. Reception children were seen trying very hard to get ready for a physical lesson in the hall although some needed help. There are many opportunities to work in pairs and small groups and to begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently. Children are encouraged to select activities but many, in particular in the nursery have to be gently persuaded. When given the opportunity the children begin to tidy away at the end of the sessions. By the end of the reception class most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels. Photographic evidence indicates that the children's spiritual and cultural development is promoted well because there are many opportunities to develop an understanding of different religions, festivals and celebrations such as Christmas, Easter, Diwali and Eid.

### *Communication, language and literacy*

72 The quality of teaching of communication, language and literacy skills is good and sometimes very good in the nursery. Speaking and listening skills are well promoted in both classes. The quality of teaching results in good and sometimes very good progress. A very good example was seen in the reception class when basic skills were very well taught as children freely chose pencils and crayons to make marks on paper and began to colour between the lines. The adult who was working with these children did not miss an opportunity to develop language as she asked the children to name the colours which they were using. Most had little idea of red, blue or yellow. Good on-going assessment took place throughout this lesson, which indicated how they were doing. Early reading skills are well promoted in both classes. A particularly well thought out lesson was seen in the reception class as the children listened to the story of *The Gingerbread Man*. All adults worked hard reinforcing the text to promote the language but only a few children were able to recall repeated phrases by the end of the lesson, although adults consistently reinforced the story and promoted speaking and listening skills well. These children regularly attend whole school assembly and they listen very well in these situations. By the time the children reach Year 1, most will attain standards which are well below what is expected. Only a few children are likely to reach the

expected level in this area. In both classes the majority of children use a limited range of vocabulary when talking, in particular about stories they have heard. In the nursery many find it difficult to concentrate and listen appropriately, for example as they look at a book and listen to the story *Jack and Lily go to Nursery*. In the reception class a few higher attaining readers name the main characters in the book of *The Gingerbread Man*. They have some idea of the difference between the pictures and the text. They talk in a limited way about the pictures such as 'He came to a river' and 'met a cow'. Average attaining children point to the text, saying little, but turn the pages over carefully. Speech is limited as they attempt to recall the story for example 'crossing river'. A lower attaining reader turned the pages and pointed to and named the Gingerbread Man on each page. Past work shows that as they get older in the reception class the children begin to learn letter sounds, in particular those that their own names begin with. They are encouraged to use their name card to write their names and a few children attempt to do this independently. Children in reception record their ideas and experiences through drawing and writing at a very low level. A few children write showing some idea of actual letters. Children use the listening centres well to look at books and listen to their favourite stories but there are too few opportunities for the children to use the computers to develop skills in this area.

### *Mathematical development*

73 The children in the nursery have many opportunities to develop mathematical skills in the activities they are offered such as singing number songs and rhymes and by completing number jigsaws and jigsaws which begin to develop an awareness of different shapes such as squares, rectangle, circles and triangles. Teaching is consistently good in both classes because all children constantly reinforce number and shape in daily routines, for example as they line up or when they call the register. Number charts on the walls promote basic counting skills and are used to promote what the spoken number looks like. In both classes the children sing number rhymes to reinforce the sequence of the numbers. Past work shows that in the reception class this learning is extended and all children are taught the importance of writing numbers correctly and counting sets of objects accurately. They make colour and shape sequences and develop this further by linking art with mathematics as they print using their hands and develop an idea of symmetrical patterns. As they get older past work clearly shows that children begin to develop an understanding of basic mathematical vocabulary such as 'one more than' and 'one less than'. They begin to record basic addition and subtraction problems. Progress is good but most are unlikely to reach the expected levels because their understanding of basic mathematical vocabulary is limited. ICT is not used effectively to promote this area.

### *Knowledge and understanding of the world*

74 Teaching is good and the children make good progress because activities are well planned and resourced and adults effectively interact to develop the children's basic vocabulary and speaking and listening skills. An example of good teaching was seen in the reception class when children were given the task of using mirrors to investigate the sense of sight. The teacher worked hard to develop specific vocabulary such as 'eyebrows' and 'eyelashes'. However, the children's limited language hinders progress in this area although there are many opportunities given to the children in both classes to develop a better understanding of the world. For example, in the nursery there is an inviting 'come and explore' table, which is full of items of interest. One articulate boy spoke about the round plastic ball, which was full of 'pretend worms'. He could not describe how it felt, for example 'soft' or 'warm' but laughed because it was 'full of worms'. All adults work hard to ensure that they do not miss opportunities to promote language and develop understanding in this area. A lovely example was seen as the children ate toast with jam during snack time in the nursery. When children showed discomfort because their hands were sticky they were asked what had made their hands sticky, a few said jam but most found this difficult to articulate. In



the reception class children talk in a limited way of how their gingerbread men biscuits have to go in the 'hot' oven to be cooked. Most know that they must not touch the oven because it is hot and it will burn them. Past work in reception shows that children learn about healthy eating. They begin to develop a basic idea of the past as they look at old and new toys and their idea of living things and how things grow is developed as they learn about the life cycle of a chick. By the time they leave the reception class most children are unlikely to reach the expected standards. All children learn about their senses and about how important it is to listen and look carefully. Most children confidently learn songs and rhymes. They look at the colours they use when painting and begin to learn the names of them. However children have too few opportunities in the Foundation Stage to use computers and develop keyboard skills and basic vocabulary such as 'keyboard' and 'mouse'. Most children confidently select materials from a limited range to develop skills needed to cut, stick and join materials together.

### *Physical development*

75 There are daily opportunities for both classes to develop their physical skills using the good range of outdoor equipment in the safe and secure outdoor play area. In the nursery most children attempt to ride wheeled vehicles and are developing a satisfactory idea of the need to share outdoor equipment such as the plastic climbing apparatus. Listening skills are well promoted and opportunities are not missed regarding developing speaking skills. In one outdoor lesson a child in the reception class was successfully taught that it was necessary to say 'thank you' before she could take a skipping rope out of the container. In the hall, reception children develop a satisfactory awareness of space and the necessity to listen carefully to all instructions. Adults develop personal and social skills consistently as they encourage the children to have a go at undressing and dressing by themselves but are there to help them and guide them when necessary. The children have many opportunities to develop skills by working with construction toys and to use soft materials such as dough to develop rolling and cutting skills. Many children, particularly in the nursery handle scissors, paint brushes and pencils with weak control, but develop more confidence as they get older. All children are taught to use equipment confidently and safely. The children make good progress in this area. By the end of reception most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels in this area although teaching is good. This is because of the children's low level on entry to nursery, in particular when handling crayons, pencils and scissors.

### *Creative development*

76 Good teaching and support enables most of the children to make good progress as they move through the Foundation Stage. The children have many opportunities to sing songs with enjoyment, play musical instruments and express their own ideas and communicate their feelings through well organised role-play sessions in the classrooms. For example in the reception they play in 'the baby clinic' and begin to develop a sound understanding of vocabulary such as 'baby', 'bed' and 'clinic'. In addition, the reception class is well equipped to continued to develop role-play sessions. Children in the nursery have confidently used a number of colours and painted their 'first' painting. Past work in reception shows that as they get older the children develop more control when using paints. Careful artwork is created using a good variety of materials and techniques such as collage, printing and painting. Nursery children were seen enthusiastically exploring the colour blue with glue and glitter. The adults who work in the nursery and the reception classes value all artwork and work is displayed imaginatively and greatly enhances the learning environment. Most are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the end of reception.

## ENGLISH

77 Although the 2001 test scores for seven-year-olds placed the school in the lowest five per cent nationally, currently standards are slightly better although still well below average. The Key Stage 2 results improved slightly in 2001 to below average compared with schools nationally but this has not been maintained and Year 6 pupils are also attaining well below average standards. Nevertheless, over the last five years the number of pupils achieving the expected level for their age has increased significantly even if the school failed to meet its 2002 target and standards fell back.

78 Pupils' limited speaking skills are still a serious handicap to their learning. Although most pupils are willing to talk, the proportion of the class who volunteer to answer questions in lessons is low, and falls even lower if a reply requires more than a factual answer. Year 1 and 2 pupils often only repeat back what they have heard and seldom take note of what other pupils have contributed. Many struggle to give more details and a significant number still find it difficult to offer a complete sentence. In a Year 2 literacy lesson many higher attaining pupils found it difficult to recount the next incident in the story of *Pig in the Pond* in a complete sentence, even though they had heard it several times. Because Year 3 to 6 pupils still have limited general vocabulary they cannot readily learn technical words since they do not understand that these have precise meanings. Lower attaining Year 5 and 6 pupils can say that an adjective is a describing word, but struggle to find one in the text of the *Cinderella* story. Even in Year 6 pupils find it difficult to express how a character in the Second World War story they are reading feels about the doodlebug bomb, many offering no more than 'scared'. They have some awareness that speaking has to be adapted to a particular context such as adjusting how loudly they speak to the whole class, but not all can sustain this. Many do not use correct grammar, offering, for instance, 'swearred' for 'swore' in a religious education in Year 3 and 4. Most pupils fail to use language to explore ideas or to reason and justify answers. When asked to predict a possible story ending from various openings in a Year 3 and 4 literacy lesson, average attaining pupils could only offer a few ideas as to what might happen and resorted to 'voting' for one of two.

79 Pupils' knowledge of phonics<sup>3</sup> was judged to be weak at the time of the previous inspection. Year 1 and 2 pupils now have better phonic knowledge and most Year 2 pupils can use at least single consonant sounds to work out unknown words. While average attaining Year 3 and 4 pupils continue to use phonic knowledge when necessary, lower attaining pupils are not able to apply this, and some Year 5 and 6 pupils do not have enough skill to use phonics when they need to. Phonics are regularly taught to Year 1 and 2 classes, but are less commonly included in Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) lessons. As a result pupils whose knowledge is not secure by the end of Year 2, unless identified as having special educational needs, do not develop competence. Moreover, teaching of other strategies for tackling unknown words is also reduced in Key Stage 2. Only those pupils confident about using a range of strategies continue to progress at the same rate as they did lower in the school. Books are not systematically allocated to older pupils to continue to practise and develop their reading skills, so pupils who are not competent are not necessarily improving consistently.

80 Pupils' comprehension of what they read also fails to progress regularly in the Years 3 to 6. Year 2 pupils read accurately and fully engage with the texts they are reading. Although it might be a very simple story they empathise with characters or situations. One lower attaining Year 2 pupil expected mum to be cross when the children in the story invited all their friends into the house and made a mess. Some older pupils ignore punctuation marks and read words incorrectly but do not realise they are reading in a manner that does not make

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<sup>3</sup> Letter combinations which represent given sounds

sense. In Year 5, for instance, one pupil read 'parents' for 'pathetic'. Few pupils even in Years 4 and 5 use cues from the text such as italics and exclamation marks to read expressively even though they study them in lessons. Year 6 average and lower attaining pupils have only a general idea of the stories they are reading and do not refer to the text to help their recall. It is only higher attaining pupils who are able to make a reasonable summary of the narrative. No pupil showed any instance of inferring or deducing a happening in their reading.

81 Few pupils competently locate information. The oldest pupils do not know how a library is organised. A few pupils are aware of how to use index and contents pages, but the vast majority have little idea of how to use a non-fiction text to access what they want to know. Very few pupils in Years 3 and 4 know the alphabet sufficiently well to use a dictionary, and so they waste time searching from the beginning of the book.

82 Year 1 and 2 pupils' writing has improved since the school was last inspected. By the end of Year 2 average and higher attaining pupils write in sentences demarcated with full stops and capital letters. Lower attainers sometimes use full stops and capital letters, but not always consistently. Improvements reported in spelling have been maintained, so everyday words are usually accurately spelt by all but the lowest attainers. However, few pupils write at length, extending ideas or developing a story. Although pupils experience a range of writing styles including letters, stories and instructions there is little difference in pupils' writing style except when creating poems.

83 By Year 6, writing has not developed much further in terms of punctuation. Very few pupils regularly use any marks other than a full stop in their independent writing - although they practise others in exercises - and no pupil is using paragraphs on a regular basis. A greater number of words are spelt accurately by older pupils, but because pupils' written vocabulary is limited spelling ability is not often tested. Average attaining pupils are not always confident about words like 'professional' and 'beautiful'. Errors in grammar such as mixing tenses, subject-verb agreement and incorrect use of 'a' and 'an' are not uncommon. While the higher attainers can apply knowledge of different styles of writing for effect in producing, for example, persuasive texts, the majority produce similar writing for all purposes. Sentences are usually short. Pupils rarely write more than a side of their exercise books, and writing is seldom lively and interesting.

84 The one aspect of writing that meets National Curriculum expectations is handwriting. The work done by the school in improving handwriting has been fully effective. By the end of Year 2 most pupils print consistently sized letters placed correctly on the lines. Most Year 6 pupils write in a fluent cursive style when required to do so. The majority of pupils' English work is neatly presented throughout the school.

85 The teaching of English is satisfactory overall, but there are areas for further development to ensure pupils make more consistent progress. Teachers are generally good at managing pupils, including those with challenging behaviour, so that they participate effectively in lessons. They praise pupils' efforts regularly to encourage them to make an effort to learn what is being taught. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy have been usefully adopted. Teachers nearly always explain learning objectives to pupils and revisit them at the end of the lesson so pupils know what they are expected to learn. The focus on words ensures pupils are regularly introduced to necessary skills for reading and spelling; text level work focuses their attention on writing styles. However, although basic skills are regularly reinforced in Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), teachers of Years 3 to 6 pupils are less effective in providing sufficient practice to ensure pupils are competent before introducing new skills. Throughout the school teachers deploy learning support assistants appropriately to support pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language during independent work. Their work is usually effective in ensuring all pupils are

able to tackle the work set. A number of the higher attaining pupils in English are those who use English as an additional language but this is not the result of a specific school strategy.

86 The chief area for development in teaching is using assessment data to plan work that meets the needs of the pupils. Expectations are too often unrealistic, and activities insufficiently thought through, which too often results in pupils failing to understand the work or losing concentration. Teachers do not always select suitable texts and give the right amount of time to activities. In Year 5 and 6 groups, average attaining pupils were unable to begin to analyse a story to see how it was built up because it took them the whole session to read it. Some lower attainers in the same year groups could not read the text at all, struggling over many unknown words in a sentence, so could not select nouns. Some pupils were confused because when asked to identify the nouns and adjectives in their text the chief character was named 'Spotty'. In a Year 2 lesson quick practice at recognising words containing 'ae' and 'ai', varied approaches to ordering a story orally, on a flow chart and with partners kept the class work focused and brisk. However, in a Year 3 and 4 lesson, the introduction to story beginnings, the worksheet for recording pupils' ideas actually restricted pupils' responses largely to a list of names and places. While in the best lessons teachers' questioning is effective in eliciting well considered responses by asking for clarification or more detail, and teachers correct speech such as 'aint' (for 'is not'), in too many lessons teachers accept an idea from a short response and develop it themselves. Use of discussion between pairs of pupils is at an early stage of development in terms of assisting pupils to speak more competently. Where there is a precise purpose and a short deadline it is useful, but not all pupils co-operate with their peers. In a Year 2 lesson pupils helped each other with the next event in the *Pig in the Pond* story, but some Year 3 and 4 pupils would not help each other to select verbs to which '-ing' could be added.

87 As a result of imprecise use of assessment some pupils' progress is not as rapid as would be expected and there is some underachievement in Key Stage 2. Much assessment data is gathered, but nevertheless pupils have been incorrectly placed in ability groups. Work is not accurately matched to build on pupils' existing skills – indeed in some groups for lower attainers it is hardly appropriate. The school has rightly identified a need for small stepped targets to enable pupils to see what they need to achieve next, but as yet is setting work beyond attainable levels for some older pupils. Pupils who only write two or three consecutive sentences, for instance, are expected to structure a whole story. While the skills of pupils with special educational needs are assessed, individual education plans are not precise enough to ensure that they can achieve each target within a reasonable time and do not drive day-to-day planning of literacy tasks. Consequently, although progress is not unsatisfactory, it is left to the quality of the support given in any one lesson. Similarly, ad hoc support by learning support assistants ensures pupils for whom English is an additional language make progress, but is not necessarily helping them to advance their personal language needs. Having recently introduced more structured provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language in the Foundation Stage, this has begun to be resolved. There is evidence that the emphasis on basic skills in Key Stage 1 is impacting on achievement in Years 3 and 4, but the lasting effect will depend on how well work is planned to build on these foundations.

88 Pupils do not regularly use their literacy skills across the curriculum to provide the levels of practice they need. ICT is rarely used to support the English curriculum even though lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs could be more productive if they had access to computers in literacy lessons. When writing tasks are set in other subjects, tasks often fail to advance either literacy or the topic being studied. In a Year 3 and 4 religious education lesson for example, pupils were given dictionaries to help them make a list of occasions on which they felt sorry for what they had done. A list of likely vocabulary like 'hurt' and 'broke' would have been more useful, with an encouragement to use spelling rules already taught to save time and frustration. The outcome for many pupils was restricted to

just two or three sentences. Pupils rarely use the school library to locate information. Resources are insufficient and often inappropriate for supporting learning. While classrooms have some reading books (although seldom more than two books per pupil) and enough dictionaries, the reading material is often at the wrong level and the dictionaries too demanding. Similarly library provision is often unsuitable and too many books are outdated while attractive modern children's fiction is in short supply. The school has identified resources for English as a weakness and is planning to develop them, but in the meanwhile pupils' access to suitable books is limited and many do not read regularly.

## **MATHEMATICS**

89 Standards in basic numeracy and in other areas of mathematics are well below average in Years 2 and 6, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The teachers ensure that all the pupils, whatever their academic ability, are fully included in learning. They identify pupils with special educational needs and cater for them soundly in lesson planning. As a result, these pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils who use English as an additional language progress as well as the other pupils; indeed, many of them are often in the higher ability groups. The school is aware that boys have underachieved relative to girls, although current inspection findings indicate no significant difference in attainment by gender. Most of the pupils are keen to learn and to do their best; they take a pride in presenting their work neatly.

90 The major weaknesses in attainment throughout the school are in mental calculations and in solving real life mathematical problems. The weak literacy skills of many of the pupils hinder their ability to understand what information is being given in a verbal problem and what exactly it is that they have to find out. They are often unsure which mathematical operation they need to use to solve the problem, especially if the problem consists of more than one step.

91 By the end of Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), most of the pupils are not confident in dealing with addition and subtraction facts to 10. Some still have difficulties reading and writing numerals to 10. Even when working with practical apparatus, the pupils do not fully understand place value in tens and units. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to be able to sequence numbers to 100 and to colour simple fractions of shapes. Most of the pupils can use non-standard units to measure the length and mass of classroom objects, but many are unsure of telling the time to the hour or half-hour. They draw simple block graphs to represent data, such as the colours of socks being worn.

92 By the end of the end of Year 6, most of the pupils find it hard to apply their numeracy skills to problem solving. They often fail to check whether their answers are reasonable. Higher attaining pupils can use written methods of multiplication, but they find division much more difficult. They also find it difficult to add and subtract decimals to two places and to relate fractions to percentages. Many pupils find it difficult to understand inverse operations. They are able to find the areas and perimeters of simple shapes and they can use co-ordinates in the first quadrant satisfactorily. They represent data, such as pupils' birthdays, by means of accurate bar graphs and bar line graphs.

93 Over time, the quality of teaching and learning is judged to be satisfactory although many lessons observed during the inspection were good and sometimes very good in both key stages. The teachers plan their lessons well, sharing the learning objectives with the pupils, so that they know what they are expected to have learnt by the end of the lesson. Lessons always start with effective 'short burst' sessions, where the teachers employ a range of strategies to improve the pupils' quick mental recall of number facts. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, the teacher made effective use of a simple card game, which the pupils enjoyed and

which helped them to improve their knowledge of multiplication tables. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher made good use of number cards to enhance the pupils' understanding of 'backwards' and 'forwards' in numbers to 20. In many lessons, the teachers ask the pupils to explain their methods and this helps their understanding of number operations. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, the teacher made good use of a pupil's mistake as a helpful teaching point about inverse operations.

94 The teachers make some useful links with literacy, by encouraging listening skills and dialogue between pupils and by ensuring that the pupils use correct mathematical terms, such as 'subtraction', 'take away', 'minus' and 'difference'. However, the teachers have not had the resources to make use of ICT to enhance learning in mathematics. In the most effective lessons, work is well matched to the pupils' differing needs, but higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.

95 The teachers make effective use of learning support assistants, who work hard with groups of pupils. Teachers and assistants monitor the pupils' progress carefully. The quality of the marking of pupils' work is variable. Some marking is clear about how the pupils might improve. For example, 'You need to be more precise when drawing axes of symmetry' in a Year 5 and 6 book and in Year 2, 'You need more practice at counting on'. In more than one class, the teacher's planning is very much a 'working document' which is constantly altered and refined as a result of day-to-day assessment. This is good practice. In Key Stage 1, the teachers make appropriate use of practical apparatus to enhance learning. In Key Stage 2, the teachers set regular homework, but the pupils' response to this is often very mixed. Lessons generally move along briskly and the teachers use plenary sessions soundly to consolidate learning and to give the pupils the opportunity to talk about their work.

96 There are some examples of the pupils using their mathematical skills in other subjects. In science Year 6 pupils draw satisfactory line graphs showing rates of water evaporation and of plant growth. In geography, Year 6 pupils reproduce data showing climatic statistics for London and Bombay and Year 2 pupils construct appropriate tally charts of the ways in which they reach school. In design and technology pupils in Years 3 and 4 make careful measurements in the design of packaging. Overall, however, the teachers make insufficient use of these cross-curricular opportunities to enhance mathematics learning.

97 A clear and detailed policy document meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Planning is soundly based on the National Numeracy Strategy. The deputy head who has just assumed temporary responsibility for managing the subject, is fully aware of the need to raise standards. There is a clear action plan to secure improvement. Ability groups (sets) have been introduced throughout most of the school, so that teaching can be more closely matched to pupils' differing needs. Teachers' planning is monitored in order to ensure that policy meets practice and there has been some monitoring of teaching, with a view to sharing good practice. The co-ordinator has led some training for staff. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment. Insufficient use is made of assessment data to inform future planning, although the co-ordinator has begun to analyse the performance of the current Year 6 pupils in tests in order to see where major weaknesses lie and to focus teaching accordingly. There are adequate resources to support teaching and learning and these will improve further as ICT begins to play a more prominent role in the school. There is a need for additional resources to support many pupils in Year 1, who are struggling with basic numeracy. In encouraging the pupils to work responsibly together in pairs or groups and to discuss ideas and problems, the subject is making a positive contribution to their social development. Some pupils in Year 6 have developed a 'mathematics trail' which helps younger pupils identify two and three-dimensional shapes around the school.

## SCIENCE

98 Standards are well below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make sound progress from a very low starting point. Standards are rising; they have improved since the previous inspection.

99 Most pupils in Key Stage 1 have very restricted language skills and very limited knowledge and experience of the world around them. This makes it difficult for teachers to teach the current scheme of work. About half the pupils have difficulty retaining new vocabulary and information for more than a few minutes. Many pupils in Year 1 do not consistently sort familiar objects into sets according to whether they are made of wood, glass, metal, plastic or fabric because they do not readily recognise the materials. Many confuse the word 'material' with 'fabric'; following much reinforcement about a third are still unsure by the end of a lesson. At least half of Year 2 pupils do not distinguish materials by common attributes such as hard, soft, smooth or rough. When the see-through nature of transparency is carefully explained to them, many have real difficulty comprehending what is meant despite a range of examples provided. The higher attaining pupils do acquire the concept and enjoy trying to articulate the word and find further examples in the classroom. Teachers work hard to provide much practical experience with common objects to help pupils acquire new vocabulary and concepts. Pupils make slow but steady progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills. Pupils' generally poor skills in speaking and writing further inhibit normal progress, so that fewer than expected reach the expected attainment level by the end of Key Stage 1. A few higher attaining pupils make better progress because they have better literacy skills, retain new learning more efficiently and have better prior knowledge and understanding. They begin to record their practical activities through independent writing and achieve standards closer to the expected levels. It is very difficult to assess the understanding and progress made by the lower attaining pupils because their writing skills are poor, their memory span short and speaking skills restricted.

100 Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make steady progress. As their literacy skills improve they become more confident in explaining and describing the practical investigations they undertake; consequently they also become more proficient in writing up these findings. Teachers follow a carefully structured programme which trains pupils in the specific scientific form of writing so that by the end of Year 6 about two thirds of pupils do so independently and competently. Teachers use scientific texts for some English lessons. Science contributes effectively to pupils' literacy development in both these ways. Pupils learn to use numerical tables, charts and a variety of graphs to record their observations. These contribute well to their mathematical development. Pupils have a secure understanding of what constitutes a fair test. Older pupils demonstrate this when they test materials for model air raid shelters in a design and technology project linked to their history topic. However, many are unsure of how to set up the test. In a science lesson all pupils demonstrated an understanding of different habitats and how some animals and plants are adapted to thrive in them. Pupils use simple keys effectively to identify a range of small creatures. The higher attaining pupils make a fair attempt at creating their own identification keys. Lower attaining pupils use a very suitable computer generated key to identify different plants and creatures. A classroom assistant helps pupils read the questions thus making a significant contribution so they can learn alongside their classmates.

101 Teaching is at least satisfactory throughout the school. Teaching is good when the work is very carefully matched to the different levels of ability so that all pupils make appropriate progress. In Key Stage 1 teaching is particularly good when activities are short, all pupils are involved and they are not expected to sit for long periods listening to the teacher. Very good examples were observed, where a teacher used pupils' misconceptions to reinforce a concept, for instance when pupils were asked to find an object which they could

see through, several chose a perforated item, such as a threading bead. The teacher explained that they could see through the hole, but not the material itself and showed the difference between that and a clear plastic cup. In the same lesson, higher attaining pupils pointed out that a paintbrush is hard and soft or stiff and bendy at the same time. These pupils sort objects successfully using a Venn diagram with an overlapping set. Lower attaining pupils sort a carefully selected group of objects into two distinct groups with the teacher's help.

102 Most learning is through a hands-on, practical approach. This requires pupils to work together in collaborative groups. Thus pupils develop their social skills. Learning about and discussing interdependence and the environment, aspects of health and drugs awareness issues all contribute effectively to pupils' personal and moral awareness.

103 The current curriculum is well constructed to meet all the requirements of the National Curriculum. The structured programme to teach pupils how to record their practical work is very good. However, although most learning is planned through practical investigations, the scheme assumes a level of knowledge and understanding that the younger and less able pupils do not have and does not include sufficient variation of task to meet their needs as well as those of the higher attaining pupils. The school is aware of this. The scheme of work is due for review during the current year and will take account of teachers' recent evaluation of teaching it and their knowledge of what is appropriate for different ages and ability levels of all the pupils.

104 The assessment procedures are based on the learning objectives for each half-term's topic. In Key Stage 1 these are unsatisfactory because it assumes a level of reading and writing that is beyond many pupils. There is little evidence that the results are used effectively to amend medium-term plans. Teachers do make good use of their informal observations of pupils' responses to alter lesson plans. Several examples were noted where a lesson plan had been changed and new activities planned because pupils had been unsure at the end of the previous lesson. Teachers are just beginning to use computers in science lessons, but this is at a very early stage of development.

105 Resources are adequate to cover the planned topics. They are stored systematically for easy access by teachers.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

106 Standards in art are below those expected at the end of each key stage. The previous report does not refer to art so no judgement is possible on improvement in standards since then. Evidence from work on display suggests that standards are rising although the quality of some Key Stage 2 work is little better than that now being achieved by the younger pupils. Although skills and technique development are included in the scheme of work, there is little evidence that it is being followed properly in Key Stage 2.

107 Few lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching was good in Key Stage 1. Only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 2, where it was satisfactory. In Year 1 pupils reinforce and extend their knowledge of colour names and explore what happens when two colours are mixed. Pupils learn to lighten and darken a colour gradually by adding it in stages to white or black. They learn specific vocabulary such as shade and tone. Pupils use the tones carefully to paint segments of a tortoise shell to show the effect of lightening a colour. Most pupils use the materials carefully and take care to keep their painting within the lines. They have been taught how to load a brush with paint and how to use the water pot properly. A few very immature pupils do not listen carefully or follow instructions properly. They mix other colours onto their shell or do not take care to keep within the lines.



108 Year 2 pupils are taught to look at the detail of natural objects and how to sketch them including some shading effects. The selections of natural objects helps pupils develop their aesthetic awareness as they experience and describe different textures. This also contributes to pupils' literacy skills by increasing their vocabulary and opportunity to develop their speaking skills.

109 The scheme of work, which is due for review shortly, ensures a good range of media and skills development through the school. There is useful guidance for teachers on how to undertake some techniques and develop specific skills. Although three-dimensional projects are included in the scheme some teachers lack confidence in this aspect so pupils have few opportunities to experience it. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of art and is keen to improve teachers' confidence and the opportunities presented to pupils. She supports and encourages her colleagues and has plans for training sessions for teachers. There is a good range of materials and equipment for the different media. A range of resources to support art, including examples of work from non-western cultures, are carefully sorted for easy retrieval by teachers.

110 Art projects are planned well to link with other curriculum subjects, such as history, design and technology. Art contributes effectively to pupils' literacy skills as they learn new vocabulary, describe their own and professional artists' work and evaluate each other's efforts. Art contributes well to pupils' developing aesthetic awareness through this appreciation and in using media to express ideas and emotions. Using ICT is at a very early stage of development. All pupils have sketchbooks but the effective use of them is very varied. Although a record of progression is made through an annual portrait undertaken by each pupil there is no consistent assessment of individual pupils' progressive acquisition of skills and techniques.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

111 It is not possible to give a proper judgement on standards, as very few examples of finished products were available. No reference was made to the subject in the previous report.

112 Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) pupils' sketchbooks show a sound development of skills in analysing commercial products, designing and evaluating their own products, but by the end of the key stage they are barely at the expected level. Pupils' low standards in writing and vocabulary make it difficult for Year 1 and 2 pupils to record these activities. Sketchbooks show that pupils have an appropriate experience of different media, materials and activities. They include learning about and using structures, such as how to join wood using card triangles; mechanisms, when using pneumatics to animate a monster; food, textiles and using graphics for effect.

113 Designing and evaluating products contributes well to literacy through annotated diagrams, written comments and acquiring specific technical vocabulary. The design and making process contributes to mathematical development through understanding scale and measuring skills. ICT is not yet being used effectively.

114 Design and technology is linked well to other subjects such as the current upper school project to make a model air raid shelter, which is linked to the history topic and also science, when pupils have to test different materials for suitability. These were the only lessons observed. Teaching was satisfactory. Pupils were appropriately challenged to devise ways of testing the materials provided. Thinking and language skills were developed when pupils had to decide which material proved the most suitable and why. Many pupils found this

difficult. Although the task was reasonable, it did not properly distinguish between materials suitable for a model and those suitable for a real shelter. The task did contribute to pupils' social skills through having to work sensibly in collaborative groups. A minority of pupils found this co-operation very difficult.

115 There is no formal procedure for assessing pupils' skills development. The current scheme of work is appropriate and due for review as part of the current rolling programme. Resources are adequate to meet the demands of the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

116 Standards in geography are below those expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection and judgements are based on these lessons, present planning, past work and discussions with pupils and teachers. Progress is satisfactory for most pupils but past work clearly shows that tasks are not always matched accurately to the abilities of all pupils. Some tasks are unfinished and literacy skills are not well promoted during written tasks. Discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6 indicate that geographical facts and vocabulary are not reinforced adequately. For example, some pupils in Year 6 were confused between 'countries' and 'towns' and others were muddled about the idea of what a continent is.

117 Teaching in geography is satisfactory but not consistent throughout the school. In the two lessons seen in Years 3 and 4, where the pupils are learning about rivers, one was judged to be satisfactory and the other was unsatisfactory. Strengths in teaching include the use of homework to support learning, satisfactory attention to the development of atlas skills and the reinforcement of relevant vocabulary such as 'continents' and 'oceans'. Weaknesses in teaching which contributed to the unsatisfactory lesson were that work was not accurately matched to the needs of individuals, in particular those with special educational needs, and the class teacher did not promote listening skills effectively which resulted in pupils not listening to her instructions. Pupils' attitudes to the subject vary and are influenced by the quality of teaching. During the weaker lesson pupils' attitudes and behaviour were unsatisfactory.

118 There is little evidence of past work in Years 1 and 2 but discussions with pupils in Year 2 shows that they have previously looked at different types of weather and have a simple idea of 'hot' and 'cold' countries. They know that we live in England but most are muddled when naming other countries in the United Kingdom. When prompted they name the street in which they live but cannot readily give their address. Most attempt to recall their route from school to home satisfactorily, using limited language skills, which make it difficult for many pupils in all year groups to explain what they have learnt in geography. Past work in Years 5 and 6 shows that pupils have looked at continents and rivers of the world and life in St Lucia.

119 The recently appointed headteacher manages the subject. He is a knowledgeable geographer who aims to use the local environment more and build in regular visits to enhance the curriculum. He has quickly identified what is needed to raise standards in the subject, for example to review the policy and guidelines which teachers follow and develop the resources which enrich the curriculum further. In addition, there is an identified need to develop monitoring and assessment procedures to track the progress that the pupils make as they move through the school. The headteacher is well aware that ICT is not used to support the geography curriculum. In classes where geography is being taught this half term displays are informative and reinforce what has been taught. A good example was seen in a Year 3 and 4 classroom showing where water can be found. The subject satisfactorily supports the pupils' cultural development as they learn about life in different countries.

## HISTORY

120 By the ages of seven and eleven the standards which pupils reach are below those expected in history. Previously completed work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils indicate that although pupils are taught historical skills, knowledge and understanding appropriate to their ages, limited language skills often hinders the learning within lessons and the progress over time for some pupils. In addition, teachers do not consistently reinforce historical facts and vocabulary effectively, which influences the standards the pupils reach. For example, a few pupils in Year 6 thought that Henry VIII was a Victorian. Most pupils make satisfactory progress but past work clearly shows that some teachers do not consistently match work accurately to pupils' individual needs. When this happens pupils are given tasks which are too difficult for them and this affects learning and contributes to the low standards which they attain.

121 There is too little evidence to make an overall judgement about teaching but in the one lesson seen in Years 5 and 6, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. Resources such as a video of the Blitz and a tape recorder were used well to promote the learning objective and all pupils handled historical objects such as a gas mask carefully. Pupils watched the video avidly and speaking and listening skills were satisfactorily promoted as they read their written accounts of what life was like during the war. However, when the pupils started to work on their written task the pace of the lesson slowed down considerably. Many took too long to get started because the pupils' limited writing skills made it difficult for them to write about life during the Second World War. Basic writing skills were not well promoted by the teacher and pupils were given too little guidance regarding the spelling of words specific to the subject, in order to help them. Pupils with special educational needs were given a speaking task, which was too difficult for them to complete without an adult. They wasted time during this part of the lesson.

122 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a simple understanding of historical events and different periods of time as they learn about life long ago. Planning indicates that pupils in Year 2 are to learn about life in London during the Great Fire. Previous work shows that they have linked history with art as they looked at the work of famous artists from the past such as Henri Matisse. In Year 3, past work shows that they have studied the Vikings and by linking history with art, they created carefully drawn and painted pictures of food, which the Vikings would have eaten during a Viking feast. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced as they study different periods of time and learn how people used to live.

123 An enthusiastic co-ordinator who has identified what is needed to raise standards further, satisfactorily manages the subject. She has reviewed policy and guidelines and developed resources. However at present, the guidelines do not reflect the mixed aged classes. Resources are good and consist of an informative selection of videos, books and historical objects, which are well organised and easily accessible to all staff. The teachers are following the new yearly plan that the co-ordinator has recently devised. In classes where history is a focus, displays enrich learning. Good examples were seen in the Year 5 and 6 classrooms where time-lines have been created to reinforce concepts taught and give the pupils a clearer idea when events they have talked about actually happened. There are no assessment procedures and ICT is not used effectively to support the subject. The co-ordinator is aware of the benefits of visiting historical places and inviting visitors into school to bring history to life but at present they are not built into the curriculum.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

124 By the end of both key stages, standards in ICT are below average. There was no judgement on standards in the previous inspection. Much equipment has been purchased only recently, with the result that the pupils have had relatively little experience of ICT at school; indeed, only now can it be said that the school is meeting statutory requirements for the subject at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6). As a result pupils have underachieved in this subject. All pupils are fully included in learning. Those with special educational needs are clearly identified in planning; they make satisfactory progress. Pupils who use English as an additional language are not at any disadvantage in ICT and they, too, make satisfactory progress. Overall, boys and girls attain equally, although those pupils who have access to a computer at home are clearly much more confident in their approach to ICT. The pupils are excited about working with the school's new laptops. However, this excitement is too much for many Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) pupils, who become far too noisy.

125 By the end of Year 2, most of the pupils can name some of the main parts of the laptop. Their keyboard skills and mouse control are limited. The weak literacy skills of many pupils mean that they find it difficult to find the correct letters quickly on the keyboard and some are confused by the keyboard's capital letters. The pupils can use the laptops to draw lines and simple shapes. With adult help, they use a program that allows them to fill the screen with colour. They know that ICT helps them to delete mistakes quickly. They are beginning to understand the function of keys such as backspace and caps lock. The pupils have had no experience of saving and retrieving work. They are able to give simple instructions to program a floor robot.

126 By the end of Year 6, many pupils are able to use different font styles and sizes effectively in different aspects of writing. They word process their thoughts about leaving Ryders Green for the secondary school. They can combine text and clip art to create eye-catching screensavers on the theme of 'saying no to bullying' and they produce thoughtful poems about a victim's perspective of bullying. These examples also illustrate ways in which the teachers are using ICT to contribute positively to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, pupils are unfamiliar with using the Internet and e-mail.

127 Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Both the teachers and the learning support assistants are gaining confidence in using the school's new laptops, though at the moment, technical hitches are a common occurrence in lessons. This slows the pace of learning and leaves many pupils frustrated and wasting time. It also means that planning does not always meet practice. There is clear teaching of specific skills. This occurred in a Year 5 and 6 lesson, where the teacher helped the pupils learn how to resize, rotate and move pictures and to save their work on a floppy disk. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, the teacher made very effective links with literacy. She began the lesson by reading a poem and showing the pupils how different font styles can give a visual emphasis to selected words. They proceeded to write words of their own in a similar way. In a Year 5 and 6 science lesson, the pupils used ICT to enhance learning about the use of keys to identify plants and animals. Nevertheless, insufficient use is made of ICT as a widespread aid to learning in other subjects, for example in mathematics. The teachers ensure that the pupils use correct ICT terms. They encourage the pupils to be as independent as possible and this is helping them to gain confidence with the laptops. At times, teachers' class control is insecure, as the pupils become far too noisy and clamour for attention.

128 The headteacher has just assumed responsibility for the subject. He is aware of the urgent need to offer relevant training for all staff, to extend the pupils' experiences of the full ICT curriculum and to raise standards. He has already ensured that there are sufficient laptops for pupils to work in pairs. He has monitored some teaching, in order to gain an initial

overview of the subject. There are no formal, whole-school procedures for assessing and recording the pupils' attainment and progress, with the result that work cannot, at present, be matched closely to the pupils' differing needs.

## **MUSIC**

129 Attainment in music is well below average throughout the school. Because pupils start with very poor co-ordination and related skills in making sounds, this means they generally make steady progress as they mature. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to that of other class members because they are supported by peers, when working together or assisted by learning support assistants when appropriate. A limited number of lessons were observed and pupils were heard singing in assembly. Pupils clearly have limited skills and understanding of music. Singing is generally enthusiastic rather than tuneful, but even so a significant number of the oldest pupils do not join in. While Year 1 pupils enjoy the fun song *Bingo* they are so keen to say 'woof' at the appropriate times that they do not concentrate on the rest of the tune. They do not pick up a new tune readily and confidently by listening. Pupils struggle to copy a simple pattern of steady beats using different body parts and also to keep the pulse. They cannot reliably recognise whether a sound is soft or loud and many are not confident about using everyday objects to make sounds in different ways. By Year 5 and 6 pupils are still not confident about keeping the pulse and inevitably are unsuccessful at holding a part when the class is clapping different rhythms. Most pupils work out ways to play together in a small group but in most cases their limited rhythmic skills do not result in a successful performance. There is no judgement on attainment in music in the July 2000 inspection report so it is not possible to say whether or not standards have improved.

130 In the two lessons seen teaching was satisfactory. Teachers' general skills ensure lessons are efficiently organised and adequately planned and that pupils are well managed so that they can enjoy participating in the activities. Their knowledge of music is not sufficiently secure to enable them to run the chosen activities for the optimum time to ensure maximum improvement. Nor do they assess how to improve pupils' skills systematically to help them move closer to the expected levels for their ages. Although pupils are interested and engage in practical work with enthusiasm their efforts fail to result in more confident and effective performance. Similarly, in assembly, teachers set an example by joining in the singing and pupils are praised for their participation but they are not helped to sing more tunefully.

131 Music introduces assemblies and the pieces played are briefly discussed. However, the regular class music lessons are not enhanced by any extra-curricular activities, although a few pupils benefit from peripatetic brass and woodwind tuition. Opportunities for most pupils to perform to a larger audience are infrequent. The subject has a low profile and makes a relatively limited contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

132 During the inspection it was only possible to observe games and gymnastics lessons. Judgements are based on these lessons and discussions with pupils and teachers. By the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) standards in games and gymnastics are similar to those found in other schools. This is not the case for gymnastics in Year 6. Many pupils do not reach the national target of swimming twenty-five metres unaided by the age of eleven. On this basis, standards overall are lower than one would expect to find by the age of eleven. Physical education was not referred to during the previous inspection so no conclusion can be made about whether standards have improved or declined. However, although all pupils' made

satisfactory progress in the lessons observed, some of the older pupils have not made the kind of progress that one would expect as they have moved through the school.

133 Before the start of a Year 1 indoor games lesson the pupils were able to explain the importance of warming-up before exercise. Pupils found their own space in the school hall to undertake their warm-up and then proceeded to show appropriate levels of control and co-ordination as they sent and received large balls to each other. Although the class teacher was very precise in her instructions, a minority of pupils found these hard to follow and to respond exactly. After a vigorous warm-up, Year 2 pupils were able to remember and reproduce simple rolling actions; forwards, backwards and sideways developing into effective forward-rolls that were finished neatly and tidily. In this lesson the pupils checked their pulses at the start of their warm-up and identified how they had speeded up after a few minutes of exercise. Year 3 and 4 pupils were able to pass, send and dribble with a large ball as they developed their skills for basketball but Year 5 and 6 pupils did not all show the expected levels in gymnastics as they created balances and tried to join movements together. In discussions with Year 6 pupils remembered that they had participated in games, dance and athletics lessons during the previous academic year, but were unable to identify specifically what they had learnt.

134 The quality of teaching in physical education is satisfactory overall. In most lessons, particular attention was paid to health and safety although in the Year 5 and 6 gymnastics lesson the unsatisfactory attitudes and response from a minority of pupils put the safety of some other pupils at risk. A strength of many lessons was that teachers ensured that pupils who were participating were fully involved and active. This was seen to good effect in a Year 2 gymnastics lesson and the Year 3 and 4 basketball session. In the latter lesson, the enthusiasm and good teaching points provided by the classteacher ensured that the pupils were physically active for sustained periods of time and keen to learn. The pace of this lesson ensured that pupils developed their games skills well. Unfortunately, in some lessons that started well, good pace was not maintained when pupils spent longer than they needed in getting out equipment. As a result, good energetic and dynamic warm-up sessions at the start of lessons lost their momentum as the sessions progressed. Non-teaching assistants often contributed effectively to the pupils' learning by working with specific pupils such as those with learning or behavioural difficulties. A negative feature of many of the lessons observed was the number of pupils who were not participating because of illness or in most cases, had forgotten appropriate clothing. These pupils often either sat or watched or were involved in an activity not related to physical education. There is no whole school policy for these pupils and this is a weakness. They could for example, be evaluating the work of others or suggesting ways that others could improve their performance. This could be linked effectively to developing the pupils' literacy skills. Seeing the similarities and differences between each other's work and looking to improve performance after evaluation is a weakness of many lessons.

135 The headteacher is co-ordinating the subject until a new member of staff is appointed for the position. There is a scheme of work and subject policy and these will be reviewed as part of the whole review of the school curriculum. The headteacher has identified that teachers for example, need more guidance when teaching the dance element of the subject. Scrutiny of an overview of the physical education long-term plan indicates that pupils are presented with a balanced curriculum as they move through the academic year. The resources for the subject are satisfactory although the school does not have access to a playing field. The playground for the younger pupils has an uneven surface that is not helpful for outside activities. Equipment is not always organised in a way that benefits teaching and learning. Mats are stored in one pile which means that pupils have to queue in lessons to get them out and the quality of other resources is not monitored. For example, the start of a basketball lesson was delayed while sufficient balls that were 'pumped-up' were found. There is no school policy or practice in place to prevent this from happening and delaying teaching

and learning. The number of extra-curricular activities that support the subject are limited and this is a weakness. The school does not participate in any competitive sport and the headteacher recognises that this is an area for improvement as it makes a contribution to the pupils' social development. However, in a number of lessons pupils were seen working well with each other either in pairs or teams. The cool-down session after Year 2 gymnastics contributed to the pupils' spiritual development as the pupils lay quietly and reflectively, listening with their eyes closed, to a story being told by their class teacher.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

136 Standards are below those required by the locally Agreed Syllabus by the ages of seven and eleven. Judgements are based on past work, lessons seen, present planning and discussions with pupils and teachers. Progress is satisfactory for most pupils but past work shows that some teachers do not cater for the mixed ages and abilities within their classes, which sometimes results in unfinished work or pupils achieving too little. This affects learning within lessons and progress over time. Basic writing skills and emphasis on the presentation of work are not always well promoted which results in untidy and careless work being produced. Discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6 indicate that although the Agreed Syllabus has been followed, many pupils are muddled about the religious concepts that they have been taught. For example in Year 2 limited language skills made it difficult for the pupils to explain what the Bible was. No pupil could recall a Bible story that they had previously heard. In Year 6 although pupils are aware of Christianity, they are confused with other religions that they have studied. They mix up religions with languages and countries, for example a few thought Punjabi and India were religions.

137 Previous work in Years 1 and 2 shows that pupils have listened to stories such as David and Goliath and The Lost Sheep and sequenced the story using pictures. They have looked at Easter and symbols associated with it and discussed the idea of special people in their lives and people who help them. In Year 3 past work shows that pupils have learnt about Judaism. Pupils in Year 4 develop their understanding of Judaism as they look at how Jews celebrate their New Year. They have previously studied different emotions such as 'being sorry' and then gone on to study the concept of journeys, which led them onto the Christmas story. Pupils develop their understanding of the Christian faith by looking at symbolic food in Christianity such as 'wine' and 'bread' and 'hot-cross buns'. In Year 5, pupils build on their understanding of different religions in the world as they develop an understanding of Islam and Muslim festivals. By Year 6, pupils have a simple understanding of different religions but many have difficulty explaining what they have learnt because of limited language skills. For example, when discussing a topic they have worked on, 'people who have inspired us', they spoke about their 'heroes' as being members of their families and no one actually could define the word 'inspire'. Most attempts at writing in all year groups are of a low level and there is evidence of unfinished pieces of work.

138 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but not consistent. In the lessons observed teaching ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. The very good teaching is characterised by pupils having very positive attitudes to religious education lessons and behaving very well during the lesson. Learning objectives are clearly defined and there are very good planned opportunities for discussion. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 5 and 6 lesson as pupils discussed the issue of 'prayer within worship'. Questioning was very good and involved all pupils. Learning in this lesson was very good and the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was promoted well. However this is not consistent in all lessons. Weaknesses in teaching show that when the teacher does not manage the class well and listening skills are not effectively promoted and pupils are not given tasks which are suitable for their needs their attitudes to learning and behaviour generally are unacceptable. Learning in these instances is unsatisfactory.

139 Provision for religious education meets statutory requirements and planning is clear and linked closely to the locally Agreed Syllabus. Resources are satisfactory and link appropriately with the guidelines that the teachers follow. However at present the guidelines do not address the mixed aged classes. The subject is satisfactorily managed by the deputy headteacher. She has identified what is needed to raise standards throughout the school, such as developing assessment procedures, and to monitor what is actually taught. In addition it is recognised that planned visits to places of worship and the use of ICT to support the religious education curriculum are not developed.