

INSPECTION REPORT

CLEOBURY MORTIMER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cleobury Mortimer, Kidderminster



LEA area: Shropshire



Unique reference number: 123361

Headteacher: Mr N. Hubbard

Reporting inspector: Mrs M.E. Cooper
15175

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th May 2003

Inspection number: 248447

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:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Love Lane Cleobury Mortimer Kidderminster
Postcode:	DY14 8PE
Telephone number:	01299 270313
Fax number:	01299 270636
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S. Wilks
Date of previous inspection:	8th September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15175	Margaret Cooper	Registered inspector	English History Educational inclusion English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9146	Mark Brennand	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
32257	Richard Chalkley	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27635	Diana Cinamon	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Geography Foundation Stage	
	Sarah Wykes	Team inspector	Science Physical education Religious education Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a popular school of average size located in an attractive semi-rural position on the edge of Cleobury Mortimer. There are 261 boys and girls aged from four to eleven on roll and all attend on a full-time basis. The numbers of boys and girls are similar overall but vary widely in some years, particularly in Year 5 where there are significantly more boys than girls. Pupils are organised into nine classes, two of which contain pupils from two year groups. There are 40 pupils currently in the Year 6 class as the result of two late entrants joining the class. Children are attaining average standards when they start school in the term before their fifth birthday. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (7.6%) is below average. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and these are all fluent in English. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs (21.5%) is similar to that found nationally, although the proportion of pupils who are subjects of statements of special educational need (3%) is high. Special educational needs are predominantly moderate and specific learning difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The majority of pupils make good progress from entering reception to leaving the school having achieved above average standards overall. Teaching is good. This helps pupils achieve well although there is scope for further improvement in some subjects. Leadership and management are good, and play a key role in achieving the positive ethos and very good relationships that are a significant feature of the school. These help to promote the very positive attitudes, values and personal development shown by pupils. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards at eleven are above average in English, science and information and communication technology (ICT)
- Pupils attain good standards in art and design, design and technology (DT) and religious education (RE) and well above expected standards in physical education (PE)
- Pupils at all stages achieve well because of good teaching
- Moral and social development are promoted very well and pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good
- The school provides a very high level of care
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- There is a very good partnership with parents who show confidence in the work of the school

What could be improved

- The rate of progress in mathematics
- Standards in music by eleven
- Although satisfactory, progress could be better in geography and history
- The level of challenge for higher attaining pupils
- Arrangements for co-ordinators to monitor their subjects

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the previous inspection in 1997. This is seen particularly in higher standards in ICT, which have risen from unsatisfactory to good, and in the good quality curriculum now provided for reception children. Standards are still good in English and science although satisfactory in mathematics. Overall teaching and progress have both improved from satisfactory to good. Pupils' very good attitudes, values and personal development have been maintained. There has been considerable improvement in arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science, and in tracking pupils' progress through the school. National strategies for literacy and numeracy have also been introduced and the literacy strategy is having a positive impact on raising standards. Additionally, improvements have been made in adapting the school accommodation, including provision of a computer suite and development of the grounds.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	D	A	A*
Mathematics	A	C	B	B
Science	A*	A	A*	A*

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

Pupils make good gains in their attainment whilst at the school. Where the comparative grade is A*, their performance is in the highest five per cent of schools nationally. Children achieve well in the reception year and attain the expected standards for their age in all areas of learning. There is some variation, however, linked to how long they have spent in reception. Those who enter reception in the autumn or spring attain higher standards than those who spend only one term before moving into Year 1. In the 2002 national tests at seven, standards were well above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics when compared both to schools nationally and to similar schools. In the national tests for pupils at eleven the school achieved its target for English and came close to achieving its target for mathematics, although this could have been more challenging. Over recent years the improvement in standards has been broadly in line with the national trend but stronger in English and science than in mathematics.

Inspection evidence shows that pupils make good progress overall at both the infant and junior stages, and that variations in standards from year to year are related to differences in the abilities of pupils between year groups. The current Year 2 pupils attained slightly below average standards when they entered the school and have made good progress to attain at least average standards in all subjects and higher than the expected standards in science, art and design, PE and RE. The current Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in English, science, art and design, DT, ICT and RE. Standards are below those expected in music because of shortcomings in provision but well above the expected standard in PE. Despite good overall achievement whilst they are in the school, pupils could achieve better in those subjects, particularly mathematics, in which progress is no more than satisfactory. This is due to shortcomings in planning and in the time given to these subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are interested in their school activities. They are very well motivated to learn
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils respond to the school's high expectations of them and behave very well both in lessons and around the school
Personal development and relationships	Also very good. Pupils relate very well to others. They show respect for each other, including those who are older or younger than themselves, and to adults. They respond well to opportunities to take responsibility and use their initiative
Attendance	Above average. Pupils arrive punctually each morning and to their lessons. The rate of unauthorised absence is average

Pupils' very positive attitudes to their school activities and their very good relationships have a beneficial effect on their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of both teaching and learning is good overall, although there is some variation between subjects. In the reception year, teaching is satisfactory in mathematical and creative development and good in all other areas of learning for children of this age. Teachers and support staff work well as a team and have a good understanding of the needs of young children. This helps children settle quickly and approach their school activities with confidence. At the infant and junior stages mathematics, including numeracy, is taught satisfactorily. English, including literacy, and science are taught well. Teaching in all other subjects is at least satisfactory, except for music, which is unsatisfactory at the junior stage because of shortcomings in subject knowledge. Art and design, DT, ICT, PE and RE are taught well.

Teachers establish good relationships, manage pupils well and plan lessons that engage pupils' interest. As a result, pupils concentrate well, work conscientiously on their activities, and make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding. Tasks are not always linked closely enough to what pupils are intended to learn nor matched to the differing needs of all pupils, particularly higher attainers. This limits the progress pupils make in some lessons. The pace of learning is variable and, in some cases, too slow. In lessons where teachers manage activities at a brisk pace and give well-judged time targets for each task, pupils work and learn at a good rate. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides an appropriate quality and range of learning experiences although there are some inconsistencies in the time allocated to subjects. The curriculum provided for reception children is of good quality
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good and promotes the good progress pupils with special educational needs make towards the targets on their individual education plans (IEPs) and across the curriculum
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are well integrated and make similar progress to their peers
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils' moral and social development are both promoted very well, and spiritual development is promoted well. Cultural development is satisfactory although there is insufficient attention to preparing pupils for life in a culturally diverse society
How well the school cares for its pupils	The high level of care is a strength of the school. Teaching and support staff establish a caring environment that promotes the confidence and positive attitudes of pupils of all abilities. Arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress are good in English, mathematics and science but underdeveloped in other subjects. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to match work to the differing needs of pupils, particularly higher attainers.

Pupils benefit from experiences that enrich the curriculum such as visits to places of educational interest, book weeks and opportunities to work with theatre groups. Good relationships and co-operation with partner institutions also have a positive impact on pupils' achievements. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and pupils' personal development. The school gives a high

priority to establishing a good partnership with parents. As a result, parents have extremely positive views of the school and their support benefits their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The good leadership of the headteacher ensures a clear educational direction for the school. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher. Management roles and responsibilities lack clarity.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are active, satisfactorily informed about the work of the school and supportive of the headteacher and staff. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities well
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has established satisfactory arrangements for monitoring teaching and put in place the required procedures for performance management. Careful analysis of assessment information in English, mathematics and science support the identification of strengths and areas for development. Arrangements for monitoring performance in other subjects require improvement
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources to improve the quality of education provided

The headteacher has established a positive ethos and excellent relationships between all those in the school community. As a result, teaching and other staff show a very strong commitment to the needs of their pupils and to school improvement. Arrangements for co-ordinators to manage their subjects are underdeveloped and this limits their effectiveness in monitoring standards and improving provision.

The school has an appropriate number of suitably experienced teaching and support staff to meet the needs of its curriculum and pupils. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The building is well-maintained and has a dedicated ICT suite. There is a sufficient amount of outdoor space but no dedicated outdoor area for reception children. The quantity and range of learning resources is sound overall and good in some subjects such as ICT and music. The school gives due attention to seeking value for money when making spending decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour is good • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with their concerns • The school is well led and managed • Children make good progress • Their children are expected to work hard and achieve their best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons • The amount of work to do at home

Inspection finds the range of extra-curricular activities to be good although most clubs are available only to junior pupils. Inspection found the amount of homework to be satisfactory overall although it is not monitored closely. A few parents expressed concern over mixed-age classes and the size of the Year 6 class. Inspection finds it necessary for some pupils to be in mixed-age classes although the school avoids this as far as it can. This partly explains the large size of the current Year 6 class but additional support could have alleviated this situation. Inspection agrees with the overall very positive views of parents. As one parent wrote to the inspectors: *I can only describe the staff as marvellous ... I cannot think of a single negative comment about any aspect of the school and I am pleased my children were able to spend their primary years there.*

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Although there is some variation from year to year, children's attainment when they enter the reception year is generally average. They achieve well whilst in reception. In accordance with the policy of the LEA¹, summer-born children spend only one term in reception² and these constitute about half of the present year group. Compared to children in other areas, summer-born children have limited opportunities to attain and exceed the expected standards by the end of the Foundation Stage³. As a result and despite the good progress made in the reception year, standards are still broadly average by the time children enter Year 1. They continue to achieve well at both the infant and junior stages and attain above average standards overall by the age of eleven.
2. Standards in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 2 were well above average in reading and writing when compared to schools nationally and also when compared to similar schools. Standards in mathematics were average compared to both schools nationally and to similar schools. Teachers' assessment of science shows that the percentage who attained the expected standard was above average but the percentage who attained a higher standard was well below average. Taken over three years, girls have performed better than boys in reading and boys have performed slightly better than girls in writing and mathematics. Over the last five years there has been greater improvement in reading and writing test results than in mathematics.
3. In the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards in English were well above the national average and very high when compared to similar schools. Standards in mathematics were above average compared to schools nationally and to similar schools. Standards in science were very high compared to schools nationally and to similar schools. Taken over three years, girls have performed slightly better than boys in English and mathematics. The rate of improvement in test results over the past five years has been broadly in line with the national trend, although weaker in mathematics.
4. The evidence from inspection shows a slightly different picture from the test results. Pupils currently in Year 2 attain average standards overall. This particular year group showed slightly below average attainment when they joined the school and have made good progress at the infant stage. Pupils currently in Year 6 attain above average standards overall. They have also made good progress since entering the school. Overall standards are not as high as those in 2002 because of a smaller proportion of higher attainers within the year group. However, there are variations in the progress pupils make between subjects. This is because of differences in the quality of planning and shortcomings in the time allocated to some subjects.
5. In the reception year, children make good overall progress in the areas of learning for children of their age. This is the result of good teaching, a carefully planned curriculum and an environment that encourages a positive approach to learning. As a result they attain the standards expected by the end of the year in all areas of learning.

¹ Local Education Authority

² This policy has now changed and from September 2004 all children will spend at least two terms in reception

³ Foundation Stage is the term given to educational provision during the pre-school and reception years

Where children attain higher or lower standards, this is linked more closely to how much time they spend in the reception year rather than significant differences in individual abilities or rates of progress.

6. At the infant stage pupils make good overall progress, notably in English, science, art and design, PE and RE. By the end of Year 2 they attain the expected standards in all subjects and above the expected standards in science, art and design, PE and RE. Pupils continue to make good overall progress in the junior classes. They achieve expected levels in mathematics, geography and history, and above the expected levels in English, science, art and design, DT, ICT and RE. Progress in music is unsatisfactory and pupils do not attain the expected standard by the end of Year 6. This is because of shortcomings in provision and in teachers' expertise in this subject. Standards in PE are well above those expected due to teachers' good levels of expertise in this subject and consistently good teaching throughout the school.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of well-planned provision and the good quality support from special needs assistants which has a positive impact on progress. Inspection evidence does not show any significant difference in the relative achievement of boys and girls although boys contribute more to discussions in some lessons. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers. Average and lower attaining pupils achieve equally well, but the progress of higher attainers is more limited in some lessons, particularly in mathematics and science. This is because assessment information is not used well enough to match work to their stages of learning and, as a result, tasks are often insufficiently demanding. The school has not yet implemented its plans to compile a register of gifted and talented pupils in order to monitor the extent to which their needs are met.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The high standards that were noted at the previous inspection have been maintained and this aspect remains a strength of the school. From the time they start in reception, pupils enjoy coming to school. Interviews with parents whose children had just begun their education confirmed they had settled in well and were thoroughly enjoying life in the school. The parents' survey indicates that almost all children enjoy school and the good level of attendance is further evidence of that. Examples of good attitudes were noted in reception where children willingly tidy away sand from the floor following play and at the weekly swimming sessions in Ludlow where pupils in Years 3 and 4 waited patiently whilst awaiting their turn to use the pool. There are numerous occasions when pupils demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm in lessons, particularly when teaching is good. In group and individual work they work hard and make good progress. Extra-curricular clubs are popular and well supported, with pupils keen to take part in activities such as football, rounders, lace making and choir.
9. Behaviour is very good throughout the school and in a range of contexts. In assemblies, at playtime and in the dining hall, pupils show respect for one another by waiting courteously to be served, holding doors open and helping one another in lessons. In the vast majority of lessons behaviour is good or better and this promotes good progress. No incidents of bullying or racism were observed and interviews with pupils and parents confirm that such incidents are very rare. There have been no recent exclusions.
10. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good, and this helps pupils become confident. They are predominantly friendly and polite to one another and this is evident from an early age. Year 1 pupils were observed sharing resources and helping one another to complete a task. A Year 4 pupil asked to borrow

a rubber and when it was passed to him he replied with a genuine *thank you*. Year 6 pupils volunteer to support new entrants to reception during lunchtime and this requires them to show high levels of understanding and maturity. Year 4 pupils act as reading partners for Year 1 pupils. These opportunities help to develop independence and responsibility. However, there is undue teacher direction in some lessons and this limits pupils' opportunities to make choices and plan their own learning.

11. Attendance is above average levels. Pupils are generally punctual and parents are quick to inform the school when their children are absent. This has the added benefit of reducing the amount of time the school spends following up absences.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of both teaching and learning is good at all stages of the school. This shows good improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. All lessons seen were at least satisfactory and teaching was good or better in about two lessons in three.
13. Teaching in the reception year is good and results in children making good gains in learning by the time they enter Year 1. Particular strengths are the good relationships at all levels which result in teachers and support staff working well together to provide stimulating activities within a safe and caring environment. Teaching and support staff demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and provide a well-judged balance between whole class and small group teaching. Reading is well taught and from the beginning children are keen to share books and talk about stories. However, in a few lessons it is unclear what children are expected to learn and, in some whole class lessons, teaching is not matched closely to the needs of all children.
14. Teaching and learning are good in the infant and junior classes although there is some variation between subjects. English and science are taught well and promote the good progress made in these subjects. Art and design, DT, ICT and PE are also taught well. This is because teachers have good knowledge and understanding of these subjects and ensure pupils increase their skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. Mathematics, geography, history and RE are taught satisfactorily so that pupils make sound progress. Music teaching is unsatisfactory because of shortcomings in subject expertise. Although music teaching is of a high standard in some classes, junior pupils do not make sufficient progress by the age of eleven.
15. Teachers provide a caring environment and establish very positive relationships. As a result pupils are confident and are well motivated to carry out their tasks carefully. A variety of teaching methods, including many practical activities, such as handling artefacts in history, are used well to engage pupils' interest. As a result, they are attentive and maintain their concentration well, and this has a positive impact on the rate at which they learn. Teachers have good strategies for managing pupils so no time is wasted in dealing with inappropriate behaviour. Lesson introductions are generally good, with teachers giving clear explanations and instructions so that pupils know what is expected of them. The final few minutes of lessons are often used to share and reinforce what pupils have achieved, but rarely used to extend learning further. Teachers take appropriate account of the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. There is some variation between classes in how effectively

homework is used to support learning.

16. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, shortcomings include poor quality lesson plans. There is often a lack of clarity over what pupils are expected to learn and the purpose of their tasks. In many lessons, insufficient account is taken of meeting the needs of higher attainers. Thus, their work is often insufficiently challenging and this constrains the progress they make. Another weak feature is the pedestrian pace of some lessons, particularly in mathematics. This limits the amount pupils can learn in each lesson and also tends to weaken their engagement in what they are doing.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Special needs support staff and classroom assistants are used effectively and make a positive impact on pupils' rate of learning. They establish good relationships with pupils and, in particularly good examples, show sensitivity in allowing pupils to learn from their own mistakes. As a result, pupils do not become too dependent upon support staff and this helps them make good progress towards their learning targets.

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

18. Overall, the school provides a sound range of learning opportunities for its pupils. This is enriched by visits, special events, a variety of extra-curricular clubs and good links with the nearby secondary school.
19. The curriculum for reception children is of good quality and planned carefully to take good account of the areas of learning for children at the Foundation Stage. There is a strong emphasis on personal and social development, literacy and numeracy and opportunities for children to choose their own activities as well as benefit from adult-directed experiences. Care is taken to ensure that reception children in the mixed-age class are given learning opportunities appropriate for their age. The Foundation Stage curriculum provides positive experiences that prepare children well for their later learning.
20. The school provides a broad curriculum for infant and junior pupils. It meets statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects, although there are shortcomings in some elements of the music programmes of study at the junior stage. Provision for RE meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Because of a strong recent emphasis on raising standards in English and ICT, the school increased the time given to these subjects. However this has had a detrimental effect on subjects such as mathematics, geography and history, where the time allocated is significantly below the national average and pupils' progress is satisfactory rather than good. Since the overall teaching time at the junior stage is slightly below the recommended minimum, junior pupils are particularly disadvantaged in these subjects. The school has already identified the need to review and improve the allocation of time to subjects.
21. The school has implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, and is adapting planning for these areas to meet the needs of pupils more closely. The literacy strategy is having a positive impact on raising standards, and pupils are given additional opportunities in other subjects to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. There has been significant recent improvement in provision for ICT and work in other subjects is used well to promote computer skills. Year 5 pupils, for example, use a

- computer program to devise simple electrical circuits in science and Year 2 pupils use a digital camera to record a museum visit.
22. The curriculum is planned appropriately over the long term. However, medium-term planning in some subjects, particularly geography and history, does not provide sufficient guidance for teachers. As a result, pupils do not make steady gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding in all elements of the subjects as they progress through the school.
 23. The school gives a strong emphasis to inclusive provision for pupils with special educational needs who receive their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. Provision meets the curricular requirements as set out in IEPs and statements of special educational need. Support is used well to meet individual needs, using a good balance of withdrawal teaching, in class support and ability groups.
 24. The curriculum is extended by special events such as book weeks and regular visits to places of educational interest, including a Year 6 tour of Roman Chester. These opportunities promote pupils' enjoyment in their learning. Pupils benefit from the very good number and range of extra-curricular clubs provided by teachers, parents and friends. These include guitar, recorders, cycling, French, maypole dancing and a range of sports activities. However, the great majority are made available only for pupils in the junior classes. The school also provides instrumental tuition for violin, brass, woodwind and percussion. A residential visit for older pupils provides curriculum enhancement in environmental work, team building, adventure activities, history and geography. In addition, the school invites visitors into the school to provide extra expertise to extend pupils' learning. A professional musical instrument maker demonstrated his work to pupils, for example, and this resulted in good quality DT work by Year 4 pupils.
 25. There is sound provision for pupils' physical, social and health education (PSHE). It promotes pupils' knowledge of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and gives them the knowledge and skills to make informed and healthy choices now and in later life. Appropriate attention is given to sex education and also to drug misuse. Local police officers visit the school to support this area of the curriculum. Attention is also given to developing pupils' understanding of citizenship. Each year arrangements are made for county councillors to visit the school to discuss social aspects of the local community.
 26. There are satisfactory links with the community to support and improve pupils' educational opportunities through the provision of additional funding or donations for specific events. This is seen, for example, in the improvements made to the school's environment by planting trees. As a result of pupils' letters, local businesses and members of the community provide valued support for the school both in kind and in person. There are good links with the nearby sports college. Older pupils have regular opportunities to visit prior to their transfer into Year 7 and to participate in extra activities including music, sport and dance.
 27. Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with particular strengths in moral and social provision. Parents praise the community spirit engendered by the headteacher and his staff and this is very evident as soon as you enter the school. The atmosphere is very friendly and welcoming and this provides a positive feel to all that occurs in the school, maintaining the good ethos found at the last inspection.

28. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Themed assemblies and well conceived PSHE and RE policies provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on their own and other people's lives. The heart of spiritual provision within the school, however, is its ethos. An emphasis on promoting self-esteem through regular praise for good acts creates an atmosphere in which all pupils can grow and flourish.
29. Provision for moral development is very good, exemplified by the way in which behaviour is managed consistently throughout the school. Teachers create an atmosphere of fairness, integrity and respect for pupils' welfare. They back this up by acting as very good role models. Issues of right and wrong are dealt with through 'circle' times⁴, PSHE lessons, assemblies and involvement of pupils in creating their own class rules. Pupils are trusted to take responsibility for jobs around the school in the library, during assemblies and in the dining hall. Junior pupils also hear younger pupils read and fulfil their roles as members of the Eco committee⁵ which is currently establishing a recycling project.
30. Provision for social development is very good. The way parents are made to feel welcome in class at the start of the day and the manner in which older pupils help to look after younger ones at lunch times foster a sense of community. Acts of generosity and kindness are encouraged at all times and are formally recognised at the termly celebration assemblies. Pupils are given opportunities to work co-operatively with a partner, as seen when Year 4 pupils collaborated on ideas for persuasive writing. Team games are promoted and the Year 6 residential visit provides an excellent opportunity for pupils to develop confidence and social skills.
31. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are given opportunities to learn about traditional European and local culture through, for example, learning about the Victorian period in history and educational visits to museums and around their own town. Work in geography, as well as visits from an Andean music maker and an Asian artist have helped to broaden pupils' knowledge of non-European cultures, particularly from third world countries. However, insufficient emphasis is given to helping pupils understand the contribution of other cultures to modern British society and prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse country. Planned visits to a mosque and Gudwara are a welcome step to start to redress this imbalance.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school continues to provide a caring environment as noted at the last inspection. Teaching and other staff work hard to nurture good relationships and to build trust. This strong ethos of care, good relationships and the positive way in which behaviour is managed promote the confidence, courtesy and very good behaviour that pupils display.
33. Arrangements for child protection and the care of pupils are very good. The headteacher is the nominated child protection officer. He has attended recent training and staff are fully informed of the agreed procedures. There is a good child protection policy that is backed up by guidance in the staff handbook. Provision for health and safety is very good. The headteacher is ably supported by a health and safety committee which carries out termly audits. Additionally, in conjunction with a safety representative from the LEA, the school carries out an annual audit of health and

⁴ Times when pupils sit in a circle and share their ideas and feelings with each other

⁵ A recent initiative in which pupils work with teachers and governors on environmental issues

safety and risk assessments are reviewed. There are six fully qualified first aiders and diligent cleaning staff keep the premises in a clean condition. Lunches are also of a very good quality and much appreciated by pupils.

34. There are sound procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. The school is helped considerably by parents' efforts to telephone and confirm absences at the earliest opportunity. Where this does not happen the secretary contacts parents by telephone on the first day of absence. Arrangements for monitoring attendance are carried out manually which means that analysing overall levels of attendance and absence is time consuming. Efficiency could be improved by computerising these records to reduce the administrative burden and provide a quicker and more effective way of identifying trends in attendance.
35. The school has established good procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Praise is regularly used in lessons to recognise good work and this helps to raise self-esteem and confidence. There are good systems in place to record and monitor any incidents of misbehaviour. Issues of bullying and racism are addressed through assemblies and 'circle' times and the rarity of such incidents is evidence that these arrangements are effective. The headteacher is not complacent in dealing with bullying and involves parents as and when the need arises.
36. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory and have improved since the last inspection. In addition to teacher assessments, national tests are completed in accordance with statutory requirements in English, mathematics and science. The school also uses optional national tests in Year 3, 4 and 5 to assess progress in these subjects. Completed tests are analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses, inform future planning and predict future results. Whilst used for overall termly targets the assessment data is not used effectively enough to set specific and well-focused individual targets for pupils, particularly in mathematics. Assessment in other subjects is underdeveloped and relies mainly on coordinators' occasional sampling of pupils' work and informal conversations with teachers. Overall, assessment information is not used effectively to meet the differing needs of pupils, particularly higher attainers. The school is aware of the need to improve the basic systems currently used to track pupils' progress. It has begun to introduce new procedures that have the potential to improve monitoring of individual progress and identification of strengths and weaknesses so as to inform individual and whole school improvement.
37. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good. As a consequence of the good relationships that exist in the school staff know pupils well. This negates the need to establish formal records. Pupils' written reports for parents contain an appropriate assessment of each pupil's personal development.
38. The school has established good procedures for identifying and supporting special educational needs that comply with the Code of Practice. Good use is made of external specialist agencies such as the educational psychologist. Pupils who are the subjects of statements of special educational need are supported well through IEPs, support staff and appropriate resources. Their progress is monitored effectively through arrangements for annual reviews.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. The school has established a very good partnership with parents. Parents are very positive in their support for the school and almost unanimous in their view that the school provides a good standard of education. Interviews with parents during the week of the inspection showed they are very happy with the way the school is run.
40. The school's links with parents are effective. Each morning parents are encouraged to come into the school with their children and this provides an informal opportunity for them to pass on information to teachers. The headteacher also makes a point of being available in the playground at the beginning and end of the day to talk to parents. Interviews with parents confirmed the ease with which they feel they can approach the school with queries or concerns. The parent of a new entrant found the information received from the school very helpful in enabling the child to settle in quickly and easily.
41. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. Around six parents help out regularly, hearing readers and supporting art and craft activities. The active Friends Association⁶ organises a range of events during the year culminating in the summer fete, to which the whole town is invited. Considerable sums of money have been raised, the bulk of it being used recently to buy computers and associated equipment for the recently developed computer suite.
42. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. There is a good school prospectus and regular letters home, which keep parents informed of forthcoming events. There are three parent consultation evenings a year that are well supported. However, pupils' written reports provide limited information about the levels at which children are working and whether these are appropriate for their age. Neither do they inform parents about targets to help their children overcome areas of weakness. However, parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of their children's targets and progress. There are no arrangements currently to run curriculum evenings for parents or to provide information about the topics pupils cover each term.
43. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at home is satisfactory. Most parents give their children's education a high priority and are keen to support their reading and homework. This is seen particularly in Year 2 where homework is well supported, but this pattern is not reflected in all classes. In one class only half the pupils regularly complete their homework assignments.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The overall good leadership and management found at the last inspection have been maintained. The headteacher is dedicated to achieving high quality provision within a caring and happy learning environment and his vision and leadership ensure the educational direction of the school. He has established a community in which all pupils and adults feel valued and he is held in very high regard by parents, staff and pupils. As a result, he is supported well by the deputy headteacher and other staff who work harmoniously together and display an excellent commitment to the needs of pupils and work of the school.
45. The deputy headteacher and co-ordinators carry out their duties conscientiously and satisfactorily. However, there is a lack of clarity over their roles and management responsibility is not devolved sufficiently. As a result, many aspects of the school's

⁶ An organisation for parents and others interested in supporting the work of the school

work are monitored in an informal and unsystematic way. In particular, the school has not developed appropriate procedures for monitoring agreed policies such as those for homework or provision and progress in subjects such as geography and music. Despite development since the last inspection, co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in identifying strengths and areas for improvement in their subjects and other areas of responsibility to feed into the school development plan. This shortcoming has already been identified by the school and plans are in hand to establish a senior management team and to strengthen co-ordinator roles.

46. The school analyses national test data and its own assessment information to evaluate its performance and identify priorities for development, particularly in core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Arrangements for performance management are in place and, together with a programme of monitoring teaching, are helping school improvement. However, shortcomings in management roles slow the rate at which some areas requiring development are identified and acted upon.
47. Governors are active and supportive of the work of the school. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. This is seen, for example, in the good provision for pupils with special educational needs that is managed well by the co-ordinator and monitored by a designated governor. Governors also play a key role in ensuring the health and safety of pupils. They are informed about the work of the school through classroom visits, presentations by the headteacher and co-ordinators and through consideration of test result data.
48. The school makes good strategic use of resources, including specific grants, and financial decisions are linked appropriately to educational priorities. Good emphasis is given to ensuring that income is used for the benefit of pupils currently within the school and to keep carry over balances to the minimum required for contingencies. Day-to-day financial procedures are managed efficiently by a clerk employed by the LEA. A recent auditors' report made only minor recommendations that have already been fully implemented. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily. The school does not formally consult parents over planned development, but close attention is given to obtaining good value when making spending decisions.
49. There is an appropriate number of suitably experienced teaching and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum and pupils. The large size of the Year 6 class came about for reasons beyond the school's control. Although this has not had a significant impact on pupils' achievements, greater consideration should have been given to exploring ways in which additional support could have been provided.
50. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The building is well maintained and provides a pleasant environment for working and learning. Pupils benefit from a good-sized computer suite but there are limited work spaces other than in classrooms. The library is used regularly for working with small groups of pupils with special educational needs and therefore provides limited facilities to support pupils' independent learning. Although identified for development, there is no dedicated outdoor area for reception children. The external grounds provide plenty of hard-surfaced and grassed space for pupils' relaxation and refreshment as well as for learning in PE and other subjects. The quantity and range of learning resources is sound overall but good in subjects such as ICT and music.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. In order to continue to improve, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

- (1) Improve progress in mathematics by:
 - increasing the amount of time allocated to this subject
 - using assessment information to match tasks more closely to pupils' differing stages of learning
 - improving the pace of lessons
(Paragraph numbers 6-7, 16, 20, 36, 67-71)
- (2) Raise standards in music at eleven by:
 - planning the curriculum to ensure that pupils in all classes build effectively on their skills, knowledge and understanding
 - ensuring teachers have sufficient levels of subject expertise and confidence
(Paragraph numbers 6, 102-104)
- (3) Promote good progress in geography and history, by:
 - improving the allocation of time to subjects
 - developing medium-term planning to ensure pupils build progressively on their skills over time
 - matching activities closely to appropriate learning objectives in all lessons
 - improving arrangements to assess and record standards in foundation subjects
 - making greater use of assessment information to match work to the differing needs of pupils within classes, particularly higher attainers
(Paragraph numbers 6-7, 16, 20, 22, 36, 87-91, 92-96)
- (4) Increase the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what higher attainers can achieve
 - using assessment information more effectively to ensure activities make sufficient demands on higher attaining pupils in all lessons
(Paragraph numbers 7, 16, 36, 65, 69, 76, 94)
- (5) As already planned, strengthen the roles of subject co-ordinators by:
 - developing systematic procedures for co-ordinators to monitor provision and progress in their subjects so they can contribute more effectively to whole school development
(Paragraph numbers 45-46)

Other minor issues which should be considered by the school

- a) Prepare pupils more effectively for life in a culturally diverse society
- b) Provide a dedicated outdoor area for reception children
- c) Monitor homework more closely
- d) Improve pupils' annual reports to parents

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

55

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

35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	29	18	0	0	0
Percentage	0	15	53	33	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y2

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

261

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR – Y2

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

8

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

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

13

Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving

2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	15	24	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	13	15
	Girls	24	24	24
	Total	38	37	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (93)	95 (93)	100 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	14
	Girls	24	22	24
	Total	37	37	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (93)	95 (84)	97 (91)
	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	15	13	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	15
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	24	23	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (76)	82 (76)	100 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	15
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	24	23	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (78)	82 (76)	100 (90)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	259	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	177

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002-2003
	£
Total income	523235
Total expenditure	518830
Expenditure per pupil	2189
Balance brought forward from previous year	2628
Balance carried forward to next year	1741

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	239
Number of questionnaires returned	141

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	30	1	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	63	35	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	38	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	42	11	0	2
The teaching is good.	70	27	0	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	38	3	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	13	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	29	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	62	35	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	85	13	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	35	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	30	11	1	9

Other issues raised by parents

A few parents expressed their concern over pupils being in mixed-age classes, and the size of the Year 6 class.

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

52. Children achieve well and, overall, attain the expected standards for their age in all areas of learning. Those who spend more than one term in the reception year are on course to exceed the expected standards in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Those who spend only one term in reception do not have time to achieve all the goals by the end of the school year.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. Teaching in this area is good. Expectations of behaviour are high and older children know what is expected of them and are eager to comply. Their concentration is very good. Even at the end of a busy day some were still determined to finish their 'doodle drawings' stimulated by the story in their literacy lesson. They know class routines and are good at managing their time and tidying up. Even children very new to school are able to put their names on a planning board to show what they intend to do. Only a small minority are not yet able to share space on the carpet without becoming distracted. Teachers use 'circle' times effectively to enable these children to think about friendship and getting on with others. Children co-operate well in small group activities. They plant seeds with considerable care, learning about hygiene by using gloves and washing their hands. Children develop respect for other children and adults as a result of good models from teachers and assistants.

Communication, language and literacy

54. This area of learning is well taught. Children bring with them good speaking and listening skills on which teachers build effectively. When reading stories, teachers are careful to explain unfamiliar vocabulary and to check understanding. In one class the word *spiral* was graphically demonstrated as all followed the action in the air. Teacher's questions in an art lesson were effective in getting children to explain how they had made a woven pattern and to describe the different textures and materials used. Teaching assistants also provide good encouragement for children to communicate their ideas in practical tasks.
55. Reading is taught well and a programme for teaching sounds helps children learn to recognise different word patterns. They enjoy books and are keen to share what they know, whether at the early stage of telling the story or reading the print. The good progress made by older children within reception is seen when they use their knowledge of sounds well to read unfamiliar words. A few children rely too much on this strategy that impedes fluency. Higher attaining children read simple books fluently and talk eagerly about their favourite stories, plot and characters. Home-school diaries are used effectively to involve parents in the reading process. Some children have made very good progress in writing and write full sentences conveying meaning clearly and using full stops and capital letters. Younger children write their names confidently and are able to copy letters. However, occasionally they are given worksheets that are too difficult for their stage of development and this limits their progress.

Mathematical development

56. Teaching is satisfactory. Younger children count confidently together up to 30 and up to 20 following a number line. They know shapes and colours and enjoy a shapes guessing game. They draw around shapes to make recognisable lorries and trains. Occasionally they are not given enough practical tasks before recording. Outdoor activities such as children throwing bean bags onto shapes and numerals, together with tasks such as counting seeds during planting, provide good practical contexts for numeracy. The majority of older children write numerals confidently up to 30. Most distinguish between odd and even numbers. They begin to understand time, for example by recording how many numbers they can write in one minute. They find the corners on shapes and measure the length of their hands. They write number sentences up to six and higher attaining children begin to calculate tens and units.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

57. Teaching of this aspect is good. The current 'Garden Centre' topic for the younger children is well planned to give them a good knowledge of different types of seeds, tools and conditions for growth. Children are encouraged to carry out planting themselves, to write labels and to water the seeds. This promotes good progress in their knowledge and understanding of conditions for seeds to grow. They learn about the past by looking at old toys and make some pop-up toys of their own. These are beautifully made but clearly require a lot of adult help and do not represent children's own ideas. Children know the difference between past and present and are developing awareness of change as they compare what they did in the past with what they can do now.
58. Younger children use their sense of touch, taste and smell as they investigate different types of melon and are good at describing what they find. In a lesson to find out what hands can do, older children explored the texture of sand and dough and communicated what they found very well. They were entranced when the teacher introduced a skeleton and they could see what the bones of a hand look like from the X-ray pictures in the hospital corner. Children are confident in using the computer, and from the earliest stages know how to *click* and *drag* using the mouse. They also operate a tape recorder themselves. While learning Bible stories children are encouraged to think about right and wrong behaviour. They are introduced to different customs through festivals such as Divali and the Chinese New Year. However, some tasks, such as making models of tepees, are of doubtful value because of the stereotypical messages they endorse about the lives of Native Americans.

Physical development

59. Teaching is good and sometimes very good, but children's attainment is no more than satisfactory. The discrepancy between teaching and learning results from the lack of opportunity for regular access to an outside space and equipment in which to gain confidence in movement in an informal setting. Children are well taught in PE lessons. As a result of clear instructions and demonstration, children make very good progress in using space and controlling movements as they spin, pull, push and slide on their tummies and backs. Children are encouraged to demonstrate good movement and this improves the achievement of the whole class. Older children make good progress in identifying parts of the body used in movement. Individual help for less confident children by teachers and assistants is good, enabling them to make progress. A good amount of exercise is generated and most children are fit. Most children have good fine motor control and use pencils and construction toys well.

They manage to dress themselves after PE and put their shoes on the correct feet but cannot be wholly independent as the top buttons on the school uniform shirts are stiff for small fingers.

Creative development

60. Teaching is satisfactory. Children experience a range of different media and materials although some art activities are too adult-directed, limiting children's own creativity. Lack of a secure outside space, so children can move freely in and out of the classroom, also limits opportunities for creative play. When the outside space is timetabled, it is used well. There is a tent, small people play is arranged on a blanket, tea parties are held, children paint the walls with large brushes and water and a nursery nurse plays bat and ball with children. Children adopt the roles of doctors and nurses in the hospital corner, taking temperatures and, with adult help, learning to wrap babies securely. They learn the skill of weaving, choosing from materials of different colours and textures. Children sing and follow action songs enthusiastically.

ENGLISH

61. Since the last inspection there has been a steady improvement in test results at both seven and eleven. Pupils throughout the school make good progress to achieve above average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing by the end of Year 6. Standards in Year 2 are average, although higher attainers achieve standards above those expected.
62. Pupils make good progress in their listening skills. Because of their very positive attitudes towards learning, they listen very attentively to stories, explanations and instructions at both the infant and junior stages. They show their developing skills by the appropriateness of their answers and comments. They speak confidently in small and large groups and convey their ideas clearly to others. Good examples were seen of teachers promoting speaking skills well. These included Year 2 pupils working in small 'talking' groups during a whole class introduction and Year 4 pupils working co-operatively in pairs to plan and compose examples of persuasive writing. Although most pupils are keen to answer questions and share their ideas in class, insufficient attention is given to involving those who are more reticent in putting up their hands.
63. Reading is taught well through literacy lessons, guided reading sessions and encouragement to read at home with parents. As a result, pupils enjoy books and develop their reading skills well. In Year 2, they read with appropriate fluency and demonstrate good understanding of what they read. They use their developing knowledge of letters, sounds and words to read with increasing accuracy. By Year 6, pupils show a good knowledge of books and authors and increasing levels of understanding. They have well-developed skills in selecting and using information from books and the Internet.
64. Pupils throughout the school make good gains in their writing skills. They write in a range of forms including stories, letters and reports. Year 2 pupils express their ideas clearly in a sequence of sentences and use a varied vocabulary and sentence structure to maintain a consistent narrative style. They make sound progress in the accuracy of spelling and simple punctuation. By Year 6, pupils sustain their ideas well in their writing. Written work is often varied, interesting and imaginative and demonstrates a good range and use of vocabulary. Spelling is generally accurate and written work is organised into paragraphs with punctuation used appropriately to

clarify meaning.

65. The quality of both teaching and learning is good. Teachers' good subject expertise enables them to help pupils make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding. They use well-chosen teaching methods and manage pupils well, so that pupils concentrate well and work purposefully in lessons. Support staff are used well to help lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to others. In a very good lesson, Year 4 pupils made very good gains in their knowledge and use of persuasive writing. This was because the use of advertisements matched their interests and stages of learning and the timing of activities was well judged so they worked quickly and maintained their concentration well. Their learning was also supported well by the opportunity to work with a partner and use a computer publishing program. In lessons where learning is satisfactory rather than good, a weaker element is the moderate pace, which means pupils do not work as productively as they should. Additionally, insufficient account is taken of matching work to the differing needs of pupils within the class, particularly the higher attainers whose tasks are not always sufficiently challenging.
66. The curriculum is planned well and enriched by book weeks and fairs and opportunities to work with theatre groups. There are good assessment procedures although assessment information is not used effectively enough to ensure work is matched closely to the needs of higher attainers. The subject is managed well and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. This includes recent development in the range of activities planned and linking learning to work in other subjects. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of future development required, and is about to implement a new lesson plan format that gives greater attention to adapting work for differing levels of attainment.

MATHEMATICS

67. Standards of attainment are average at the ages of seven and eleven in all aspects of the subject. This is not as good as at the time of the previous inspection when standards were above average. Over the past four years standards have varied from above average to average as a result of the different overall levels of ability for each of the year groups. All pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, including those with special educational needs. These pupils benefit from the good support they receive from support assistants.
68. Year 2 pupils attain expected standards in the use and application of mathematics in simple problem solving and investigations. They use a variety of addition and subtraction calculations, for example, to find different ways of making 35 or to calculate the total number of toes within a group of children or the whole class. Higher attainers are secure in their understanding of place value to 100 and are developing this to 1,000. Other pupils are still somewhat insecure with place value to 100 and require apparatus to help them make calculations. Year 2 pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the properties of shapes in two dimensions and measure accurately to the nearest centimetre.
69. Year 6 pupils develop their skills in using and applying number to solve problems. However, samples of pupils' work demonstrate insufficient challenge and opportunity for the average and above average pupils to develop these skills to the higher levels of which they are capable. They use the four operations accurately and have a satisfactory understanding of decimals, fractions and percentages. Year 6 pupils also calculate the perimeter and area of simple shapes and symmetry and know the

properties of shapes in three dimensions. They create their own very carefully presented graphs to enable them to convert miles to kilometres.

70. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. One example of very good teaching was seen when Year 5 pupils became very excited and enthusiastic about their work as they discovered patterns in number sequences and described them to their friends. The activities were planned to take account of the range of attainment of the pupils so that they were challenged appropriately. The clear learning objective enabled the teacher to assess the pupils' progress throughout the lesson and ensured a very good pace of learning for pupils of all abilities. In the main, however, progress in lessons is limited by a lack of pace and failure to challenge pupils sufficiently. The quality of marking is inconsistent and the school's policy is not always applied. As a result, in some classes marking provides little guidance on what pupils need to do to improve or to extend their knowledge and understanding.
71. The school provides an appropriately balanced curriculum, based largely on national numeracy strategy recommendations. However, the amount of time allocated to the subject is less than that seen in most schools and this limits the rate of progress. The co-ordinator has limited opportunities to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school. However, she is knowledgeable and fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has already taken steps to improve standards by using LEA expertise to develop provision. Learning resources are good and used effectively to support pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

72. Pupils throughout the school make good progress and attain above average standards at seven and eleven. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection and there has been sound improvement since that time. Lower standards compared to 2002 test results are linked to a smaller proportion of higher attainers in the current Year 6 group. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is good overall and is enhanced by pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils' books and displays throughout the school indicate a thorough coverage of all areas of the curriculum.
73. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, most pupils can express their own ideas in order to find solutions to problems. For example, they are able to explain how an experiment is undertaken, describing accurately the methods used for their 'cress investigation' using appropriate scientific language such as *germination*. Lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs make good progress, well supported by special needs assistants. Higher attainers demonstrate their understanding of circuits by explaining why a light-bulb will not light if the circuit is open.
74. Year 3 and 4 pupils have a good emerging understanding of the criteria involved in conducting a fair test. In one effective lesson, pupils were devising a fair test with their teacher in order to discover on which types of surface snails prefer to move. Pupils used correct scientific language to describe the properties of each surface, lucidly describing why the snail may or may not like it.

75. In a good Year 6 lesson, pupils were able to expand upon the scientific criteria involved in fair tests. As these pupils carefully explored and recorded how they could test the properties of different commercial paper towels, they successfully discovered an appropriate approach to working out the problem. They appraised each other's methods effectively, using complicated criteria in their reasoning for fair tests, and honed their methods until they were sure the tests were absolutely fair. Average and higher attaining pupils describe the functions of the major organs of the human body, whilst lower attainers label component parts of the human body and its organs.
76. Teachers have good subject expertise that enables them to promote pupils' progress well, and the working atmosphere, co-operation and mutual support prominent in most lessons provide a very positive environment for learning. An over-reliance on work sheets in some lessons, however, means that pupils do not always benefit from opportunities to make discoveries for themselves through research or investigations. At times this adversely affects the progress of higher attaining pupils due to the limited opportunities to extend their learning. Teachers appear too cautious in their assessment of pupils' work. This results in few higher attainers achieving above average levels in teacher assessment tasks, and also to insufficient challenge being offered in some lessons. ICT is used well to help pupils develop their scientific knowledge and skills through, for example, use of the Internet and the Intel microscope. There are also good examples of work in other subjects being used to promote learning in science. In PE, for example, pupils build on their existing understanding of the different functions of various parts of the body.
77. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed by the co-ordinator, ably supported by a colleague. Whilst the co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning, there are no opportunities to observe teaching to support identification of common strengths and weaknesses in the school. The curriculum meets statutory requirements although the policy and planning provide insufficient guidance to teachers on how the needs of differing groups of pupils should be met. The curriculum is enriched by a range of visits and good use of the local environment. Visitors share their expertise about the environment and planets to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. The quality, range and use of resources are good.

ART AND DESIGN

78. Standards are good throughout because teachers are confident with the subject and provide a good experience of different media and techniques. As a result, pupils throughout the school achieve well. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. During a visit to a pottery, Year 2 pupils made Easter Baskets. These show plenty of variety in the style of handle and decoration and have been glazed and fired to a high standard. Use of shade to create depth is evident in pupils' charcoal sketches of old bottles. They have looked at the work of artists and their hand drawn and computer generated work in the style of Mondrian shows good shape and colour.
79. Art is used to support work in other curriculum areas but at the same time there is good development of skills for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Pupils represent aspects of the local church by scoring on clay tablets and explore possibilities for printing repeating patterns inspired by Viking artefacts. 'Starburst' pictures show good development from hand-drawn to computer realisation. Beautifully drawn pastels and collages in the style of Picasso show good attention to detail and carefully selected materials. Pupils use notebooks effectively to develop skills in planning and sketching. Observation is effectively linked to studies of artists as seen in a lesson in which

pupils drew on the work of Georgia O’Keefe and Charles Rennie Mackintosh when sketching and painting flowers. Pupils learn to mix watercolour to create different effects. By Year 6, almost all pupils create landscapes confidently and many display good techniques in representing background and foreground.

80. Teaching is good. Pupils are given plenty of time to complete their work, yet at the same time a good pace is maintained. Good encouragement to ‘have a go’ while also providing individual support results in confident pupils willing to follow their own ideas. The variety and creativity of the work is the measure of how successful this is.
81. Management is satisfactory. Plans are in hand to improve the quality of curriculum guidance although teachers are making good use of what is available. Artists visit occasionally but there are at present no plans to visit art galleries and this limits pupils’ experiences.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

82. Pupils attain the expected levels at seven and above the expected levels at eleven. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils demonstrate well-developed problem solving skills and creativity in making objects. Achievement is limited to some extent by an inconsistent approach to design at the planning stage and in evaluation of the products.
83. Year 1 pupils have made interesting lunch boxes paying good attention to detail such as fastenings. Year 2 pupils cut and stick repeating stripes to fit into a template for Joseph’s ‘dreamcoat’. Many are able to follow the teacher’s template for a coat by drawing around small dolls. As a result of a demonstration by an Andean instrument maker, Year 4 pupils designed and produced beautifully made instruments using a variety of materials in a most creative way. For example, objects such as seashells, nutshells, bottle-tops and beads were used to produce decorative shakers, pipes, stringed instruments and drums. Not only are the colours delightful and the finish good but these instruments also produce good sounds.
84. No Year 6 lessons were seen and much of the DT curriculum is planned for later this term, but a discussion with Year 6 pupils showed they are clear about designing for a purpose. They have good ideas for designing toothbrushes to appeal to a four year-old child. They name the ingredients for a healthy sandwich to include protein, carbohydrates and salad and the need to avoid fatty foods and sugar. They are aware of health and safety risks in food technology. Shortcomings in planning, drawing and labelling designs over time have resulted in a lack of familiarity with subject terminology. For example, although pupils demonstrated very good recall of making a car in Year 5, they were not familiar with vocabulary such as *axle*, *dowel* or *rods* even when prompted. In general, pupils’ ability to evaluate what they make is underdeveloped. However, Year 6 pupils have benefited from the high standard in making objects over time and this contributes to the good attainment.
85. Only two lessons were seen. Evidence from these and pupils’ work indicates that teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. In a very effective Year 3 lesson to find ways of strengthening paper in preparation for making photograph frames the teacher organised the learning into a series of challenges so that pupils could build on what they learned. The teacher ensured pupils understood the implications of what they did so that they learned at a fast pace. For example, they discovered that rolling paper into cylinders or cones would support an egg and that folding into concertinas

strengthens load bearing. In some lessons teaching does not sufficiently challenge pupils because too much is prepared for them instead of giving them the means to design and try out their own ideas.

86. Leadership and management are satisfactory but arrangements for monitoring and assessment are largely informal. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The subject is enriched by visits such as those to a tile works, links with business partnerships and provision of a Young Engineers club. A very impressive lace making club also provides good opportunity for pupils to learn a skill and follow a design.

GEOGRAPHY

87. Standards are average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils study a range of topics but do not achieve as well as they could because the curriculum is not planned to ensure consistent progress in geographical skills. Mapping skills for example are underdeveloped.
88. Year 2 pupils make comparisons between houses here and in Bangladesh and draw the route on a map of the world. They also make comparisons with what people eat. They identify key features of their town after walking around their locality and prepare to use these to create a leaflet to inform visitors about its attractions.
89. By the time pupils are in Year 6 they know basic information about different parts of the globe. Pupils gain isolated knowledge of different countries and some show very confused and negative understanding about the customs and habits of peoples in other parts of the world. They know a little about St Lucia from their Year 3 studies and have some idea of the hunting techniques of the Yanomami people found in Brazil. Year 4 pupils show developing skills when they compare the rainfall and temperatures of Sarawak and London. As part of the Eco project these pupils consider the effects of traffic on the environment by surveying how pupils get to school. Year 6 compare their own environment with places such as Kenya, learning a little about cities and farming.
90. Teaching is no more than satisfactory overall. Some lessons lack challenge and the pace is too slow so that pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Year 2 pupils worked diligently to improve their understanding of a sequence in a walk around the locality but their achievement was constrained by an undemanding task and a slow pace of working. Year 4 pupils showed they have good ideas about pollution and how this links with their own way of life but are well able to grapple with more complex issues and ways of working.
91. Management is satisfactory although arrangements for monitoring standards and progress are underdeveloped. Subject planning provides insufficient guidance for teachers to promote steady gains in pupils' skills over time. The extent to which the curriculum ensures skills, knowledge and understanding build progressively on previous learning is also weakened by the decision to let teachers follow their preferred topics. However, the curriculum is extended and enriched by some good initiatives. Year 6 pupils carry out fieldwork and orienteering as part of a residential visit. Year 4 visit botanical gardens in Birmingham for rainforest stories and Year 5 have a visit from a water company to learn about water purification. The Eco committee has made a positive impact through the audit of birds and recycling.

HISTORY

92. Pupils make satisfactory progress and broadly attain the expected standards by seven and eleven, as found at the last inspection. However, standards could be higher. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection and judgements are based on scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work and discussion with pupils.
93. Pupils aged seven show a developing understanding of the passing of time, including changes in their own lives as well as events and people from the past beyond living memory. They demonstrate knowledge, for example, of Samuel Pepys and the Great Fire of London. They also understand that aspects of life have changed over time, including clothes and shopping arrangements, and that books and artefacts can be used to find out about the past. By the age of eleven, pupils demonstrate knowledge about people, events and aspects of life in different historical periods including the Ancient Egyptians, Romans, Tudors and Victorians, although this knowledge is not extensive. They make sound progress in the skills of historical enquiry but those of historical interpretation, organisation and communication are less well developed.
94. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In a good Year 1 lesson, pupils made good progress in their knowledge of the 'swinging' 1960s as well as in their understanding that aspects of life change over time and that artefacts help us to find out about the past. The lesson was planned well to promote progress in skills as well as knowledge, and the past was brought to life by the opportunity to dress up in clothes of the period. As a result, pupils were attentive and interested and maintained their concentration well. They enjoyed exploring 1960s-style patterns and colours by the opportunity to design their own 'kipper' ties. Scrutiny of books shows that tasks are often insufficiently challenging and, in particular, not enough demands are made of higher attainers. This puts some constraints on pupils' learning.
95. The curriculum meets National Curriculum requirements and takes some account of national guidance. Medium-term planning, however, does not provide enough guidance for teachers to ensure pupils make steady progress in historical skills and understanding as well as knowledge. Insufficient curriculum time also limits the progress pupils are able to make. However, the curriculum is enriched by visits to places of historical interest such as Year 2's visit to a china museum and Year 6 pupils' guided tour of Chester by a Roman 'soldier'. The school also hires boxes of good quality artefacts which are used well to stimulate learning in, for example, Year 6 work on the Romans.
96. History is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator. She has good expertise in the subject and an understanding of key strengths and areas for development. However, current procedures for monitoring limit the impact she is able to have on provision and pupils' standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

97. Pupils make sound progress at the infant stage to attain average standards by the end of Year 2. They achieve well at the junior stage to attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. This shows good improvement since the previous inspection when progress was found to be unsatisfactory.
98. The National Curriculum programmes of study are well planned and implemented and pupils have good opportunities to use ICT in supporting their learning in other

subjects. A new computer suite was established earlier in the year and this has increased opportunities for pupils to develop their computing skills and their knowledge and understanding. All teachers have successfully completed a national training scheme which has helped to improve their own knowledge, confidence and enthusiasm. This has resulted in the higher standards attained by pupils.

99. Year 2 pupils use computers confidently. They are able to open, save and close files, change font size and colour and edit their work successfully. They use ICT to write stories and produce visual presentations that involve inserting photographs from a digital camera. They are able to explain the use of technology in the home and the outdoor environment and enter instructions to control equipment.
100. Pupils in the junior classes use computers effectively to develop skills in other subjects. For example, Year 4 pupils use a publishing program in English to create well-presented posters to advertise products they have invented. In art and design they produce paintings and repeated patterns. In mathematics they generate detailed pie charts and graphs. Year 4 pupils produce well-presented illustrations about electrical circuits and use a word-processing program to write reports about them. They produce information posters about the various areas of the wild area to inform other pupils about trees, birds and plant life. By the end of Year 6, pupils use word-processing skills to produce well-presented booklets of their own poetry, produce cards to celebrate special occasions and enter data into spreadsheets to produce graphs. They use the Internet to search for information and know how to insert it into their work. They can send and receive email messages and have good opportunities to use computers to control events or movement of objects.
101. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a clear understanding of the potential use of ICT to support and develop pupils' learning in other subjects. The co-ordinator samples pupils' work throughout the year, although arrangements for monitoring provision and assessing standards are underdeveloped.

MUSIC

102. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the infant classes and attain the expected standards by seven. This is a similar picture to that found in the last inspection. Standards at eleven have not been maintained and are now below the expected level. This is because of shortcomings in provision and teaching, which result in unsatisfactory progress at the junior stage. By Year 6 pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to perform, compose, develop a musical vocabulary and evaluate and improve their own or others' work. These judgements are based on lesson observations, school assemblies, discussions with staff and pupils and scrutiny of teachers' planning.
103. Pupils do not always sing in tune or with enthusiasm. This was seen, for example, in a whole school session despite accompaniment by pupils playing guitar and good encouragement from the teacher. In lessons, teaching was satisfactory and sometimes good although the limited time allocated to the subject constrains opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their efforts. The best lessons are taught by the co-ordinator whose good subject knowledge and experience provide a good role model for others. Lesson plans rarely contain sufficient detail in order to

meet the needs of pupils. There is a lack of well-focused learning objectives to enable them to know what they are expected to achieve during the lesson. The school uses national guidance as the basis of planning and has modified this to meet the needs of its pupils. Pupils' behaviour in music is good because teachers use good strategies to maintain control of necessarily noisy sessions.

104. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and experienced. Assessment procedures to monitor pupils' progress have not been established, but the co-ordinator is involved with all pupils through her participation in music for assemblies and school productions. In addition, the co-ordinator ensures that all pupils experience 'live' music by arranging for orchestras and solo musicians to perform in the school. All pupils benefit from opportunities to participate in an annual production, in which the standards of performance are rated highly by teachers, parents and governors. The school also provides a range of extra opportunities for junior pupils. For example, the County Music Service provides specialist tuition for string, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments and teachers provide clubs for recorder and guitar. Monitoring procedures are limited to an analysis of teachers' termly planning documents and limits the rate at which areas for development are identified and acted upon. Resources are good and include instruments from around the world to support pupils' studies of music from other countries.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

105. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 respectively are above and well above those expected nationally for their age. This indicates good improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of both teaching and learning is good across the school. A detailed scheme of work supports staff in their lesson preparation. Little time is wasted during changing and teachers always carry out a safety check to ensure pupils are appropriately dressed which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers are good role models and set a good example by wearing the appropriate dress.
106. Year 2 pupils make good progress during lessons to improve their understanding of team games. There are positive examples of pupils demonstrating, evaluating and improving their own performances and those of others. Pupils show an emerging understanding of rules and tactics of various games. Younger pupils at Year 1 study movement sequences, using travelling and balancing, making good progress throughout the lessons. These pupils are able to describe the effect that exercise has upon their bodies.
107. Standards in swimming are good. From Year 3 upwards pupils attend weekly swimming lessons during the summer term, and there is a clear progression in confidence and competence across the age range. During these lessons, pupils make considerable efforts and achieve significant progress. Less confident and lower attaining pupils are well supported, sometimes even by fellow pupils. This is indicative of the caring ethos of the school.
108. At Year 6, effective teaching and good pupil response during a table tennis lesson exemplified rapid progress in a short period of time. Teaching was focused to improve the levels of pupils' skills and they were able to explain their strategies and techniques well. Displays of photographs featuring dance through the ages stimulates pupils' learning well. Pupils are keen to take part in extra-curricular activities and competitive games. There is particular success in inter-schools unihoc, swimming and rounders.

Additionally, pupils benefit from football and other sports provided by outside agencies.

109. The subject is appropriately managed by a capable co-ordinator who has led training sessions and is available to support less confident staff as required. Teaching and learning are supported by an appropriate scheme of work and policy. Whilst there are some trophies and photographs of a range of activities on display, there could be more celebration of all the good work shared through the school. There is a good number and range of resources of good quality to support pupils' progress.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

110. Few lessons were observed and judgements on standards are also based on scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, standards are above what is required by the locally agreed syllabus. This indicates sound improvement since the previous inspection. There was insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement about teaching, although there are indications that it is at least satisfactory.
111. Year 2 pupils talk fluently about special clothes which have a religious significance. They look at the clothes worn by different faith groups, especially those worn during celebrations. Year 3 pupils study the symbolism of different signs in the Bible, and they can differentiate between signs from the Old and New Testaments. By Year 5 pupils are able to compare and contrast different faiths thoughtfully. In their study of creation, and while contrasting the Judaeo-Christian beliefs with those of the Hindu faith, pupils are encouraged to appraise the different religious ideas and beliefs from their own viewpoint, with good results. The work in Year 6 skilfully follows through the strong ethos of care and support of each other and promotes knowledge of differing beliefs.
112. Visits to the local church are supported by talks from the vicar about the church and discussions about clerical vestments. This provision enhances pupils' knowledge of Christianity well. Visitors invited to the school to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding in RE have mostly been of the Christian faith. Whilst this is very worthwhile, visits from people of different faiths could help to prepare pupils more fully for their lives in multicultural Britain. However, Year 3 and 4 pupils are preparing to be welcomed to the Birmingham Mosque and Gurdwara to broaden their knowledge and understanding of Islam and Sikhism.
113. RE is satisfactorily managed and the co-ordinator offers support to any teachers who lack confidence in this subject. The curriculum meets the requirements of the local agreed syllabus, and is extended through the themes studied in class and school assemblies. Although learning resources are satisfactory overall, there are insufficient books for pupils to study different faiths for themselves.