

INSPECTION REPORT

WINDY ARBOR JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

Chelmsley Wood, Solihull

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104071

Headteacher: Mr B P Bowell

Reporting inspector: Mr C Kessell
20695

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd May 2003

Inspection number: 246348

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:	Woodlands Way Chelmsley Wood Birmingham
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Nick Stephens
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

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20695	Mr C Kessell	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught What the school should do to improve further
19697	Mrs J Moorhouse	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works with parents
3751	Mrs T Cotton	Team inspector	Music Religious education Special educational needs Educational inclusion	
19897	Mr J Francis	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
25384	Mr R Bonner	Team inspector	Science Physical education	
19765	Mrs P Shannon	Team inspector	English Art and design English as an additional language	How well the school is led and managed
28882	Mrs B Jones	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties	
18709	Ms N Bee	Team inspector	Geography History The Foundation Stage	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
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	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	22
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	23
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	27
THE UNIT FOR PUPILS WITH BEHAVIOURAL AND EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES	28
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	30
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	35

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Windy Arbor Junior and Infant School is above average in size with 296 full-time pupils (154 boys and 142 girls) aged between four and eleven. There is a designated nursery offering 40 part-time places. This community school serves Chelmsley Wood, an area in Solihull of predominantly rented accommodation and recognised as having high levels of social and economic disadvantage. At 29 per cent, the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average but this does not accurately reflect the high levels of deprivation found in the area. The attainment of the pupils when they start school is well below average. The majority of pupils are of white ethnic heritage although a number of other ethnic groups are represented. However, very few pupils speak English as an additional language and there are no pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. Nineteen per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is about average. The majority of these pupils are identified as having learning difficulties. In addition to this, the school has a Unit for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The percentage of pupils who have statements of educational need is above average. A high number of teachers have either left or joined the school in the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a caring school that provides an acceptable education for its pupils. Although standards in English, mathematics and science are not high enough, there are signs of improvement. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but consistently good in Years 1 and 2. The pupils generally make sound progress through the school but progress is good in Years 1 and 2, especially in English, mathematics and science, because of the quality of teaching and learning. The behaviour of the pupils is very good and they have positive attitudes to learning. The hard-working team of teaching and non-teaching staff is provided with good leadership by the headteacher. The management of the school by senior staff and the governors is satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The good quality education provided for the pupils in Years 1 and 2 enables these pupils to learn at a good rate in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in the Unit are provided with good support and care which enables them to make good progress.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The care provided for the pupils is good.
- The parents think very highly of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- The proportion of lessons where teaching and learning are good.
- The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching.

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

The school has made satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in January 1998. Many of the positive features of the previous inspection are still in place. For example, the pupils still have positive attitudes to learning. No unsatisfactory behaviour was observed during the current inspection, which is an improvement. Likewise, the percentage of unsatisfactory teaching observed is significantly lower than it was last time. However, progress against key issues for the previous inspection has been variable. Although the school's trend of improvement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has kept pace with the national trend, standards in these subjects are still too low. The presentation of pupils' work is still often unsatisfactory. The school has made better progress in developing assessment

procedures and using the information provided by these procedures to track pupils' progress. There is still work to be done in this area, as there is with the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, which was another issue. After a number of teachers have left and joined the school, there now appears to be stability, with an enthusiastic staff who are committed to improvement.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools ¹	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	E	D	E	D	very high A* well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
Mathematics	E	E	E	D	
Science	E	E	E	C	

The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 6, indicated that standards were well below average in English, mathematics and science.² When compared with similar schools, standards were below average in English and mathematics, and average in science. When compared with the results from 2001, the percentage of pupils who achieved the expected level 4 improved in mathematics and science. The improvement in mathematics was significant and led to the school being presented with an Achievement Award by the Department for Education and Skills. The results in English dropped in comparison with the previous year. National data indicate that some pupils did not make the progress that was expected of them in English and mathematics in relation to their prior attainment in Year 2. The school's statutory targets in English and mathematics for 2003 anticipate an improvement on 2002.

The results of national tests in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, showed standards were well below average in reading, and below average in writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, reading and mathematics were above average and writing well above average. Recent national test results in Years 2 and 6 have shown some difference in the performance of boys and girls beyond the trends found nationally. For example, the girls perform significantly better than the boys at reading in Year 2.

The pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are below average in reading, writing and science and average in mathematics. In these areas of learning, the pupils are making good progress. Pupils in Year 6 are achieving standards that are well below average in English, mathematics and science. The pupils' progress in these subjects is currently satisfactory.

Pupils achieve expected standards at the end of Year 2 in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Expected standards are also found in art and design, design and technology and physical education at the end of Year 6. Standards in ICT and music are not high enough in Year 6. Standards are below expected levels in geography, history and religious education at the end of both Years 2 and 6. The majority of children in the reception year are unlikely to achieve the expected standards in most areas of learning by the end of the reception year. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall.

¹ Similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

² These judgements are based on average National Curriculum points, which are calculated by attaching point scores to the levels achieved by all pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy coming to school. They are interested in their work and enjoy being involved in other activities provided by the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour in classrooms, in the playground, when moving around the school and at lunchtime, is consistently very good. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good, and relationships are very good. Pupils and adults get on very well together. Pupils are aware of each other's needs and do their best to help each other.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are well below average. Not all parents fulfil their responsibilities by ensuring that their children attend regularly. Analysis of national test results by the school shows that the poorest attenders achieve the lowest results.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although some good and very good teaching was observed during the inspection. The number of lessons that were judged to be unsatisfactory was far less than the previous inspection. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The pupils learn well in these subjects and make good progress. In all lessons, the management of pupils is good and there are very good relationships between the pupils and teaching and non-teaching staff. However, in a significant number of lessons, teachers need to have higher expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Day-to-day assessment could be used more effectively to ensure that higher attaining pupils are given more challenge in their work and pupils with special educational needs are provided with activities that reflect the targets in their individual education plans. Basic skills such as speaking, listening and writing are not always well promoted and, although lessons are planned satisfactorily, the lesson objectives that are shared with the pupils are often too broad and difficult to understand. Support provided by classroom assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as their classmates. The pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are consistently provided with good quality support.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broadly based, but because children in the reception class do not have religious education on a regular basis, it does not fulfil all statutory requirements. Time allocated to geography and history is well below the average for these subjects. There are good links with the community and other schools, and good extra-curricular activities.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans when they are given support by the special educational needs support assistant. However, class teachers do not always consider the needs of these pupils in their lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. When pupils are identified with language needs, effective support is provided that enables them to make good progress with their English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. The pupils' social development is very good. Spiritual and moral development is good, and cultural development satisfactory. The provision has a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. This is a caring school where individuals are cared for at all times whatever their needs. Procedures for checking pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory.

Parents' opinions of the school are very positive. The school has a strong relationship with parents and encourages them to take an active part in their children's learning and development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has contributed much to ensuring the positive and supportive atmosphere found in the school and the very obvious 'team' approach found amongst teaching and non-teaching staff. Staff find him inspiring and motivating. Other key staff and subject co-ordinators provide sound management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, offer effective support to the school and are satisfactorily involved in shaping the direction of the school. They meet most statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Governors understand the need to challenge the work of the school and make comparisons in performance. The school is developing its use of data and assessment information to track the progress of pupils. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is not sufficiently rigorous.
The strategic use of resources	The school's use of the financial resources available to it is satisfactory. However, contingency funding is below the recommended levels. The additional funding allocated for special educational needs and pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties is used effectively to ensure good provision.

Staffing and levels of resources are satisfactory. The school's accommodation is very good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school promotes good attitudes and values. Children become more mature and responsible and are expected to work hard and achieve their best.• Teaching is good.• Children like school. It is friendly, caring and welcoming.• Parents feel well supported and encouraged to participate in school activities.• The leadership of the headteacher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are no areas of significant dissatisfaction.

The parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire and the 18 parents who attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting are supportive of the school. They think it is a good one and are pleased their children attend. Inspection evidence confirms much of what parents think is good.

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 below those expected nationally in almost all areas of learning, apart from physical development and creative development. Although progress is satisfactory in relation to their previous attainment, both the standards which the children reach and the progress which they make in writing are affected because there are too few opportunities for children to systematically develop writing skills in adult-focused activities.

2 The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, showed standards in reading were well below average and below average in writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. In relation to their prior attainment at the end of reception, these pupils achieved well overall although standards could still be higher. The percentage of pupils who actually achieved the expected level 2 was very similar to that found nationally in all of the areas of learning. In writing and mathematics, the school percentage exceeded the percentage nationally. However, the percentage of pupils who reached the higher level 3 was well below average in reading and below average in writing. This depressed the overall results. Over the last four years there has been a continual trend of improvement in writing and mathematics but reading fell back slightly in 2002 after steady improvement. When looking at the performance of boys and girls, the trends over recent years have been similar to those found nationally with the exception of reading. The gap between the boys and girls is wider than one would normally expect to find in the majority of schools.

3 The results of National Curriculum tests in 2002, taken by pupils at the end of Year 6, showed standards to be well below average in English, mathematics and science. These pupils made below average progress in English and mathematics in relation to their prior attainment when they were in Year 2. Their progress in science was satisfactory. When compared with similar schools, standards were below average in English and mathematics and average in science. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 was well below average in all three subjects. There was some improvement in the percentage of pupils who achieved the expected level 4 in mathematics and science. The improvement in mathematics was significant. Although the percentage in science was quite near to that found nationally, the English and mathematics percentages were some way off. When taking the years 2000 to 2002 together, the performance of boys and girls varies quite significantly from the trends found nationally. Since 1998, the school's trend of improvement has been similar to the trend found nationally.

4 In the current Year 2, standards are below average in English and science and average in mathematics. The trend of improvement in this year group is continuing as a result of good teaching and learning. In Year 6 standards are well below average in English, mathematics and science. Progress in these subjects is currently satisfactory. The school's statutory targets in English and mathematics for pupils in the current Year 6 anticipate an improvement on the previous year.

5 There is an improving picture in the school. Staffing is more stable and the progress of pupils is being tracked more effectively. There are some disaffected pupils in Years 4 and 5 as a result of the staffing issues but the school has recognised this and is providing appropriate support. However, there are other factors that do not help the drive to raise standards. Although teaching is generally satisfactory with much that is good, the proportion

of good teaching is still not high enough, particularly in Years 3 to 6, to make progress any better than satisfactory. When pupils are starting off at a lower level, they need to achieve more rapidly to attain expected levels. Some teachers have too low expectations of what their pupils can achieve and lesson organisation does not always enable all pupils to make the progress they are capable of. Poor attendance is also another contributory factor to low standards. While pupils are not at school they cannot learn and make progress. Careful analysis by the school of last year's national tests proves this point.

6 Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 in art and design, design and technology and physical education are similar to those found in the majority of schools. Standards in ICT and music are as expected at the end of Year 2, but below expected levels at the end of Year 6. Standards are below expected levels in geography, history and religious education at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is a result of these subjects not being covered in sufficient depth. This has been recognised by the subject coordinators and will be addressed in the next academic year.

7 The school makes good provision for pupils with statements for their special educational needs. These pupils make good progress, because of regular support in class lessons from classroom assistants, who have the expertise to respond to specific, individual needs. Provision for pupils identified on School Action Plus³ is good and they achieve well. Pupils' needs are met by the special needs classroom assistant, who works either within the classroom or with small groups withdrawn from lessons. Support is well focused and draws effectively from the pupils' targets in their individual education plans. Assessment is used successfully to identify what has been achieved and to guide the next step in learning. Records and targets are shared with teachers and pupils and indicate clearly the good progress pupils have made over time.

8 Progress for other groups of special educational needs pupils, particularly with learning difficulties in reading and writing, is satisfactory. This is a significant group within the school and teachers respond to needs by planning work to meet the broad ability levels found in literacy and numeracy lessons. However, work is not always specific enough to meet the pupils' individual needs and targets from individual education plans. They are not used consistently to guide planning. For instance, work in pupils' books in non-core subjects, such as history and religious education, is planned at one level.

9 The one pupil identified as using English as an additional language has made good progress in improving speaking and listening skills.

10 Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in the Unit show good achievement against personal targets both in behaviour and in learning. Sometimes improvements are very good given pupils' starting points. In science and mathematics in particular, pupils often reach the nationally required levels of attainment; as they do in aspects of other subjects, especially in art and design and physical education. Good progress in learning represents an improvement since the previous inspection.

11 Despite the national data, 98 per cent of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that their children were making good progress in the school. Most of the parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting were happy with their child's progress and believed that children were sufficiently challenged in school.

³ The second stage of the school's register of pupils with special educational needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12 Pupils' attitudes to school and their lessons are good and their attitudes to learning are positive. Pupils show a lively interest in what is being taught and they enjoy coming to school. They rise to the challenge when teaching is demanding and enjoy practical tasks. Pupils' positive attitudes and enthusiasm were noted in nearly all lessons. Pupils in Year 2 enjoyed the challenge of working on adjectives in an English lesson. During an ICT lesson involving the use of pictograms, Year 5 pupils worked enthusiastically and with enjoyment. Pupils are capable of working independently and concentrating on tasks. Inspectors saw good examples of concentrated work by pupils in Year 1 in a design and technology lesson on food and in an English lesson on writing from a different point of view by pupils in Year 5. A notable contribution to pupils' personal development was seen in an English lesson when Year 3 pupils applied themselves productively to developing sentences using words showing time. A good example of boys and girls working co-operatively together, taking turns and helping each other was seen in a music lesson in Year 4. Pupils handled equipment and resources sensibly and confidently during lessons in science and physical education. Inspectors saw many opportunities for pupils to work in lessons in groups, pairs and teams, that enhanced the very good social development of pupils. In a Year 4 history lesson pupils worked collaboratively in pairs when comparing the lives of rich and poor people in Tudor times. Pupils in Year 5 enjoyed working together comparing the features of a city, a town and a village in a lesson in geography. The vast majority of parents responding to the questionnaire agreed their children like school and the inspection findings confirm their views.

13 Most children in the Foundation Stage show positive attitudes to learning, settle in well and enjoy coming to school. When given the opportunity, the children are able to work independently but adults sometimes miss the chance to develop personal independence, for example during drinks and snack time when they do not always allow the children to hand round the fruit or pour the drinks. Behaviour is good and the children develop good relationships with the adults who work with them and with each other.

14 At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' behaviour in the classroom was said to be good. This situation has improved and inspectors saw consistently very good behaviour in classrooms. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The behaviour of pupils in the playground and during dinner times is very good, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Provision for pupils' moral development is good and positively promoted by the high expectations of good behaviour maintained by all staff. Parents strongly believe that the school promotes good attitudes and values. Pupils are aware of the standards of behaviour that are expected from the time they start school and they meet these standards consistently, including moving around the school very sensibly even when they are unsupervised. The vast majority of parents responding to the questionnaire agree that behaviour in the school is good. There have been eight exclusions from school during the last school year involving three pupils who were all boys. The exclusions all resulted from instances of misbehaviour.

15 Pupils respond willingly to the opportunities provided to be involved in the life of the school. These opportunities make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and moral development. The majority of pupils have responsibilities in their classrooms and for keeping shared areas tidy. Some classes have a rota of class monitors and all, including the youngest children, have an opportunity to be register monitor. Register monitors come into school before the start of the school day and take the registers to the classrooms. Pupils from Year 5 and Year 6 have an opportunity to be elected through a whole-school election on to the school council. Older pupils have duties and responsibilities around the school such as acting as courtyard monitors and library monitors, and acting as 'buddies' to younger pupils during lunchtimes. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and handle them reliably and efficiently. When talking to pupils, inspectors found them friendly, polite and helpful. In a number of lessons pupils are given opportunities to make decisions and use their initiative by being

asked to work in small groups and discuss tasks. Pupils approach these opportunities sensibly and with enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 1 were seen praising the efforts of others after a team game in physical education. Year 5 pupils made constructive and sensitive comments on other pupils' written work at the end of an English lesson. Provision for spiritual development through religious education lessons offers pupils opportunities to develop and reflect on their own beliefs. Year 3 pupils had a good level of respect for the subject when discussing baptism during a religious education lesson.

16 Relationships in the school are very good and enable pupils to develop an understanding of what the school expects from them. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection when relationships were good. In the classroom, the relationships between the pupils and the teacher are consistently good, have a positive effect on learning and set the tone for the very good social development of pupils. Inspectors saw kind and caring attitudes between pupils of the same age and between older and younger pupils. Pupils understand the consequences of unkind behaviour or bullying. Bullying is discussed during assemblies and has been on the agenda of the school council and pupils know to approach staff with their concerns. Pupils work and play together collaboratively and in twos or threes and in small groups. This was seen during lessons in science and physical education and at playtimes.

17 The vast majority of pupils with special educational needs are keen to learn and so persevere with harder tasks in lessons and make sound progress. Relationships between different groups in school are very positive, with pupils showing patience for slower readers and writers and encouragement when pupils with social and emotional difficulties keep on task in lessons. There is some innovative provision for pupils who are reluctant to read, set in the 'jungle reading area', which is motivating boys in particular to choose books from a wider range of texts and to read for pleasure.

18 The school places strong emphasis on personal development for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social problems. Targets are set to raise standards. The school uses a range of personal and general incentives to motivate these pupils to acquire good attitudes towards learning and behaviour. In general the pupils make appreciable effort to achieve targets. The school's good policy of inclusion has been greatly beneficial towards personal development. Good relationships are formed across the school.

19 At the time of the previous inspection attendance at the school was satisfactory. Attendance is now poor, with figures well below those of other primary schools nationally. Unauthorised absence is consistently low. Figures have been affected by the small number of families who do not co-operate as well as they might in helping the school improve the situation. However, the majority of pupils are keen to come to school and are generally punctual. This enables lessons to begin on time and the school day to get off to a good start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20 The parents of the school have a high opinion of the teachers and the work they undertake. Ninety-eight per cent of those who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that teaching was good in the school and at the pre-inspection meeting it was considered a strength of teaching that the views of pupils and parents were always considered. Inspection evidence indicates that there has been some improvement since the previous inspection. For example, the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has dropped considerably; however, there are still some areas for development in teaching that affect most parts of the school but particularly the Foundation Stage⁴ and Years 3 to 6. During the inspection, 52 per cent of lessons were satisfactory, 42 per cent good and 4 per cent very

⁴ The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

good. Two per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. Overall, teaching is judged to be satisfactory with pupils learning soundly. This judgement was reinforced through a scrutiny of pupils' work. When teaching was satisfactory, although the lesson strengths exceeded the weaknesses, pupils did not learn at the same rapid rate as they did where teaching and learning were good or better. As many of the pupils start school with well below average levels of attainment they need to make good or very good progress to ensure that they reach or are nearer to expected levels by the time they leave school. This cannot happen with predominantly satisfactory teaching. The percentage of good or better teaching will need to improve if the school is to make a greater impact on pupils' progress.

21 Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and sometimes good. Teachers' planning is sound but there are too few opportunities for the children to develop letter formation and basic writing skills in adult-focused groups. Although procedures for day-to-day assessment are satisfactory, adults' written comments are often too vague to inform future planning and teaching and there is little evidence of any written evaluation of how lessons have gone. In addition, adults sometimes do not promote speaking and listening skills effectively and miss opportunities to develop assessment records. These weaknesses in teaching affect the standards that the children reach, the learning within lessons and ultimately progress over time.

22 The management of pupils is a strength of teaching and this is consistent through the school. There are some challenging pupils in the school but classroom relationships are very good. Despite some teaching not always being good, the pupils are interested in learning. The teachers do their best to ensure that the learning environments of the classroom are positive and supportive to the pupils. They go to great lengths to display the pupils' work and also to provide displays in the classroom that represent as many areas of the curriculum as possible. This also enhances the school accommodation.

23 The teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are a strength of the school. This is particularly the case in English, mathematics and science. Analysis of pupils' work in these subjects showed that the pupils had made good progress in relation to their prior attainment as a result of good teaching and learning. Expectations of what the pupils can achieve are good and better consideration is taken of the different ability groups found in the classes. However, there is still room for improvement, and an over-reliance on worksheets, particularly in mathematics, can slow the learning of some pupils, especially the higher attaining pupils.

24 Although most of the literacy and numeracy lessons are planned to provide different work for pupils of different ability, this good practice does not extend effectively to other areas of the curriculum. Some teachers do not expect enough from their pupils and too little attention is paid to the different ability groups found in all of the classes. This often means that some pupils find work too easy while others find it too difficult and do not finish the activity. Analysis of work showed this to be the case in subjects like geography, history and religious education. Too often, activities like 'colouring' are provided for pupils in these subjects, which do not support the development of the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. In many instances, the pupils' presentation of their work is unsatisfactory because some teachers have too low expectations of what pupils should be producing. In these situations, the skills of writing are not well promoted. When asking questions of pupils, there is a tendency by some teachers to rely on answers from only those pupils who put their hand up. This allows some pupils to become 'passive learners' and does not promote speaking and listening skills well. In better lessons, teachers target their questions at all ability groups to ensure full participation. This also provides them with helpful information about the pupils' understanding of a subject. This was seen to good effect in a Year 1 design and technology lesson as the class teacher introduced the pupils to different kinds of fruit, as part of a new topic on food. Careful questioning about the different types of skin, flesh and peel led to pupils successfully considering which fruit had to be washed before preparation for

eating. Given that some of the fruit introduced to the pupils was unfamiliar to them, they made good gains in their knowledge and understanding.

25 Day-to-day assessment is an area that requires further improvement. On too many occasions, teachers do not use the information from their professional evaluation of a lesson to influence future planning or the type of work that is provided for different groups of pupils. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and can provide pupils with wrong messages. Although there are always many positive comments, very little information is provided for pupils on how to improve their work or move on to the next stage of learning. In some instances, a comment like 'brilliant' is used for work of a low standard.

26 When teaching is good, not only do pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate but pupils show good effort and concentration and have a good understanding of their own learning. This was seen to good effect in a Year 1 mathematics lesson as pupils counted a selection of coins to find the total and in a Year 2 literacy lesson all pupils were challenged effectively as they looked at the text of *Lazy Ozzie*. In a Year 2 science lesson, where pupils identified the common features in themselves, the class teacher looked very carefully at how she could extend and challenge the pupils during their investigative work. Although much has been made of the good teaching in Years 1 and 2, it was seen elsewhere in the school. There are a number of talented and well-trained teachers throughout the school who are good role models for their colleagues and effective teaching was observed in every year group but more consistently in some. A very good lesson was observed in Year 5 as pupils investigated texts from other cultures, and in Year 4, pupils developed their hockey skills well in a well-organised physical education lesson that built on previous learning. Good interactions with the pupils by the teacher ensured good progress as Year 6 pupils investigated how some solids dissolve more quickly than others. The small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching was as a result of significant proportions of pupils not making any progress during some lessons.

27 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is mainly within the classroom, where pupils follow a similar curriculum to others. As yet, the work set for different levels of ability within classes is not as exact as it could be and the specific targets set for individual pupils in their individual education plans are not used well enough in work in lessons. This is particularly so in subjects such as geography, history and religious education where pupils with special educational needs have to complete the same work as others. In literacy and numeracy, setting by ability⁵ in Years 4, 5 and 6 is providing a broad match of work to need, but in some lessons it is not sharp enough. For instance, pupils copying out a letter scribed by the teacher are practising their handwriting skills rather than learning to write independently. Support staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning but sometimes their support is not so effective when pupils are provided with inappropriate work by their teachers.

28 The provision for homework is satisfactory across the school and is appropriate to pupils' ages. A number of examples of effective homework supporting the school curriculum were observed during the inspection, particularly in literacy. This would support the view of 94 per cent of the parents who agreed that the child gets the right amount of work to do at home.

29 Individual education and behaviour plans for the pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are written in conjunction with the teacher in charge of the Unit and the class teacher, with involvement by the co-ordinator for special educational needs and the special support assistants. Records are kept daily of attainment and progress, and liaison between staff across age groups ensures continuity and progression. Teachers are more aware of targets now and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Work in class is appropriate as a rule. The strong team of assistants and ongoing Unit support contribute

⁵ Pupils placed in groups according to their ability.

admirably to the effectiveness of the programme. Teaching is good for these pupils, as is learning.

30 The school has one pupil who is identified as using English as an additional language. The school provided additional support at an early stage. As a result of this good intervention the pupil made good progress with his speaking and listening skills and is no longer in need of targeted support.

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

31 Overall, the quality and range of the curriculum provided by the school are satisfactory, similar to the judgements of the previous inspection. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education. While the curriculum meets most statutory requirements, including that for a daily act of worship, some pupils miss this regularly for additional support work. Additionally, children in the reception class do not have regular religious education, which is a statutory requirement for children of this age. Appropriate policies and schemes of work are in now in place and, while good attention is given to investigative aspects of the science curriculum, this is less effective in mathematics. At the time of the previous inspection, it was reported that there was no formal guidance on how much time was allocated to individual subjects. While there is now guidance on this, it is not sufficiently well applied or monitored. Consequently, subjects such as geography and history, which alternate each half term, do not receive sufficient time over the year. As a result, standards in these subjects are below the levels expected.

32 The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is good and very good for outdoor activities. It is planned according to the national guidance and there are regular opportunities for structured outside play, which promote all areas of learning well.

33 The special educational needs support assistant provides focused help for pupils with special educational needs, both in class lessons and in small groups outside the class, on a regular basis. This provision is good. An instance is when pupils who need extra help with their speaking or phonic skills work on a one-to-one basis and make good progress with their learning. Work is well planned and assessment used successfully to identify how learning is to be moved forward.

34 The school makes sure that all pupils are included and have good access to all aspects of learning and the extra provision the school makes, for example, additional targeted support in English and mathematics, and the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Provision is good for pupils' personal development. Health, sex education and the use and misuse of medicines and drugs are taught as part of personal, social and health education and the science curriculum.

35 Pupils with educational, behavioural and social difficulties are integrated into mainstream for all lessons and have access across the curriculum, including extra-curricular activities. All Unit pupils are included in external visits, residential stays, and class and school events. The Unit base room provides an area for withdrawal purposes, and pupils meet there at the beginning and end of each day to engage in social or learning activities.

36 The school follows the local education authority guidance regarding support for pupils who use English as an additional language and is effective in providing additional support as required.

37 Long-term and medium-term plans are sound and provide for the coverage of all programmes of study. Weekly plans are suitably detailed, focusing on the key objectives

pupils are to learn, although these are not always sufficiently specific for teachers to be able to evaluate pupils' learning effectively and do not always reflect the different needs of the highest attainers. This is acknowledged by the school and addressed in subject action plans. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented. They have been appropriately resourced and, in mathematics in particular, are having an impact on helping to raise standards throughout the school.

38 Extra-curricular provision is good and many pupils across the school take part in a wide range of activities throughout the year. They are able to participate in clubs during the lunch hour and after school, where boys and girls can learn to play musical instruments, play football and netball or use computers. The curriculum is enhanced through a very good range of visits made by pupils, and by visitors to the school. Visiting theatre companies and musicians enhance pupils' understanding of historical events and different cultures. Pupils visit different local places of interest, which enhance their learning in many areas of the curriculum, and pupils in Years 3 to 6 have many opportunities to take part in popular and successful residential visits and a music course.

39 There are good links with partner institutions, such as the local cluster of schools and a nearby Beacon school. Links with the Beacon school have helped in the provision of good outdoor play facilities for children in the nursery and reception classes. Good links with the local secondary school are effective in helping to prepare pupils well for their transfer to their next stage of education. The school also provides regular placements for the initial training of teachers. Links are also being forged with a school in America to widen pupils' understanding of other education systems.

40 The good links with the wider community are helping to contribute to pupils' learning. The pupils have opportunities to appreciate different religions through local church groups, and the teaching of art, English and other subjects is improved by visits such as those from theatre groups. Links with the local college and the Prince's Trust have resulted in the development of parts of the school grounds, and links with a local bakery firm have developed work in design and technology where in the past, staff have involved pupils in sandwich making.

41 School policies ensure that these aspects of education incorporate the Unit pupils. All are expected to behave well and value the needs of others. Unit pupils have many emotional problems to overcome. Great efforts have been made to improve in work and behaviour; confidence and self-esteem have grown. Friendships and understanding have developed across the school.

42 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The level of provision has been maintained since the previous inspection. The school places a high value on the unique qualities of each pupil and so there is a strong emphasis on establishing a caring, stable community, where pupils feel valued and secure. This sense of well-being is mirrored in the way all school groups work together harmoniously throughout the day.

43 Provision for spiritual development is good. School and class assemblies provide time for pupils to reflect on shared values, such as loyalty and friendship. By focusing on the meaning of words in hymns and songs, such as *My never leave me friend*, pupils begin to make links with their own life experiences and the teachings of Jesus. These ideas are often developed further in religious education lessons, when pupils consider what is important in their own lives. There is a clear focus on reflection and prayer in collective worship, and in lessons there are opportunities to reflect on the beauty of the world, though these are unplanned. This is evident in the powerful images of 'meditating eagles reborn' created in their poetry by Year 4 pupils.

44 The promotion of moral development is good. Teachers provide good role models of 'fair play' and encourage pupils to consider their own actions and how they affect others. The school stands for positive values and there are clear expectations of good behaviour, to which all pupils respond. Teachers show tolerance and sensitivity when dealing with pupils who need extra help and displays around the school emphasise care and concern for others. Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong and comment if they believe things are unjust. For instance, after reading a story about poachers, pupils identify that killing elephants for their ivory is cruel and unlawful. Provision in personal and social education lessons enables pupils to develop their own self-esteem and discuss more sensitive and wider issues, such as bullying.

45 Provision for social development is very good, and the school's inclusive nature is a strength. Pupils are taught to respect others and their beliefs and to develop a strong sense of their own self-worth. This is underpinned by a system for rewards. Certificates for outstanding attendance or achievement and 'Star of the week' are valued by all age groups. For instance, a Year 6 pupil is proud of her achievement in gymnastics, whilst a pupil with social and emotional difficulties details his good progress in lessons through a range of positive comments and stickers. Pupils also have a voice in the school council, through whole-school elections for representatives from Years 5 and 6. Residential visits enable pupils to develop greater confidence and independence in a wider social setting. In everyday lessons, such as in numeracy and physical education, boys and girls co-operate well together and from nursery onwards teachers encourage pupils to take turns and to be polite to others. Parents are pleased with the good standard of behaviour in school and the positive way in which pupils interact.

46 Provision for cultural development is sound. Whilst pupils learn about their own cultural heritage through visits to the Black Country Museum and art galleries, there is less planned, or incidental work linked to the study of other cultures and lifestyles. Visitors from other cultural backgrounds are infrequent. Effective work in art is linked to exploring European and African artists and a residential 'arts week' for Years 5 and 6 pupils promotes creative links with art, drama and music. Older pupils were motivated by working with a local poet and some reluctant readers now choose to read poetry for pleasure. The school has an interesting range of musical instruments from other countries, which were not observed in use during the inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47 Windy Arbor School takes good care of its pupils. The school's atmosphere is supportive and happy and this makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. The school has a sufficient number of relevant procedures and guidance and welfare policies to inform and underpin its actions. These policies are consistently implemented throughout the whole school.

48 The procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good and all staff, including the newly qualified teachers, are aware of the procedures and the personnel involved. There is evidence of a thorough and careful monitoring by the headteacher and the school has a sensitive concern and awareness for the needs of its pupils and their parents. Policies are in line with local procedures and good relationships exist with personnel from outside agencies involved with pupil care. The school has one member of staff qualified in first aid and some members of staff have undertaken basic first aid training, although this training has not been made available to staff recently. All the necessary procedures are in place for dealing with minor accidents or incidents. Arrangements and procedures for the conduct of educational visits fully comply with local authority guidelines. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular health, safety and security audits are carried out in the school with site manager and, more recently, governor involvement. The

school has clear policies for ensuring the safe and sensible use of the Internet. Governors are aware of the need to provide a safe environment for pupils and staff. A safety issue related to an unfenced pool in the courtyard was brought to the notice of the school during the inspection.

49 Supervision at lunchtime is well organised through a rota of six supervisors, a number of whom are employed in the school in other roles. Lunchtime is a happy and orderly occasion as pupils behave in a mature way and take responsibility for their own behaviour. A small number of parents attending the parents' meeting commented on supervisors being 'unsympathetic'. The inspectors disagree with these views. Supervisors make positive comments for good behaviour and attitudes directly to the pupils and give a daily 'good table' award. The table that has the most points for the week has an extra session in the 'activity' playground. The midday supervisors have received training on the school's policy for managing misbehaviour and show an understanding and willingness to use its approach when the occasional incident occurs. With the help of older pupils who act as 'buddies', supervisors manage the distribution and use of the popular playground equipment and the organisation of games for younger pupils. The organised use of games and equipment makes a positive contribution to the harmonious atmosphere and co-operation of pupils on the playground. Pupils treat supervisors with politeness and courtesy. Lunchtime makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

50 There has been a drop in attendance figures since the time of the previous inspection. However, the school is working hard to improve and has good procedures for monitoring attendance and promoting punctuality. Through clearly written letters and reminders in the school's newsletter, the school clearly demonstrates to parents the importance of good attendance and punctuality for the smooth running of the school. The school follows up the small number of parents who fail to communicate the reasons for their child's absence, so that for the vast majority of pupils unauthorised absence is minimal. Parents are made aware of their responsibilities in meeting the school's expectation that pupils will attend regularly and arrive on time. The school has recently started to reward good class attendance on a weekly basis. Good attendance is acknowledged publicly during the 'class assembly' when parents are present. Seven pupils received 100 per cent attendance awards during the 'Achievers Evening' at the end of the last school year.

51 The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The school gives a high priority to the expectation of a good standard of behaviour that is consistent throughout the school. The level of behaviour is clearly understood by pupils and parents. There are school rules and a small number of classes display their own appropriately worded class rules and have their own reward systems. Inspectors saw very good behaviour consistently rewarded with praise, stickers and completion of sections of their achievement books so that pupils were encouraged to work hard and succeed. A small number of parents attending the parents' meeting expressed some concern related to bullying being ignored and issues not being dealt with in an appropriate way. Pupils say that bullying does happen occasionally in school and that they can confidently talk to staff who "sort things out".

52 Two pupils from each class are chosen by teachers to be rewarded publicly for good work, effort and behaviour during the monthly 'Achiever of the Month' assembly. Staff have a thorough knowledge of their pupils and monitor their personal progress in an informal way. Parents attending the parents' meeting agreed that teachers know the children well and commented on the sensitive choices made by staff when selecting older and younger pupils to be 'buddies'. Pupils are constantly supported and, in turn, promote the welcoming and caring culture of the school.

53 The quality of provision is good for Unit pupils. Close connections with outside agencies ensure correct programmes of help are undertaken. Psychological, educational and

medical help is ongoing. Pupils in the Unit are closely monitored and are subject to continuous assessment. Speech and language therapy is available as necessary. Unit staff maintain daily records and weekly reports of attainment and progress in all aspects of development. Information is collated and acted upon constantly.

54 The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. When children enter the school in the reception classes their attainment levels are checked and pupils in Years 2 and 6 undertake all statutory assessments in English, mathematics and science. The results of these tests are analysed, for example in terms of attendance, ethnicity and gender. One outcome from this analysis has shown that pupils who attend regularly make better progress than those who are frequently absent from school. The school also carries out a range of additional tests in English and mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5, and writing assessments, reading, spelling, and 'end of topic' tests in some subjects.

55 The use of assessments to guide curricular planning and support pupils' academic progress is satisfactory. The systems the school uses to identify the standards of attainment for English and mathematics are developing well and effective tracking procedures are beginning to identify the rate of individual pupils' progress. This information is based on the results of testing and re-testing of pupils in most year groups. Particularly good progress has been made in entering assessment information into a computer database. This is already providing the school with much clearer information about the attainment and progress of individuals and different groups of pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. The school acknowledges that further work needs to take place to develop and refine these procedures. Assessment information is used well to identify pupils with special educational needs and additional support is provided for pupils who are not making the progress that they should. The school is beginning to introduce 'end of topic' tests in some subjects to check how well pupils have achieved. However, teachers do not always use the outcomes of these assessments to plan appropriate work that builds effectively on pupils' previous learning.

56 The school analyses well pupils' responses in the national tests in English, mathematics and science, identifying particular strengths and areas that require further improvement. As a result of this analysis the curriculum has been adjusted, with greater emphasis being placed on these identified areas of difficulty. For example, in response to weaknesses in pupils' skills of scientific enquiry, a much more structured approach to the teaching of this aspect has been implemented. In other subjects, for example music, design and technology, history and geography, the school is beginning to introduce a simple method of recording pupils' levels of achievement, but this initiative is in its infancy.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57 The school continues to work hard to build on the friendly and positive partnership it had with parents at the time of the previous inspection. Parents' opinions of the school are very positive and there are no areas of significant dissatisfaction. The school works well with parents in a relationship of mutual respect. A significant majority of parents responding to the questionnaire agree the school works closely with them. Parents receive good quality information that is presented in a friendly and readable style. The governors' annual report to parents and the school's prospectus are produced as one document. It is an attractively presented, thorough document containing all the essential information, including a copy of the home-school agreement and a photograph of the members of the school's council. A well-presented class newsletter is sent home each term. It contains information for the forthcoming term on the curriculum topics, details of homework arrangements and a request to parents to complete the homework diary, and a sentence encouraging parents to share their concerns with staff and call in for a chat before or after school.

58 The contribution of parents to pupils' learning is satisfactory both in school and in the work pupils do at home. The school has continued to work towards a greater involvement of parents in their children's education. Parents are invited to the weekly class assemblies and to the end of year 'Achievers Evening'. Inspectors saw approximately 20 parents and grandparents attending a Year 4 class assembly and a number of them staying on afterwards to join their children in their classroom and work with them for part of morning. Each class teacher provides details of the curriculum for the coming term in the class newsletter and lists some of the key areas that are going to be covered during the term. Parents and grandparents are part of the small but loyal group of parents who help in the school on a regular basis. They hear children read and make a useful contribution to practical activities. The school's site manager helps with swimming lessons each week and one parent helps in the school's office with administrative tasks. The 'Parent and Friends' is an active and supportive group that organises a number of fund-raising activities throughout the year and helps the school at other events such as organising refreshments when the school hosts the borough netball tournament. Money raised has been used to pay for a theatre group to come into school and to purchase equipment for use in school, for example video cameras, playground equipment and books. The majority of parents have signed the home-school agreement and comply with the requirements it contains. This contract has strengthened co-operation between parents and staff.

59 Parents responding to the questionnaire felt well informed about how their children are getting on at school. There are three formal parents' evenings each year and attendance at these meetings is good. At the October meeting the school has begun to set personal and academic targets for pupils, although this procedure is still in its early stages. The meeting held in June is an 'Open Day' when parents are able to look at their children's work and discuss the end of year report. A sample of reports scrutinised by inspectors contained a thorough and systematic record of pupils' progress and achievement. Appropriately worded and 'user-friendly' comments on pupils' personal and social development are included in the 'general comments' section. Reports do not contain targets for development. The arrangements for the setting of homework and the types of tasks pupils may be expected to do at home are usefully included in the termly class newsletters. Inspectors saw good practice in homework being set in line with this information and some good use being made of homework diaries by older pupils and their parents.

60 Parents of pupils with special educational needs have an 'open door' policy with school and have regular meetings with the special needs co-ordinator, sharing targets and drawing from outside expertise. There are regular reviews of pupils' individual plans.

61 There is close contact with parents of pupils in the Unit who appreciate the work of the school. The school welcomes parents' comments on target setting and parents attend school meetings and annual reviews. Where parents actively support homework projects, pupils achieve more.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62 The leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has many good leadership qualities that are highly valued by the governors, staff and parents. He is well respected by the school community. This is because of his collegiate approach and the efforts he takes to consult staff and governors in decision making. A key strength is the headteacher's ability to motivate staff and to ensure that they feel valued and part of the team. As a result, despite many changes in staff over the past two years, morale is high and relationships both between the staff and pupils and with each other are very good. The headteacher is viewed by parents, staff and governors as friendly, accessible and caring. He has an understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

63 The school and governors have an agreed vision expressed in the aims and values of the school. They are successful in establishing a socially inclusive curriculum that values all pupils' contributions. An appropriate race relations policy is in place. Great care is taken to integrate pupils from the Unit. The school has successfully established an atmosphere where all pupils work well together, demonstrating good behaviour and attitudes to work. The school is therefore successfully achieving its aim of providing 'an environment where the children develop personal values and attitudes which will allow them to take their place in society with pride'. The school is aware of the need to continue to raise standards for some pupils who do not always achieve well enough. Currently the aim 'to provide an environment in which every child develops to their full potential academically' is not fully met.

64 The delegation of management responsibilities is satisfactory. The school has had to deal with a high number of staff changes over the last two years. This has affected the balance of some areas of responsibility and the rate of implementing change. The head and deputy meet regularly for day-to-day organisational needs and for more strategic decision making. However, the deputy head currently has too many major areas of responsibility as well as a full-time teaching commitment. While she undertakes many aspects of her work successfully, there remains an undue burden on the deputy's time for management responsibilities. The school has plans to address this issue.

65 The senior management team has appropriate involvement in decision making and in supporting the headteacher to take the school forward. The senior management team includes the key stage⁶ leaders and teacher in charge of the Unit. They are also the co-ordinators with responsibility for English, mathematics, science and ICT. As such they are able to maintain an overview with the head, of the standards the school achieves. They lead team meetings with staff and have had a positive impact on analysing data and identifying areas for improvement. As the headteacher is solely responsible for performance management, the members of the senior management team are unable to contribute to this process.

66 Many of the co-ordinators are relatively new to the school. English, special educational needs, ICT and English as an additional language are examples of well-managed areas of the school. All co-ordinators have action plans, manage their own budgets and monitor curriculum planning. Co-ordinators keep governors well informed through regular reports. The school has procedures in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning; however, these are mainly limited to English and mathematics. The regular monitoring of these two subjects by the co-ordinators and members of the local authority advisory service is steadily having an impact and raising standards. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning is not systematically in place for the other areas of the curriculum, including the core subject of science and the Foundation Stage. This limits the school's ability to improve some aspects of teaching and learning and to raise the standards that some pupils attain. Therefore, currently the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are unsatisfactory

67 The special educational needs co-ordinator and classroom assistant with responsibility for special educational needs work in partnership and have good skills and expertise. This is having a positive effect on provision. Clear assessment and records of pupils' achievement and progress are helping to guide planning. The special educational needs co-ordinator is proud of the training programme provided for staff, to improve the level of their expertise. An example is work on accelerated learning.

68 The management of English as an additional language is good. At present, due to staffing changes, the head has an overview of this area. The local education authority

⁶ Key Stage 1 - Years 1 and 2. Key Stage 2 - Years 3 to 6.

guidelines are in place and due to early intervention and support, the pupil with English as an additional language has made rapid progress.

69 At the time of the previous inspection, the governors carried out their responsibilities in a satisfactory way. They have continued to do so, making a sound contribution to how the school is organised and run. They are proud of the school and show an active interest in all aspects of its work. There is a clear scheme of delegation that defines roles and responsibilities and most governors have individual responsibilities such as literacy, numeracy, special educational needs and charring sub-committees. Governors are kept appropriately informed by the headteacher, through effective headteacher reports, and informally through meetings and discussions. This enables them to have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and appreciate that there is more to be done to raise academic standards. Although the governors fulfil most of their statutory duties, there are weaknesses in ensuring that all pupils are provided with a daily act of collective worship and the teaching of religious education on a regular basis to reception children.

70 The school has satisfactory procedures for ensuring that the financial resources available to it are used to support pupils' learning efficiently. The headteacher, school secretary and the local education authority finance officer ensure that within the school there is a secure grasp of the school's financial situation, so that the school can manage its budget efficiently. Although planned financial reserves are less than good practice recommends, the school and governors are confident that they can respond to changing circumstances with minimal disruption to its planned strategies, enabling the focus to remain on raising pupils' attainment and progress. The use of the funds the school receives to support pupils with special educational needs and those with behavioural and emotional difficulties is used well to provide good provision in both of these areas. The investment made to provide a special educational needs classroom assistant who manages individual pupils' programmes of work is proving beneficial.

71 The school is managed well on a day-to-day basis, including control of its finances. The school has had a recent audit visit where financial administration was judged to be well controlled and effective. There were a few recommendations made which will be fulfilled in the very near future. The school staff work together as a community, and care for the pupils. The school secretaries are both very welcoming and play a full part in school life. They are efficient in their responsibilities, although the school does not yet have electronic systems for all aspects of their work.

72 There are good procedures in place at lunchtimes. The senior supervisor manages the team well and ensures the children are happy and safe. The site manager is flexible and accommodating. He keeps the school secure and manages the cleaning and maintenance programme efficiently.

73 The school's evaluation of its performance is satisfactory. The school identifies its strengths and diagnoses areas for development. The head and management team evaluate the school's performance systematically and some effective strategies have been put in place to improve identified weaknesses, for example, differences in attainment between boys and girls. There are appropriate systems for assessing the academic performance of different groups, with groups of pupils given targeted support.

74 The school improvement plan is a useful document and is used by management, governors and staff to check progress with their priorities. It emphasises the importance of raising standards and includes a programme of staff training. However, it does not include a detailed long-term map of priorities to take the school forward.

75 The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is securely in place. The headteacher has responsibility for professional development and performance management, with a cycle of observations established. The school's commitment to the support and training of all staff has been recognised through its achievement of 'Investors in People' status. There is an appropriate balance between supporting the individual needs of staff and the priorities of the school improvement plan.

76 The school's procedures for supporting new staff and newly qualified staff are good. There is a well thought out induction and support programme. Senior staff give good support and staff support each other well in year groups. New staff are quickly made to feel valued members of the team. There is a good team spirit amongst the staff. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. Specialist teaching is provided in ICT and this has made a good contribution to the improvement in provision and the improving standards since the previous inspection.

77 Management of the Unit by the teacher in charge is satisfactory. However, there is a need to review some policies, though guidelines on integration are relevant and effective. Clearer recording of pupils' progress is needed. Liaison with outside agencies is good. Great value is placed on teamwork between Unit staff and teachers across the school and the hard work of all staff and the headteacher enables the Unit to be successful.

78 The accommodation is very good overall and fully meets the demands of the curriculum. Classrooms are large and there are a number of specialist rooms including a well-equipped computer suite, two libraries and specialist rooms for special educational needs, music and the pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties. The outdoor area for the children in the Early Years Unit is very good and there are two school halls. The interior of the building is well maintained and enhanced by good displays of pupils' work. The school grounds are spacious with sufficient playground space for the size of the school and access to a playing field that can be used for physical education and as an additional play area. The school is currently developing an environmental area that will support learning in science and other areas of the curriculum. A 'courtyard area' in the centre of the school is used by pupils, for example, to read quietly.

79 Overall, resources for learning are satisfactory. The development of a new computer suite has contributed to an improvement in the computer skills of pupils and the steady improvement in standards. However, the ratio of computers to pupils is lower than average and despite plans for further hardware, the school's computer provision will not meet the government's target for 2004.

80 Taking into account the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2, the care provided by the school, the pupils' positive attitudes to learning and very good behaviour, and the strong social development, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

81 To improve standards and the quality of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should now:

Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:

- planning work more rigorously for different ability groups and providing extension activities for higher attaining pupils;
- ensuring that all teachers have realistic expectations for pupils of all abilities;
- providing pupils with learning objectives that they can understand;
- using the information provided by day-to-day assessment and marking more consistently;
- using more effectively the targets set for pupils in lessons and discussions with pupils about their work.

(Paragraphs 4, 5, 8, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 37, 55, 95, 96, 98, 99, 108, 110, 112, 114, 115, 122, 124, 125, 127, 131, 132, 133, 139, 150, 154, 160, 174, 178, 179)

Improve the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching to ensure that all of the recommendations above are fulfilled and to progressively develop monitoring beyond just English and mathematics.

(Paragraphs 31, 66, 126, 135, 144, 151, 168, 180)

THE UNIT FOR PUPILS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL DIFFICULTIES

82 The quality of provision for pupils with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties is good. Improvements have been ongoing since the previous inspection to enhance this provision. Problems reported before have been dealt with. Successful integration into main school for all subjects has seen advances in all-round development of the pupils and full commitment by all staff. This co-operation of all teaching and non-teaching staff and the headteacher has contributed to the strengthening of the provision.

83 Pupils meet in the Unit base room at the beginning and end of each day and may be withdrawn there if necessary at other times. Throughout the day, pupils remain with their peers, starting from morning registration. At present six pupils are on roll, five boys and one girl, ranging from Year 4 to Year 6. Staffing includes a teacher in charge and three special support assistants. Staff work closely as a team. Together they provide support for pupils throughout the day, monitoring behaviour and tracking development in general. All pupils have statements of educational and behavioural needs. Additional difficulties include those of a medical or physical nature. Staff are sometimes required to give medication during the day. All pupils have backgrounds of serious behavioural, emotional and social problems from an early age.

84 Pupils attain standards similar to their peers in the National Curriculum. Attainment is usually at or approaching national levels in the core subjects, especially in science and mathematics, though English is less successful, with pupils often achieving more with their reading than writing. Reports suggest that the pupils have not been confident in writing things down. Parents are sometimes "amazed" to see written work at all. In other areas of the curriculum, such as art and design and physical education, pupils often succeed and do well in line with national levels. Care has been taken in work presentation and efforts have been made to improve handwriting.

85 Pupils achieve well against targets of behaviour and learning. In all respects, a number of improvements have been seen and good progress has been made. Pupils have become more confident and this is reflected in their work. A growing sense of satisfaction has brought appreciable changes in behaviour and attitudes. Sometimes the progress is very good, given their background reports on entry to the school.

86 Teaching and support of Unit pupils are good. All staff have positive attitudes and help the pupils to develop personal skills to promote learning and success in work and behaviour. Ongoing assessment leads to individual planning and attention to particular needs. Marking, however, at the upper end of the school, is not always thorough enough. The work of the pupils is not always considered carefully and corrected in full. Staff show clear understanding of situations and closely back class teachers' work. Pupils show a sense of pride in their work and are willing to make an effort. They work well alongside their peers.

87 Individual behaviour plans are initiated and overseen by staff who keep daily records of each pupil's development. Weekly meetings involve reporting and amending targets. Individual education plans are reviewed at least once a term with the class teacher. Many informal discussions occur in between. Annual reviews include all relevant personnel. Parents and pupils are encouraged to contribute their own suggestions to any changes in targets. Plans are specific to the individual and address needs; they are now securely implemented, with an appropriate system of assessment and evaluation in place. These are improvements since the previous inspection, when individual education plans were incomplete and assessment was unsatisfactory.

88 The school liaises closely with health and education authorities and all outside agencies, such as social services, and places particular importance on the work of the

educational psychologist, school nurse and the behaviour support service, who have regular contact with the pupils. Full co-operation between the teacher in charge and the co-ordinator for special educational needs ensures correct procedures are in place for pupils with additional problems.

89 All members of the school, escorts and taxi drivers become involved in the social development of pupils and play their part in praising and reinforcing good behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to converse with adults whenever possible. They are given opportunities to speak in assembly. During the inspection the two Year 4 pupils took a full part in poetry reading and speaking in a class assembly for the school. They spoke clearly, with confidence. Reports show a steady growth in confidence and self-esteem for pupils in the Unit.

90 Parents in general are very supportive. All are kept in touch by regular letters. They are encouraged to visit school whenever possible and they attend annual reviews. Parents enjoy visiting the school to watch their own children taking part in assemblies and school events. They appreciate the work of the school. Where homework support at home is more thorough, achievements are increased. Home-school diaries are in regular use and parents are asked to take part in behaviour as well as learning programmes at home.

91 Management of the Unit is sound. The teacher in charge is experienced and caring. The strong support of the support assistants is a great asset and teamwork is valued. The format of the policy documents, though, needs to be brought up to date, and central records of pupils' attainment and progress more clearly collated.

92 Unit pupils have full access to the National Curriculum and are involved in all aspects of school life. They are welcome to attend extra-curricular activities. One pupil has recently played football for the school and others have been in teams. One pupil attends an art club, another has chosen extra time for ICT. Two pupils attend a games club run by the three support assistants to include other members of their year group. These connections are invaluable in social training. Pupils join classmates on all visits and residential stays and take part in class or school events. Base room meetings twice a day are beneficial for personal development and are well used to engender interest in different activities such as jigsaw puzzles, very popular at present, and for the allocation of stickers/certificates for good behaviour and work. The school should consider enhancement of the base room environment to include creative stimuli, such as colourful and interesting art work and the therapeutic use of music, which would motivate responses and expressive feelings.

93 The success of the school's policy of inclusion for pupils with emotional, behavioural and social problems depends on the total commitment of all staff and interaction with peer groups. Success was very much in evidence during the inspection. Personal development is of a high priority for these pupils. Many barriers have been broken down and Unit pupils are benefiting from the positive response of the whole school. The headteacher and whole staff have worked hard to make inclusion work in the truest sense. Throughout the school integration is very good. Good improvements have been made since the previous inspection.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	77
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	32	40	2	0	0
Percentage	0	4	42	52	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17	296
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		93

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	56

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	26	23	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	24	24
	Girls	19	20	21
	Total	40	44	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (80)	90 (90)	92 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	23	24
	Girls	21	20	21
	Total	44	43	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (85)	88 (85)	92 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	23	17	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	21
	Girls	12	10	13
	Total	22	24	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (67)	60 (35)	85 (73)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	15	19
	Girls	11	11	14
	Total	16	26	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	40 (54)	65 (46)	83 (41)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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
253	4	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
10	0	0
2	4	0
3	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
3	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)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.4
Average class size	21.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	164.5

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	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	23.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
	£
Total income	848658
Total expenditure	864009
Expenditure per pupil	2708
Balance brought forward from previous year	42168
Balance carried forward to next year	26817

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	12
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	329
Number of questionnaires returned	86
Percentage of questionnaires returned	26

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	31	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	29	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	37	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	41	5	0	1
The teaching is good.	74	24	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	23	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	20	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	63	29	7	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	64	33	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	30	0	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	33	8	1	6

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

94 Nursery and reception children are taught either alongside each other or together as part of the school's Early Years Unit. All adults work well together as a team, as they follow the nationally recognised guidance for children of this age. Planning is sound, but most children are unlikely to achieve the expected levels by the end of their reception year, in spite of making satisfactory progress. Attainment of children on entry to the school is well below average. This is slightly lower than was reported in the previous report. A few children have been identified as having special educational needs and they are satisfactorily supported. Children enjoy coming to school, and develop good relationships with each other and the adults who work with them. The good induction procedures enable them to settle into school happily and easily. All children have regular opportunities to use the very well equipped outdoor area, and this promotes all areas of learning well. In addition there are sound opportunities for the children to plan activities, carry them out and review them afterwards. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

95 The quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage gives them a good basis to their education. All children are well supported by the adults who work with them. The learning is effectively planned for the nationally recognised early learning goals. Planning is detailed and identifies interesting activities, which promote all areas of learning. There are many opportunities for children to begin to develop confidence when speaking and listening, for example when they recall what they do in their 'plan, do and review' sessions. However, adults do not consistently promote speaking and listening skills well. Children are sometimes allowed to shout out when others are talking and adults do not explain the importance of listening carefully at all times. Mathematical skills are promoted soundly, as when children sing number rhymes or count the number of children who get off the 'bus', which has been made from chairs in an outside activity. Learning resources are good to cover all areas of learning and are very good for the outside area. All children have very good daily opportunities for structured outdoor sessions in a secure area. Opportunities are very good for physical development as children use a good range of wheeled toys and climbing apparatus. In addition all children have regular lessons in the school hall for physical development lessons.

96 During the week of the inspection there were 68 children in the Foundation Stage. The 34 nursery-aged children attend part time. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Adults keep information on individual children, which they use to group children within classes. Satisfactory profiles on all children have recently been started and these clearly show the progress the children are making in all areas of learning. However, although there are assessment sheets to fill in for all adult-focused activities there was little evidence of any ongoing assessment being completed during activities. Comments filled in on assessment sheets are often vague and then are not helpful to move individuals or groups onto the next stage of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

97 Teaching is satisfactory and although this area is promoted in most lessons, opportunities are sometimes missed to develop personal independence. For example, during snack times adults do not consistently allow children to count out the beakers for their drink, hand round the biscuits or fruit or give the children the chance to pour the milk from the jug. In addition, although the children sing lovely songs which promote the importance of saying "please" and "thank you" adults do not always reinforce these values when the children select a piece of fruit or a biscuit. Behaviour is consistently good and the majority of children show

positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. This results in good relationships developing throughout. There are many opportunities to work in pairs and small groups and most children do this well and share equipment sensibly. Children in the nursery and reception are encouraged to select activities themselves and this is emphasised daily. When children are unsure, the adult working with them sensitively supports. In all classes, adults give children regular opportunities to tidy away at the end of sessions and they do this satisfactorily. Children in nursery and reception begin to develop an idea of celebrations as they attend a weekly birthday assembly. However, there is little evidence of planned activities to promote respect for their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people. The reception children do not have a planned weekly session that addresses religious education. Progress is satisfactory but by the end of the reception, most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels.

Communication, language and literacy

98 The quality of teaching of communication, language and literacy skills is satisfactory. Activities are interesting and there are many opportunities for children to develop speaking and listening skills in all areas of learning. When they are not expected to sit and listen for too long, most children listen and concentrate well. However, speaking and listening skills are not always effectively promoted. Adults sometimes allow children to shout out and then do not insist that they listen properly. The development of speaking skills is affected for some children when adults ask questions and then accept answers from the few children who put their hands up or the ones that shout out. This practice does not involve all children and affects learning, in particular for the average and lower attaining children in nursery and reception.

99 In the nursery, the children work on developing their pencil control and make marks on paper as they attempt to write about pictures they have drawn. Nursery children are shown what their name looks like when written down in order to recognise the written form. As they get older they begin to learn how to write it themselves. There are many opportunities for children in nursery and reception to take part in non-adult focused writing tasks both inside and outside the classroom. In reception, during adult-focused activities, the children work in ability groups but sometimes they are not all challenged sufficiently. For example, although most children in reception can write their first name not all have been encouraged to write their family name. Too many say that they cannot do it. Lower attaining children in reception have weak pencil control and poor letter formation and there is little evidence of them developing these skills either in adult-focused groups or in past work. In fact, there was little evidence during the inspection or in past work of children writing and then being given clear guidance by adults regarding what they need to do in order to improve. The children are not given enough guidance regarding writing with correct letter formation or developing their writing into 'words' and 'spaces'. This hinders the development of writing skills for all abilities. ICT is used satisfactorily to promote this area. Past work shows that the children begin to develop word processing skills by copying sentences. This work has been linked to creative development and they have then used a computer program to draw a picture of ducks swimming on a pond to illustrate their sentence.

100 Most children in the nursery and reception handle books carefully, are interested in looking at the pictures and enjoy listening to stories. As they get older they begin to be aware of the difference between the pictures and the text and start to tell the story using the pictures to guide them. In reception, the children attempt to read the simple texts they are given. They are taught key words and begin to recognise these in their books. Lower attaining children begin to recognise the main characters' names in the books they read such as 'Chip'. Teachers keep records of the books children have 'read' and make brief comments on reading behaviour. The best comments are clear and enable adults to work specifically on individual children's difficulties. The children's attitudes to learning are enthusiastic and this

supports learning generally within lessons. By the time they reach Year 1, most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels but progress is satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment.

Mathematical development

101 The children in the nursery and reception have many opportunities to develop mathematical skills. Activities are often linked to creative development as they sing number rhymes and begin to learn the sequence of the numbers 1 to 5 and later 5 to 10 both forwards and backwards. They use paint and make footprints as they develop an understanding of mathematical vocabulary such as 'wide' and 'long'. Mathematical concepts such as 'heavier' and 'lighter' were developed enthusiastically as nursery and reception children worked on a non-adult focused task using scales and flour. Children in the nursery were well supported as they used an assortment of teddy bears to begin to understand mathematical vocabulary such as 'big', 'little' and 'middle-sized'. This activity linked in well and reinforced the story of *The Three Bears* that had previously been read to them. There was little evidence during the inspection and in past work of reception children recording numbers as they worked out simple sums. During adult-focused activities to promote mathematical development the reception children are placed into ability groups. Higher attaining children count reliably to 10 and recognise numerals up to 9. They begin to develop a sound idea of working out basic addition sums. However, although adults generally support the children satisfactorily, they do not effectively promote the necessity to write numbers properly. The small amount of recorded work showed few examples of children developing correct number formation. When a mixed ability group of reception children were asked to write numbers, few children wrote them correctly. Most children in reception begin to name basic shapes correctly such as squares and circles. Teaching is satisfactory and attitudes to the subject are enthusiastic. Progress is satisfactory in relation to their prior attainment but most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the end of reception. These levels are lower than at the time of the previous inspection. There is no recorded evidence of ICT used to support this area in past work. However, nursery and reception children were seen enthusiastically developing basic counting skills and basic computer skills such as 'clicking on the mouse' as they made a block graph on a grid with plastic teddy bears and then transferred this information onto the screen. They were well supported by a nursery nurse.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

102 Teaching is satisfactory and this area is promoted well both inside and outside the classroom. Children spoke enthusiastically about planting sunflowers and beans, showing a satisfactory idea of what plants need to grow. All children have many opportunities to investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses. For example, the reception children spoke excitedly about when they made, cooked and tasted pancakes. They listed some of the ingredients that they used and identified basic differences between the uncooked mixture that they said was "runny", and the end product. Higher attaining children knew that it was the "heat" that cooked the pancakes. Linking this area with communication, language and literacy, after hearing the story of *The Three Bears* the children had the opportunity to make porridge. Previous work shows that the children in the Early Years Unit have looked at 'cold countries' and looked at the animals, such as polar bears and penguins, which live there. Most children have a limited idea of their immediate locality and actually where they live. When talking to a group of mixed ability children, none could recall their address. A lower attaining child said he lived "over there, near school". A higher attaining child named the road in which she lived but none mentioned names of places in their immediate area, such as Chelmsley Wood, Solihull or Birmingham. Past work shows that they are developing a sense of time as they identified the year in which they were born. However, children in reception could not recall this work. Higher attaining children in reception were seen enthusiastically developing a time-line, as they decided which teddy bear was the oldest. This lesson was well

resourced with a number of different-aged teddy bears to reinforce the concept of past and present. Planning for the outdoor area shows that the children in both the nursery and the reception have investigated the differences between 'wet' and 'dry'. By the time they leave reception most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels in this area. This is lower than at the time of the previous inspection but progress is satisfactory. Previous work and planned activities show that children do have opportunities to use ICT to support learning and they develop basic computer skills such as word processing and learn how to click the mouse and move the cursor around the screen. In both nursery and reception the children have many opportunities to select from a range of materials to develop skills needed to cut stick and join materials together. The children use construction toys enthusiastically and most play well during these activities.

Physical development

103 Sound teaching and support enables most of the children to make satisfactory progress as they move through the Foundation Stage. There are regular opportunities for nursery and reception children to develop and reinforce skills using the very good range of equipment in the attractive, secure and well-organised outdoor play area. Adults interact effectively within all activities to support the good range of activities that reinforce all areas of learning. Children were seen confidently riding wheeled vehicles and using the climbing frame, showing independence and satisfactory control. Other outdoor activities, which the children were enthusiastically taking part in, were painting the fence, working in 'Bob the Builder's' shed, listening to a story, and playing in the home corner. In addition, teachers' planning shows that all children have a physical development lesson in the hall each week though no lessons were observed. All children have many opportunities to develop skills by working with construction toys and to use soft materials such as clay to improve rolling and cutting skills. There are planned opportunities to develop their control in handling scissors, paintbrushes and pencils. For example, the children in the nursery were seen confidently painting teddy bears. Most handle equipment safely and make satisfactory progress in this area. By the end of reception most children are likely to reach the expected levels in this area.

Creative development

104 There are opportunities both inside and outside for all children to express their own ideas and communicate their feelings through the many well-resourced role-play areas⁷. For example, in the 'Chinese Restaurant', nursery and reception children were seen playing supportively alongside each other as they realistically acted out a scene. One child was talking on the phone and taking the order, whilst another child was cooking and a third child was packing the food to take away. This was a non-focused activity but all children were acting very sensibly whilst thoroughly enjoying themselves. Children in both the nursery and reception have produced colourful pieces of artwork. With support, they have used a variety of materials and made attractive collages of fairy tale characters such as Little Red Riding Hood, the Woodcutter and Grandma. Previous work shows that they have developed an idea of three-dimensional art as they made Terrible Trolls from recyclable materials. In 'plan, do and review' children chose to make and decorate headbands using a selection of materials. They have linked art with knowledge and understanding of the world and carefully painted penguins. Previous work shows that creative development has been linked with mathematical development as children in reception used felt tip pens to colour in basic shapes. Planning shows that all children have regular opportunities to sing and develop a repertoire of songs and learn how to play musical instruments. By the end of reception, most children are likely to reach the expected levels in this area. This is similar to the previous inspection.

⁷ An area to develop children's play normally based on a room in an establishment known to them.

ENGLISH

105 Pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining standards that are well below average in reading and writing and below average in speaking and listening. Throughout Years 3 to 6, teaching is generally satisfactory. As a result most pupils, including those with special needs, make satisfactory progress. There are a few pupils who could make better progress, often the higher attainers, and some pupils who have underachieved in the past.

106 Attainment in Years 1 and 2 presents a more favourable picture. The seven year olds currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are below average in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Throughout Years 1 and 2, teaching is generally good. As a result pupils, including pupils with special needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

107 There have been a number of improvements since the previous inspection. Teaching has improved. Appropriate progress has been made with the key issue of raising the low standards of writing and reading in Years 3 to 6. There is good progress in raising standards of writing in Years 1 and 2. The introduction of the literacy strategy, together with a range of targeted interventions including booster sessions and clubs for reluctant readers and writers, is beginning to have an impact on standards. The introduction of half termly assessed writing is effective and ensures secure coverage of skills. Standards are steadily rising with a higher percentage of pupils attaining the national average than at the time of the previous inspection. The strategy of setting pupils in Years 5 and 6 is effective and could be usefully extended to Years 3 and 4. An appropriate amount of homework is set each week across the school, based on reading, spelling and comprehension work.

108 While there have been a number of improvements, there is still some way to go if standards are to continue to rise significantly and if all pupils are to make better progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The lack of a detailed policy for speaking and listening means that teachers do not get sufficient guidance. There are not enough strategies in place to encourage reluctant speakers to join in, or to ensure pupils use and retain their technical vocabulary in subjects. Although the school is focusing appropriately on developing pupils' basic skills, some need more support in using these skills effectively in other subjects, particularly in history, geography and religious education. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve or of their presentation of work. Errors in spelling and untidy handwriting are not consistently pointed out, even when they are part of pupils' targets. The wording of some lesson targets is too difficult for some pupils, and is therefore not helpful. Reading records need to be more detailed, to ensure that pupils do not have any gaps in their skills and that all areas of reading are covered to enable pupils to achieve the higher levels.

109 Pupils' attitudes to English are good. They behave well in lessons. The majority of pupils are attentive, concentrate well, stay on task and work hard. Many older pupils work independently for long periods of time. While pupils enjoy their work, some are passive in lessons. They lack the confidence to initiate discussions and need a lot of persuasion to join in.

110 Teaching has improved since the time of the previous inspection. It is generally good in Years 1 and 2 because teachers provide systematic teaching of the basic skills of literacy and a good range of interesting materials. Expectations of work are generally good. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. In the best lessons, teachers have a thorough knowledge of how to teach the literacy strategy effectively and use questions well to target all pupils. For example, in a very effective Year 5 lesson, pupils were well challenged. The teacher had high expectations and pupils were eager to join in discussions based on a book about the war in Bosnia. The school has put in place an extensive range of additional

support targeted at lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. These include clubs to motivate reluctant readers and writers and booster sessions. As result, most pupils make satisfactory progress and occasionally good progress with their learning.

111 In informal situations, such as around school, in the playground and in small group sessions, pupils are chatty and friendly. They are generally keen to talk about and share their ideas. By the age of seven, pupils' speaking and listening skills are just below expectations, with pupils having slightly better listening skills. The majority of pupils listen sensibly to the class teacher although some are passive listeners who need a lot of encouragement to join in. Teachers use interesting books such as *Lazy Ozzie* or *Wayne's Box* to capture pupils' interest. They work hard to include reluctant talkers and encourage them to talk in sentences. Strategies such as talking in small groups or with 'talk partners' help give more reluctant pupils confidence to share their ideas.

112 In Years 3 to 6 the teaching of speaking and listening skills is satisfactory and at times good. Where speaking skills are well taught, teachers use interesting books and poems such as *Jim-Jam Pyjamas* to stimulate pupils' interest and extend their vocabulary. They make sure pupils have time to talk in small groups. Although teachers generally promote words associated with the subject, a significant minority of pupils struggle to use the correct vocabulary. Sometimes higher attaining pupils lead the conversations. More strategies are needed to help some less fluent pupils extend and retain their vocabulary while extending more fluent communicators. Adults, who support lower attaining pupils, give good support. They ensure pupils are fully included and participate.

113 By the age of seven, pupils' reading skills are below average. Although a significant proportion are likely to reach the national average, there is a large number of less confident readers and not enough pupils achieve the higher level 3. Teaching is good. Attention is paid to developing pupils' knowledge of sounds and words and to developing pupils' awareness of the conventions of print. Teachers use a range of interesting books and word games that stimulate pupils' interest. Most pupils make good progress although there remains a wide range of ability. By the age of seven, more able pupils read with expression and have a good sight vocabulary. Average pupils use a range of strategies to attempt new words. Some less fluent readers, although enjoying sharing their books, read hesitantly. While pupils take their books home regularly, not all pupils are heard to read. Most pupils show interest in their reading books and in the reading activities in lessons.

114 By the age of eleven, although a higher percentage of pupils than last year are likely to reach the national average, very few pupils will reach the higher levels. There is a very wide span of reading competence. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is satisfactory and at times good. Teachers generally model reading well. They read to pupils with enthusiasm and expression. Staff ensure pupils are exposed to a wide range of children's literature. The choice of texts, such as *Tom's Midnight Garden* and *Clockwork*, stimulates the interest of both girls and boys. The use of the 'jungle reading club' is particularly effective in encouraging positive attitudes to reading, in a relaxed yet structured setting. Throughout Years 3 to 6 pupils' attitudes to reading are generally positive. By Year 6, fluent readers use deduction and can scan text for additional information. Average pupils are able to read silently and can make sensible predictions. There are a large number of lower attainers, some of whom lack confidence. They rely more on sight vocabulary, rather than using a wider range of strategies to read unknown words. Most Year 6 pupils can discuss their reading preferences; however, few can name a number of favourite authors. More regular use could be made of reading journals to increase pupils' recall of authors. The reading records are not detailed enough to identify the full range of reading skills. This makes it difficult to ensure all pupils make sufficient progress.

115 Pupils throughout Years 1 and 2 enjoy using the computerised library independently. Generally the school's strategy to have reading sessions outside the literacy hour is

successful. Nevertheless, pupils who are not working with their teachers are not always sufficiently challenged. Occasionally, books are not matched closely enough to pupils' reading levels; for example, some lower attaining pupils were reading books that were far too easy. The school has improved its range of books to support the literacy strategy; however, some dictionaries need replacing.

116 By the age of seven, pupils' writing skills are below average. Although many pupils will reach the national average, there remain a large number of less confident writers and only a few pupils will reach the higher level 3. Teaching is good. Pupils have regular opportunities to practise handwriting and follow a clear programme of spellings. Most can use simple word lists and dictionaries. They are beginning to use punctuation appropriately and can form their words and letters reasonably accurately. There are regular opportunities to write for extended periods. Pupils experience a range of writing opportunities including poetry, lists and their own creative stories. Tasks based on stories such as *Wayne's Box* appeal to boys and girls. By the end of Year 2 many pupils can write at least half a page or more, retell familiar stories and attempt simple poems. Higher attaining pupils produce some imaginative writing, for example, "The wolf sometimes wears a dinner jacket. His eyes are narrow like the slit in a postbox".

117 By the age of eleven, pupils' writing skills remain well below average. However, the introduction of the literacy strategy and the improved standards at the end of Year 2 are beginning to have an impact on standards. While writing skills are well below average in Years 5 and 6, they are below average in Years 3 and 4. The school has successfully extended the pupils' range of writing opportunities and increased the time pupils have for extended writing. By Year 6, higher and average attainers are capable of some imaginative writing. There are some good examples of characterisation and plot when pupils study aspects of *Macbeth*. Pupils increasingly use a range of sophisticated connectives such as 'furthermore' and 'however'. Average attaining pupils can review well-known books using interesting vocabulary, for example, "Harry flicked the pages quickly yet gracefully, looking carefully for the correct spell. Then he began to chant slowly yet quietly". By Years 5 and 6 not enough pupils write consistently well using a joined, cursive style. The school has identified the need to review aspects of presentation and its handwriting guidelines.

118 The school is working hard to improve standards of writing in Years 3 to 6. The range of writing opportunities has increased, although there not enough examples of persuasive or empathetic writing. Teachers model aspects of writing that pupils find difficult. This helps pupils improve aspects of their extended writing. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to edit, redraft or correct their work.

119 The ICT suite is used regularly to support literacy skills, with a range of programs to consolidate basic skills. ICT skills are used well to produce the school's attractive magazine 'Windy Times'. However, the lack of computers in classes means there are missed opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their daily English work. English makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural development. The range of books in classes and in the library prepares pupils appropriately for living in a multicultural society. More opportunities could be provided for pupils to experience theatre groups, poets and authors.

120 The management of English is good. The school's priorities for English are appropriate and focused on continuing to raise standards. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning and analyses pupils' work and test results. Areas for improvement, including teaching aspects of the literacy strategy and gaps in pupils' learning, are identified and fed back to the teachers.

MATHEMATICS

121 While pupils' attainment remains well below average by Year 6, standards are rising and the proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels by eleven has improved significantly from 35 per cent to over 60 per cent in the past two years. Pupils are making satisfactory progress overall. For pupils in Year 2, attainment is in line with national expectations and they are making good progress. At both Year 2 and Year 6, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels is low, depressing the overall standards. Those pupils who have special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards their own targets. The systems and management put in place by the co-ordinator are beginning to have an impact and there are indications that standards generally are beginning to improve.

122 The setting of pupils into ability groups in Years 5 and 6 is helpful in narrowing the range of attainment, and within these sets teachers generally plan appropriately for the different attainment levels. However, the needs of the higher attainers are not always sufficiently addressed. Lessons usually begin with the whole class working together on mental mathematics. While this is a valuable session, not enough emphasis is placed on pupils gaining the rapid recall of tables and number bonds necessary for efficient working during the independent parts of the lesson. During the independent part of the lesson higher attaining pupils often have similar work to others before moving on to work that is more challenging. This is often unnecessary reinforcement and slows their progress. By the time they have finished the first task there is rarely sufficient time for them to use and apply the skills they have to extend their learning. Most pupils use and understand mathematics vocabulary well. For example, Year 6 pupils working on frequency tables and graphs used terms such as 'tally-charts' and 'frequency intervals' accurately.

123 By the age of seven, the majority of pupils have a sound understanding of using number but few are able to apply this knowledge confidently to solving problems or in everyday situations. The pupils are less secure in their understanding of shapes, space and using measures. By the age of eleven, higher and average attaining pupils understand fractions and decimals and can solve number problems. Lower attaining pupils lack confidence and their knowledge of place value is not as advanced as one would expect. Pupils are not proficient in undertaking their own mathematical investigations or developing their own approaches to problem solving.

124 The quality of teaching and learning is variable across the school. For those pupils in Years 1 and 2, it is good overall, similar to the judgement at the previous inspection. In Years 3 to 6 it is satisfactory; this is supported by the lessons seen and work in pupils' books over the year. This is not as good as reported at the previous inspection, but much of this is due to the instability of staffing in this part of the school over several years. Teachers have good relationships with pupils but not all know how to get the best from them yet. Where good or very good teaching was seen, for example in a Year 3 lesson on angles, the teacher made good use of assessments from the previous lesson to recap aspects that pupils were less confident about and developed this into a well-planned activity on compass directions. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, it was either due to poor planning so pupils did not have enough time to enter the data they had collected onto the computer, or inaccurate matching of the task to pupils' level of understanding. In these instances a significant number of pupils failed to make progress during the lesson.

125 The National Numeracy Strategy is used appropriately and enhanced by the use of commercially produced books; most teachers are confident with this and plan according to the requirements. The expected range of topics is covered, although pupils do not always have enough opportunities to apply mathematics to everyday problems. While good use is sometimes made of ICT in the timetabled sessions in the computer suite, the lack of

computers in classrooms means that pupils do not have the opportunity to use this as an everyday tool for mathematics.

126 Through monitoring and data analysis, the subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of standards across the school and what needs to be improved. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored, but greater rigour needs to be applied in making clear links between the quality of teaching and what pupils are learning to improve the rate of progress, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Numeracy is used satisfactorily across the other subjects of the curriculum, such as science where they measure in Newtons or graph the results of their investigations.

127 Assessment overall is satisfactory, and the school carefully analyses the results of the tests to identify areas of weakness and help the placement of pupils in appropriate sets. Marking is regular and supportive, but not enough tells pupils what they need to do to improve, and is often over-complimentary where work does not show significant improvement over time. Few teachers set short-term targets for improvement. Pupils have little knowledge or understanding of their own performance and, therefore, cannot track their own progress.

SCIENCE

128 The standards attained by seven year olds are currently below average while those attained by eleven year olds are well below average. These standards are similar to those recorded at the time of the previous inspection. The standards currently being achieved by seven and eleven year olds are similar to those recorded in the teacher assessments and tests in 2002. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well because of the good teaching and support that they receive. The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Although this is an improvement since the previous inspection, the standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 are still not high enough.

129 By the age of seven, pupils plan and conduct experiments and record their results in charts, for example, the height of a broad bean that had been grown from seed. In lessons, pupils correctly identify similarities and differences between themselves and others, and investigate the differences as they measure and compare the length of their hand spans. In discussions, pupils speak knowledgeably about the different parts of a plant and the life cycle of a frog. Analysis of pupils' previous work indicates that most pupils have some understanding of forces. Many pupils have a good insight into the importance of healthy eating and the effect of exercise on the body.

130 By the age of eleven, pupils conduct experiments on, for example, the weight of an object and the amount of force required to move it, recording their results on charts and graphs. Pupils plan and conduct their own experiments choosing appropriate equipment. This was observed in lessons in Year 6, where pupils investigated how quickly salt dissolved in water. In discussions, pupils describe some methods such as filtration and evaporation for separating simple mixtures. Most have a satisfactory understanding of physical processes, for example that light travels in straight line, and can describe how shadows are formed. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the characteristics of living things. More pupils have a good understanding of the functions of the most important human and plant organs but the knowledge and understanding of average and less able pupils are not so secure. There are weaknesses too in pupils' knowledge and use of correct scientific language, and in their ability to interpret graphs, evaluate evidence and draw appropriate conclusions. The school has recognised these weaknesses and has put into place a clear planning structure to help raise standards in this area of pupils' work. This initiative is relatively new and its effectiveness is yet to be evaluated.

131 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and in Years 3 to 6 it is satisfactory. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In lessons, teachers manage pupils well and as a result pupils behave well and most try hard with their work. The relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves are good. Teachers value the contributions that pupils make and this effectively promotes their self-esteem and encourages them to work harder. In the best lessons, teachers explain what they want pupils to learn so that they understand the purpose of the lesson. During the introduction to these lessons teachers make good links with previous learning, and ensure that the lessons carefully build upon pupils' knowledge and understanding. In a good lesson in a Year 2 class, the teacher presented the lesson in a lively and interesting way that engaged and maintained the interest of the pupils. She questioned the pupils well, checking their understanding, and helping them to make the next steps in their learning. She set high expectations of the pupils' effort and behaviour and, in response, the pupils tried hard, worked well together as members of a group and enjoyed the activity. Similarly in a lesson in a Year 6 class, pupils were well supported in their learning as they developed the skills of designing, conducting and recording the outcomes of an experiment. They organised themselves well, worked effectively together and as a result made good progress in their learning.

132 Although all the teaching and learning observed was at least satisfactory, there were weaknesses in some lessons. For example, teachers do not always question effectively to fully assess the understanding of pupils in the class. In some lessons, work is not sufficiently tailored to meet the learning needs of all groups of pupils, resulting in some pupils struggling with the work and not making the progress they should. Close examination of pupils' previous work supports this view. All pupils in a class are often given the same tasks, with little consideration given to their learning needs. This leads to work not being completed, particularly by less able pupils. Assessment information is clearly not being used effectively to plan appropriate work that builds on pupils' previous learning. Teachers often do not have sufficiently high expectations of the pupils and their work. This results in careless work that is not well presented. The quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory overall but is variable. In the best examples it informs pupils of the quality of their work and provides pointers for further improvement, but in many cases work is simply marked with a tick.

133 The curriculum is satisfactory. The school has recently made changes to the curriculum as a result of a careful analysis of test results and the work in pupils' books. Through this activity the school identified particular weaknesses relating to pupils' skills of scientific enquiry. In response, a much more structured approach to the teaching of this aspect of the subject has been implemented. There is often good provision for pupils to develop skills of investigation through conducting experiments, and obtaining and presenting their findings. There is good provision for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in this subject. For example, pupils use rulers and instruments such as force meters for measuring, and display their findings on charts and graphs. There are weaknesses, however, in the use of literacy skills, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Teachers often pay too little attention to the care and accuracy with which pupils record their work and to their use of technical vocabulary. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to research scientific topics using the Internet, and to use computer programs to sense physical data. In physical education lessons throughout the school, teachers make good reference to the effect of exercise on the body, and this effectively supports pupils' learning in this subject.

134 The assessment procedures to record and chart pupils' progress as they move through the school are generally satisfactory, but require improvement. Teachers appropriately assess pupils' learning in Years 2 and 6 and the analysis of the tests in Year 6 has been effective in identifying areas for improvement. Teachers conduct tests at the end of each unit of work, but the results of these assessments are not used effectively to plan the next stage of pupils' learning.

135 The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator works hard and has been instrumental in the recent positive developments in this subject. He has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and where improvements need to be made. He regularly monitors teachers' planning, has observed teaching and learning in two classes and has analysed the work in pupils' books. There is currently no systematic provision for him to monitor the outcomes of the changes that have been made to the curriculum or to monitor teacher and learning in all classes. There are sufficient resources for the teaching of the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

136 Work scrutiny and lesson observations show that standards are similar to those found in most schools by the age of seven and eleven. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This is the same picture as at the time of the previous inspection.

137 Work samples show that by the end of Year 2, pupils acquire an appropriate range of skills and techniques. Through a range of activities this includes self-portraits, paintings, printing, tie-dyeing, patterns, pastel work, colour mixing, wax resist, observational drawings and some collage work. Some pupils produce self-portraits with good levels of detail.

138 By the end of Year 6, pupils experience an appropriate range of materials, tools and techniques. They produce self-portraits, paintings, block prints, etchings, abstract patterns, pastel and charcoal work. They are exposed to French, Indian, African, South American, Aboriginal and Japanese styles of art. There is some three-dimensional work, as well as weaving, collage and masks made from clay. There are opportunities to look at the work of different illustrators. While there are some opportunities to learn about abstract art, this could be further developed.

139 Teaching across the school is never less than satisfactory and at times it is good. Throughout the school teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and are well prepared. They have a good relationship with pupils and work hard to develop pupils' confidence. Pupils' skills are securely built on. At times, expectations of pupils work could be higher. There are some examples of pupils' creativity being developed such as the vibrant masks in Year 3; however, generally more focus is needed on developing pupils' imagination.

140 Pupils generally enjoy their art sessions. They listen sensibly and make interesting suggestions. Some reluctant speakers have to be encouraged to make contributions. Pupils collaborate well in small groups and show interest in each other's ideas. Staff show pupils that their artistic efforts are valued by the way work is displayed throughout the school. There are attractive murals produced by a parent artist. Pupils have opportunities to be artists. For example, older pupils produced a mural for younger pupils and Year 6 had the opportunity to work with a artist, with their finished work displayed locally. The school runs a number of clubs for younger and older pupils, which are attended by both boys and girls. A particularly successful initiative is a club run by members of a local church group.

141 There are links made with other subjects, particularly history, for example paintings of Roman soldiers in Year 3, Tudor portraits in Year 4 and designs of Greek mythological creatures in Year 5. Pupils also have opportunities to practise their observational skills in science. Some drawings displayed, of parts of a plant, showed real attention to detail, with some pupils producing drawings to an above average standard. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their speaking and listening skills in small groups. For example, Year 6 pupils are encouraged to discuss how art can portray emotions, as part of their work on war paintings. Some pupils have difficulty recalling factual aspects of their work. These pupils

need more opportunities to consolidate their knowledge. For example, some Year 5 pupils could not recall the names of a number of well-known artists, including some they had studied.

142 There are some opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their skills. Year 2 pupils used an art program to generate attractive autumn leaf effects. Year 6 pupils used digital cameras appropriately to capture images for future design work. However, some pupils, after having produced interesting computer-generated images based on Matisse, considered the work to be ICT work rather than understanding that computers had been used to produce their art work.

143 Teachers build in regular opportunities for pupils to appraise their own work and the work of artists. For example in Year 2, pupils commented on the simple differences in patterns on a range of bowls. Pupils have sketchbooks from Year 1 onwards and use them effectively both as a tool to practise aspects of their work and in Years 3 to 6 to experiment with ideas. For example, in a well-taught Year 5 lesson, pupils were encouraged to look closely at the work of Gaudi and adapt his style to aspects of their own designs. Some more able pupils showed some understanding of perspective in their sketchbooks.

144 The subject is appropriately led by the co-ordinator. She is aware of what is needed to take the subject forward. There have been a number of improvements since the previous inspection. The programme of work has been updated and revised planning has a greater focus on skills development; however, a system for assessing pupils' work, while planned, is still not in place. The co-ordinator monitors planning and has begun collecting samples of work. She has a good understanding of the work produced across the school. However, she does not have the opportunity to support staff through observing their teaching, or working alongside them. Resources are satisfactory, with a rolling programme to address identified gaps in resources for the revised curriculum. Art contributes to the pupils' appreciation of artists from around the world and promotes their cultural development well.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

145 Standards attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are similar to those expected for pupils of this age and have been maintained since the previous inspection. With a well-planned curriculum and sound teaching, all pupils achieve well. One of the major factors that enable pupils to achieve in this way is that lessons are planned in blocks over a short period of time, for example, a week. This allows pupils to complete their project without losing interest and reinforces their understanding of the techniques learned. Because of this approach it was possible to see only one lesson. However, the good displays of finished work around the school and pupils' own planning folders indicate that teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. The one lesson it was possible to see was taught well and gave pupils a good introduction to their food topic on fruit and vegetables. Good questioning by the teacher encouraged the pupils to observe carefully and make sensible responses about what they were seeing.

146 Discussions with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 showed that they were interested and knowledgeable about the work and the techniques used to achieve a soundly finished product. As much emphasis is placed on the design as on the making of their models. Following good guidance and helpful planning booklets, pupils design, make and evaluate their work well. In Year 6, pupils' designs for shelters show an imaginative approach to making a range of things from dog kennels to umbrellas. They could explain a range of techniques for cutting and joining and how they reinforced their models to give them greater strength. For other pupils across the school, their animal puppets, photo frames or storybooks with moving parts such as flaps, tabs and pop-up pictures, show appropriate attention to detail and sound skills in finishing off. They learn to mark, cut, join and assemble, and display

satisfactory skills in these aspects. All pupils used appropriate technical vocabulary and often referred to making a 'mock-up' before moving on to their final design.

147 There is a sound scheme of work and pupils experience a range of topics as they move through school. With the use of good planning booklets, pupils are given appropriate opportunities to make things and to develop design skills. The co-ordinator, while relatively inexperienced, is well supported by helpful advice from the local education authority, and uses her own knowledge to enhance the subject. This was evident during discussions with pupils who responded enthusiastically to the subject. Pupils' work is evaluated and their progress monitored to further improve standards. The subject has a suitably high profile and status throughout the school.

GEOGRAPHY

148 By the ages of seven and eleven pupils attain standards below those expected for their ages. These standards are lower than those reported in the previous report. Progress is satisfactory for all pupils in relation to their level of knowledge when they enter Year 1.

149 Judgements are based on one lesson seen in Year 5, discussions with pupils, and a scrutiny of teachers' planning and work pupils had previously completed. There is too little evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching but teaching in the one lesson observed was good. The teacher questioned the pupils well as they discussed the main features of a seaside resort. Literacy skills were promoted effectively as she insisted that they answered in full sentences. However, although most pupils had a sound idea of what a seaside resort might look like, most had little idea of what a port was. Few pupils knew how to use the key on a map. The teacher used resources such as an overhead projector and photographs well to develop their knowledge of cities. Learning within this lesson was good although standards were judged to be below expected levels for pupils of this age.

150 The younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about simple maps, journeys and routes they take, as they study their local environment. Most pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory idea of the basic function of a map but most have a very limited idea of towns and countries, in particular the countries that make up the United Kingdom. They talk about Gambia being a hot country and enthusiastically recall a few facts from a video which they have watched. Although previous work shows sound opportunities to write, literacy skills are not well promoted. Sometimes work is not well matched to individual needs and the task is too difficult. This results in unfinished pieces of work. The work produced in particular by lower attaining pupils and that of average ability pupils is often untidily presented. Year 3 pupils develop a simple understanding of the local area and draw plans of Chelmsley Wood. Pupils in Year 4 have used their developing research skills to look for information on different types of buildings. They have studied life in Chembakolli, an Indian village, and looked at where India is on a world map. Greece is the country which pupils in Year 5 have been looking at, concentrating on the island of Kephallonia. In addition they have worked on where the countries of Europe are situated. In discussion, Year 6 pupils talked about their river topic and used basic vocabulary relating to rivers such as 'mouth', 'source' and 'estuary'. Previous work shows that they have looked at the water cycle but their knowledge generally is limited. Pupils in Year 6 say that facts in geography are difficult to remember. Work produced is untidily presented and in most year groups it is not consistently well matched to the different abilities within the classes.

151 Satisfactory progress has been made in developing the curriculum since the previous inspection. The national guidelines have been introduced and the co-ordinator has reviewed the policy and scheme and developed a whole-year overview that has recently been introduced. Resources have been acquired to link with all topics. They are well organised and easily accessible. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and interested in the subject and has

worked hard at developing the curriculum. However, there has been no effective monitoring of what has been taught and this is unsatisfactory. It has resulted in topics not being covered in enough depth and, although this may not affect learning within lessons, it affects standards and progress over time. The co-ordinator has correctly identified areas for improvement and is in the process of developing and implementing assessment procedures so that pupils' progress can be tracked accurately as they move through the school. The subject satisfactorily supports the pupils' social, moral and cultural development as they learn about life in different countries and take part in residential visits where they have opportunities to look at different environments and reinforce what has been taught in the classroom. The school is beginning to use ICT to support geography, in particular in Years 5 and Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 have designed satisfactory leaflets using the computer to advertise a Welsh holiday cottage that offers bed and breakfast. Younger pupils in Year 5 have developed interesting pages for a holiday brochure to promote the island of Kefalonia in Greece. Geography displays in classrooms enrich the learning environment and highlight the topics being taught.

HISTORY

152 Standards are below the expected levels at the age of seven. This is slightly lower than reported in the previous inspection. By the age of eleven standards are similar to those reported during the previous inspection, being below the expected levels for pupils of that age. However, all pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their previous attainment.

153 By the time they are seven, the pupils talk in a limited way about life in the past. In Year 1 they have looked at what life was like in London during the Great Fire. Art and design was linked to history as pupils worked together using a variety of papers and paint to recreate a lifelike scene of the Fire of London. Literacy skills were promoted satisfactorily as they made booklets and wrote sentences about what happened. Pupils in Year 2 were keen to recall facts about the video that they watched about Florence Nightingale. They spoke of visiting a museum and saw what houses were like long ago, making simple comparisons of major differences. However, they have little idea of why people in the past acted the way they did. For example, they knew that Florence Nightingale changed the hospitals but no one could explain why. They could name no other famous person from the past.

154 Analysis of work from Years 3 to 6 shows that some topics studied this year such as the Romans, the Tudors, the Greeks and Britain since 1930 have not been covered in enough depth. Teachers do not promote literacy skills effectively, which results in work being untidily presented. In addition, work is not accurately matched to the needs of all pupils in the classes. This results in tasks being unfinished because either they are too difficult or not enough time has been spent on the tasks. Pupils in Year 6 have a weak historical knowledge and awareness of the past. For example, their understanding of the Second World War is limited. They talked satisfactorily about evacuees and that it was safer to live in the country rather than the towns and cities and that Hitler wanted to take over the world. However, they had no clear idea of how long the war lasted or when it started or finished. There are limited opportunities in Year 6 for them to write at length, offering reasoned explanations for historical events. ICT is beginning to be used to support the subject. For example in Years 2 and 6 pupils have used the Internet to look for information about Florence Nightingale and Britain during the Second World War.

155 Only one lesson was seen and there is too little evidence to make a judgement on teaching. However, in this Year 4 lesson the teaching was good. Good questioning from the teacher enabled the pupils to enthusiastically recall what they had learnt about the Tudors. The pace of the lesson was brisk and the teacher had high expectations regarding answering her questions. Her subject knowledge was good and there were satisfactory opportunities for the pupils to discuss tasks in pairs. Resources such as pictures showing poverty in Tudor

times were used well to develop a better understanding of the Tudors. Pupils' attitudes to the subject were good as the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject was transferred to the class.

156 Satisfactory progress has been made in developing the curriculum since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator is hard working and has linked the scheme with the national guidelines. In addition, a new curriculum overview has recently been put in place and assessment procedures are being developed. However, all teachers do not yet use these consistently. Resources are satisfactory in quantity, well organised and easily accessible. The subject satisfactorily supports the pupils' social, moral and cultural development as they learn about life in the past. All pupils have opportunities to work together in pairs and groups. Educational visits are arranged to support some topics; for example, Year 4 visit Tamworth Castle as part of their Tudor topic. Good history displays in classrooms enrich the learning environment and highlight the topics being taught.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

157 Pupils are currently reaching the standards expected nationally by the end of Year 2. Although standards in Year 6 are still slightly below national expectations, standards are improving and all pupils through the school now make satisfactory progress which was not the case during the previous inspection. The school has made good progress in eradicating many of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. ICT now has a high profile in the school and is a very popular subject with all pupils.

158 By the end of Year 2, pupils use the mouse control and keyboard accurately. They 'log-on' their computer at the beginning of lessons, 'log-off' at the end and most are able to save and retrieve their work although some of the lower attaining pupils need support with this. The pupils are beginning to use databases to store information that can be searched and produce word-processed work such as the rewriting of *Little Red Riding Hood*. In discussions, the pupils accurately described using a program to produce art work where they controlled a paintbrush, pencil and paints. Pupils were less confident in describing the uses for ICT out of school. They identified using the computer to improve their work in mathematics. This was seen during the inspection, as a Year 2 class used the computers to develop their mental calculation strategies, using a program that allowed the pupils to solve money problems. During this session, the class teacher made good use of the computers to allow her to provide different levels of work for the different ability groups in her class.

159 Many of the average and higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are operating at expected levels. They have covered an appropriate range of work and talk confidently about the subject. For example, pupils are able to search their individual files of work and show examples of multi-media presentations, spreadsheets, adventure stories and a good use of the Internet for researching information for subjects such as geography and history. They talk articulately about using e-mail to correspond with pen pals and about editing the 'Windy Times', the school newspaper, which is produced electronically, and includes photographs and written accounts of schools events such as the arrival of school inspectors! They explained the use of digital cameras to record 'Red Nose Day' and how to use sensing devices such as those to record sound, in science in Year 5. However, there is a significant minority of pupils who are not so proficient in these areas, which is why standards are still below the expected levels. However, inspection evidence indicates that standards are improving and are likely to be at the expected levels in Year 6 in the very near future.

160 The subject co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and should take credit for much of the improvement in the subject since the previous inspection. He does not have a class responsibility and takes all of the classes in the school for their ICT lessons. This strategy was developed by the school and governors to ensure continuity and stability in the subject and to provide 'in-house' professional development for teachers who were less confident in the

subject. This has been successful. The co-ordinator is also available to offer good technical advice. However, although this provision is reviewed annually, it is unclear at present how long this will continue. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons are planned well and all classes have a regular weekly lesson in the computer suite. Pupils enjoy these lessons and work successfully as individuals and in pairs, and this effectively promotes their social development. Although teaching and learning are satisfactory, insufficient attention is paid to the wide range of ability that is found in most classes. As all pupils are expected to cover the same work this sometimes leads to higher attaining pupils waiting for others to finish a task or lower attaining pupils finding work too difficult, particularly if they have no support.

161 All classes are provided with additional two sessions in the computer suite so that ICT can support the promotion of literacy and numeracy skills. These sessions are quite short and vary significantly in their effectiveness. It would appear more appropriate to allocate an extra complete hour in the suite and then allow teachers to decide how they want to use the provision. Because there are no computers in classrooms, there are limited opportunities to use ICT to support other areas of the curriculum and this is currently a weakness. Other than literacy, numeracy and music and the use of a digital camera in art, ICT was not seen supporting any other subject during the inspection. The subject action-plan indicates that extra computers will be provided for the subject and this should help to alleviate this situation.

162 The school has an effective scheme of work that is based on national guidelines. There were some criticisms during the previous inspection about pupils' limited access to parts of the ICT curriculum. This is no longer an issue. Pupils are now able to develop the skills associated with ICT effectively. Many of the pupils do not have computers at home and the co-ordinator operates an ICT club that is open to pupils in Years 5 and 6 where they can finish work or undertake research. There are also ICT lessons open to community members that contribute well to the school's links with local people. Although there are assessment procedures in place, these could be more effective and provide better information to teachers for their future curriculum planning and a better work-match for pupils in different ability groups.

MUSIC

163 By Year 2, pupils broadly meet the expectations in music for their age. By Year 6, pupils attain below the expected levels. Unlike the previous inspection, there is no longer a music specialist and other music support is not reflected in the quality of music observed in school. However, there are pockets of skill and enthusiasm evident in lessons, which encourage enjoyment and achievement. An example is the guitar accompaniment for singing in whole-school assemblies, when pupils sing tunefully with others and join in on cue.

164 Planning in music also has improved since the previous inspection, when learning was not identified clearly enough. A new structured music scheme is providing guidance for less confident teachers to plan the way ahead and so develop pupils' skills with music in a more consistent and progressive way. Due to teacher mobility and inconsistent coverage of the curriculum, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made uneven progress with their learning over time and standards are below the levels expected for their age.

165 In Year 2, pupils explore how to produce and combine sounds by using simple percussion instruments and performing songs, such as *Dinah in the Kitchen*. They recognise and keep a steady pulse and begin to add simple rhythms successfully. They enjoy 'stamping out' the beat to questions and answers related to *What time is it Mr. Wolf?* One or two more capable musicians try to make the beat faster or slower. However, there is less opportunity for pupils to explore simple structures and to create a beginning, middle and end or to stand back and improve their own work.

166 By Year 6, pupils begin to recognise the relationships between sounds and how they reflect different intentions. Imaginative links with ICT and videotapes from silent films are used well for this purpose. However, many pupils are still exploring the sounds instruments can make and have a limited knowledge of technical terms such as ‘timbre’, ‘tempo’ and ‘mood’ when evaluating different kinds of music. In the lessons observed, progress was satisfactory with most pupils starting to improvise rhythmic phrases as part of a group, but the standard of the finished pieces was still below the levels expected for the pupils’ age.

167 All school groups, including pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties, concentrate on the tasks set in lessons. Skills of collaboration are good and older pupils in Year 6 work in a mature way in mixed gender groups. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to perform with others and have the confidence to do so.

168 Teaching is satisfactory overall. The present subject co-ordinator has worked hard to raise the level of confidence and expertise of colleagues and is trialling a new, structured music scheme in Years 1, 3 and 4, which is working well. Lessons are well managed and run at a smooth pace. Assessment procedures are linked to the new structured music scheme, but as yet are in their infancy and do not inform planning and skills development. Teachers miss opportunities to use music to enhance the pupils’ social, cultural and spiritual development. The co-ordinator has the commitment and enthusiasm to move the subject forward. As yet there are no procedures for monitoring the subject, to ensure consistency of coverage and quality of learning. Resources are appropriate to support pupils’ learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

169 The attainment of seven year olds and eleven year olds is broadly average. The picture was much the same in the previous inspection. Pupils achieve well in relation to their previous learning as a result of good teaching and good provision of activities outside of lessons for pupils in Years 3 to 6. There is no significant difference in standards between boys and girls.

170 By the age of seven, pupils are acquiring and developing skills of receiving and sending a ball. Most pupils effectively throw and catch balls of different shapes and sizes, displaying satisfactory hand to eye co-ordination. A few pupils find this activity difficult, particularly when working with a smaller ball, while more able pupils achieve this task catching the ball with one hand. Pupils show satisfactory awareness of the space around them and satisfactory control of their movements as they run and dodge in and out. Most seven year olds have some understanding of the importance of exercise and the effect of exercise on the body. In a lesson in a Year 2 class, for example, pupils suggested that exercise “makes your heart beat faster”. In discussions, pupils talk about having worked on the apparatus, walking on benches, balancing and jumping off, and creating movements like a robot. Pupils speak knowledgeably about the importance of health and safety and that “four people have to carry a mat”.

171 By the age of eleven, pupils have continued to develop skills of receiving and sending a ball and demonstrate this when hitting, throwing and catching a ball in lessons, and in football, netball and tag rugby clubs outside lessons. In a lesson in a Year 4 class for example, pupils displayed a satisfactory level of control as they used hockey sticks to ‘push’ the ball to their partner. Similarly, in a lesson in a Year 6 class, pupils demonstrated satisfactory technique and control as they sought to improve their throwing skills. During competitive games activities, pupils show a clear understanding of the rules of the game, the parts of the pitch where they have responsibilities, and the principles of attack and defence. Most pupils display satisfactory awareness of space and co-ordination, as they pass the ball to members of their team. During a netball practice, more able pupils in Year 6 demonstrated

good awareness of space and fluency of movement as they passed the ball accurately and then quickly moved into a space to receive the ball. In lessons, pupils explain the importance of warming up before an activity and the benefits to health and fitness. In discussions, pupils speak enthusiastically about the variety of sports and games that are available to them. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, most pupils swim 25 metres, with a significant number swimming much longer distances.

172 The quality of teaching and learning is good. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 has improved since the previous inspection. The teachers ensure that the pupils are fully warmed up at the start of lessons and cooled down at the end. Lessons are well planned and structured to include all pupils. Teachers display good subject knowledge through their explanations and directions to pupils at the beginning of lessons. They intervene well as the lesson proceeds, providing good guidance on how pupils might improve their performances. Teachers often use the pupils well to demonstrate good practice, and this enables others to see how they might improve their work. Teachers have a supportive approach to the pupils and their learning, which promotes confidence and self-esteem. The teachers manage and organise the pupils well and set high expectations of their concentration and effort. In response, pupils have positive attitudes; they try hard and work effectively together as members of a team. In a lesson in a Year 2 class for example, pupils worked well in pairs and larger groups as they practised their throwing and catching skills.

173 The school has an up-to-date policy and scheme of work to guide teachers' planning in gymnastics and games but not in dance or athletics. Pupils are provided with a good range of extra-curricular activities of a sporting nature, and these activities are normally well attended. The school provides netball, tag rugby, football, cricket and athletics outside lessons, and competes against other schools in football, netball, tag rugby and athletics. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 participate in outdoor activity challenges, for example canoeing and archery, when they visit outdoor education centres. The school has good links with the local police who provide coaching in tag rugby. Pupils have also had the opportunity to work with specialist coaches in both football and athletics. The school does not formally assess or keep records of pupils' levels of achievement or the progress they make. The subject co-ordinator is keen and knowledgeable; she monitors teachers' planning and effectively supports colleagues on an informal basis. She has been instrumental in introducing several initiatives, for example the 'wide awake club', and has a clear view for the development of the subject. Resources in the school to support the curriculum are satisfactory. The school has a good outdoor provision, but the number and quality of gymnastics mats for pupils are unsatisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

174 By Year 2 and Year 6, standards are below the levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Since the previous inspection, standards by Year 2 have fallen from broadly in line with the average to below average. Often the good quality of discussion observed in lessons is not reflected in the quality of finished work. This is because pupils' skills with spelling and writing are below average and hamper both the pace and quality of their work in all year groups. Teacher and pupil expectations of written work are not high enough and marking does not help pupils to improve their work and reach higher levels.

175 Religious education has, however, improved in other ways. In lessons, the quality of teaching, previously unsatisfactory, is now satisfactory and on occasions good. This is because teachers use guidance from the locally agreed syllabus and the school's schemes of work, to plan more clearly for learning in lessons. This is supporting more consistent progress, as skills and understanding are being built upon progressively year on year.

176 Lessons related to Christianity have a clear focus and, because teachers encourage pupils' contributions, there is sound progress during discussions. For instance, Year 2 pupils understand that Jesus was special and that shortly after Palm Sunday he was crucified. One pupil suggested, "God made Jesus into a really nice man, so he can tell us what to do." By Year 6, pupils begin to think more deeply about the meaning of life and ask questions, such as, "How did God create the world?" and "When we die is there a heaven or is it never again?"

177 In Years 1 and 2, pupils enact in role-play the story of Jesus and the lepers and begin to think about those less fortunate than themselves. By Year 6, pupils relate their learning to their own life experiences and make informed decisions, for instance, deciding what makes a friendship last and using the story of Jacob and Esau, to identify aspects of their own jealousy. The development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths and beliefs is variable. Pupils learn facts about other world faiths, such as Islam, Judaism and Hinduism, but have less opportunity to visit places of worship. There are few regular visits from people from other cultures, who have different lifestyles. This limits the opportunity to stand in someone else's shoes and view life from a different perspective.

178 Pupils behave well in religious education lessons, but some pupils begin to get restless if asked to sit and listen for too long. This is especially so if work is challenging and uses more obscure language, such as 'art', 'hallowed' and 'thy'. In general, teachers plan work at one level and so pupils with special educational needs follow the same targets for learning and so struggle to cope. Pupils with social and behavioural difficulties are well supported in lessons and their contributions valued. .

179 In the lessons observed, teaching was sound overall; occasionally it was good. Relationships were good and classes well managed. Teachers used questioning well in lessons and worked hard to include the high proportion of less confident and competent speakers. Over time, work in pupils' books is disappointing and indicates some unsatisfactory teaching, which occurs when work is left unfinished and poorly presented. Although improving of late, there is a tendency to over-use worksheets and this restricts the pupils' personal response to issues.

180 The subject is managed appropriately, with new schemes of work and better short-term plans guiding work in lessons. More consistent monitoring of teaching and learning will ensure gaps in coverage and progress are identified and addressed. A new system for assessment has recently been introduced. Resources for the subject are appropriate.