

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Shrewsbury

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123524

Headteacher: Dr H Humphreys

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Brackstone
21872

Dates of inspection: 16th – 19th June 2003

Inspection number: 248470

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: | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 - 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Dawsons Rough Shawbury Shrewsbury |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr C Smith |
| Date of previous inspection: | February 1998 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|------------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 21872 | Mrs L Brackstone | Registered inspector | The Foundation Stage English as an additional language Mathematics Geography History Music | How well are pupils taught? How high are standards? a) the school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? |
| 9079 | Mrs A Moss | 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 the parents? |
| 24342 | Mrs D Franklin | Team inspector | Special educational needs Educational inclusion English Art and design Religious education | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| 11777 | Ms C Poulter | Team inspector | Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's C of E Primary School is situated in the village of Shawbury, five miles north of Shrewsbury. The school is housed in a modern building close to the Royal Air Force base. About half of the school's pupils have parents working on the base, which means that the school population is extremely transient with up to 20 per cent of pupils per year group moving in and out of school. Between Years 2 and 6 the mobility rate is 70 per cent. Other pupils come from the village of Shawbury and the surrounding area. It is a fairly small primary school with 149 pupils on roll with slightly more boys than girls (80 compared to 69). Pupils start school in the term in which they are five and are taught in six mixed ability classes, three of which are mixed age groups. The vast majority of pupils are of white UK heritage and although two pupils use English as an additional language at home none are at an early stage of language acquisition. Four pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is well below average. There are 24 pupils on the special educational needs register, which is an average number for a school this size. The needs of the pupils consist of severe learning, profound and multiple, emotional and behavioural, speech and communication, hearing and physical problems. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs. Attainment on entry is above average by the majority of pupils who attend a nursery before they start school. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for just over two terms and his deputy headteacher had just returned from maternity leave.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Mary's is a good effective school. As a result of high mobility, it is not possible to measure progress throughout the school. However, in relation to their prior attainment pupils achieve well because the overall quality of teaching and learning is good and all pupils are fully included in all activities. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very high quality support they receive. The new headteacher is truly committed to the school and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and staff. Pupil expectation is high and this results in excellent attitudes to school and very good behaviour in and around the school. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Relationships within school are excellent. Pupils' attitudes are of the highest quality and behaviour is very good.
- The headteacher has an outstanding vision for the school and is very well supported by his deputy headteacher and a truly committed team of staff. Overall management is good.
- Provision for special educational needs is very good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The breadth and balance of the Foundation Stage curriculum is good.
- Pupils are supported and guided well in their personal and educational development.
- Provision for moral and social development is very good. Spiritual development is good.
- Effective links with parents are made and this has a positive contribution to the work of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, history and religious education which are all below the expected levels at the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Procedures for tracking pupils' academic progress and use of assessment to guide teachers' planning.
- A whole school approach to the checking and the evaluation of teaching and learning.
- The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its requirements.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998 and has made satisfactory progress since then. Progress has been particularly rapid in the past two terms. The school has started to implement nationally recommended guidelines into curriculum areas. Assessment procedures are now satisfactory but insufficient use is made of the information gathered. A more consistent approach to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning has been recently adopted. Subject management is developing steadily. The use of purposeful play in the curriculum for the youngest children is now securely in place. Throughout the school the quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection and this is now good. The provision for moral and social development is now very good. The new headteacher has leapt into his role with vigour and real enthusiasm. He has an excellent vision for the school and together with his dedicated staff shares a commitment to improve and has a very good capacity to succeed.

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 | A | B | A | A |
| mathematics | C | C | C | D |
| science | B | E | C | D |

| Key | |
|--------------------|---|
| well above average | A |
| above average | B |
| average | C |
| below average | D |
| well below average | E |

Mobility is very high and it is not appropriate to judge achievement from Reception to Year 6 over time. However, in relation to prior attainment achievement is good. Children start the Reception class with above average skills in all areas of learning. This is because the vast majority of children make good use of a place in a state funded nursery setting. During their time in Reception the children make good progress because of the good quality teaching and the stimulating environment of the Foundation Stage. Consequently, by the time that they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum they are exceeding the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress because of the good teaching and learning in these classes and achieve above average standards in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics. This is a good improvement since the standardised tests of 2002. Standards in music in Year 2 are above those expected for this age group. Standards in writing are average and this represents a slight decline since the standardised test results of 2002. Standards in science are average but this represents a good improvement since the teacher assessments of 2002, which were below average. The pupils achieve the expected levels of attainment in geography and physical education at the end of Year 2. However, standards in art and design, history, design and technology and information and communication technology are below expectations. Inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 6 pupils are attaining average standards in English. This may appear to be a decline since 2002 when the English standardised tests, recorded in the table above, were well above the national average and in comparison to similar schools. However, in fact, it represents very good progress in this year group because nearly one half of this cohort of 16 pupils has special educational needs. Standards in mathematics and science are average and this is similar to the results in 2002. In Years 3 to 6 the pupils make good progress in these subjects because the quality of teaching and learning is at least good and is frequently very good. More capable pupils make good progress and achieve the higher levels in the national tests. Standards in geography, music and physical education are as expected for this age group. However, standards in art and design, history, design and technology and information and communication technology are below the expected level. This is because curriculum coverage in these subjects had not been satisfactorily planned for in the past. Consequently, pupils have not adequately developed their skills. Standards in religious education in both Years 2 and 6 do not meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. This is because the requirements for religious education have not been taught progressively

throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment because they are supported very well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Excellent. Pupils show outstanding enthusiasm for the school and are totally interested and involved in all activities. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good. Behaviour in and around school is of very high quality. No anti-social behaviour was observed during the inspection. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good overall. Relationships are outstanding. Pupils show great respect to their teachers and classmates and use their initiative very well. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. Pupils do take holidays during term-time to spend time with their fathers when they are on leave from the Royal Air Force. Most pupils arrive at school on time. |

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 overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection half of the teaching observed was either very good or excellent. Consistent strengths throughout the school are the very high expectations of the teachers and their pupil management. Lessons move at a very good pace and very good use is made of the time available. Support staff are deployed very well and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. The school fully meets the needs of all pupils. Resources are used very well and this maintains pupils' interest, concentration and motivation. Lessons are planned thoroughly and a wide range of teaching methods used well. Day-to-day assessment is good overall but is particularly effective in developing pupils' understanding of their own learning in English and mathematics. Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy well. Homework is used well to consolidate the acquisition of skills. However, information and communication technology skills are less secure. A number of subjects have not, until recently, been consistently taught throughout the school and this is unsatisfactory because they have failed to sufficiently develop the pupils' knowledge and skills. Consequently, teaching is judged to be good overall.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory overall. The curriculum in the Reception class is good. Relationships with partner institutions are very good and the community contributes well to pupils' learning. There are very effective strategies for teaching numeracy and good methods for literacy. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. However, the coverage of some subjects is narrow and statutory requirements are not met in history. The requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are not met. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Very good. Individual education plans support the pupils very well and are used extremely effectively by teachers when they are planning their lessons. Pupils are fully involved in all activities and are very well supported by teaching assistants. Provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is very good. |
| Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development | Good overall. Provision for moral and social development is very good. Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong and are encouraged to work together as part of a very caring and respectful community. Provision for spiritual development is good and opportunities for reflection effectively contribute to their personal development. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory but because of weaknesses in the curriculum pupils have missed out on opportunities to develop their cultural awareness consistently. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Good overall. Behaviour is monitored very well and pupils are well supported in their educational and personal development. The monitoring of their personal progress is good. However, tracking procedures to check their academic performance lack structure and use of teacher assessments to inform future plans are unsatisfactory. The school promotes racial equality appropriately and has considered the implications of the new Disability Act. |

The school works closely in partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher has an excellent vision for the school and leads his staff by motivation and example. His management skills and those of key staff are good; the headteacher plans carefully and is aware of the need to involve all stakeholders in his strategic plan. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Unsatisfactory overall. Governors have not held the school to account for failing to implement the full National Curriculum and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. They have not ensured that the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been rectified at a fast enough pace. However, they are very supportive of the new headteacher and over the past two terms have started to become more involved in the life of the school. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Satisfactory. Procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning are in place but lack structure. The analysis of national test results is not yet being used effectively to monitor performance over time. |
| The strategic use of resources | Satisfactory. Funding is clearly allocated to the educational priorities identified in the school development plan. The headteacher is proactive in seeking grants and makes good use of any funds gained. The principles of best value are not fully understood by governors. Whilst competitive prices are sought for major spending decisions, the governors have not fully consulted stakeholders on major financial decisions and are not sufficiently |

| |
|----------------------------|
| challenging in their work. |
|----------------------------|

The number of teachers and support staff adequately meet the needs of the curriculum. Accommodation is satisfactory. Learning resources are satisfactory overall; they are good in English but unsatisfactory in religious education and history.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers have high expectations.• Behaviour is good.• Teaching is good.• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• More information on the progress of their children.• Better working relationships between home and school. |

The inspection team endorse all the positive views of the parents. Inspectors agree that the annual reports could provide wider evidence on how their children are doing. However, the inspection team cannot endorse the view that relationships between home and school need improving. At the meeting between the registered inspector and parents prior to the inspection some concerns were raised about the attitude of the headteacher towards them. Inspectors feel that the headteacher always has the true interests of the children at heart and any manner considered abrupt is not intentional.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils enter the school at various points in their primary education with a very wide spread of ability, ranging from more capable individuals to those who have special educational needs. Mobility is over 70 per cent from Years 2 to Year 6 and this is very high. Therefore, it is not appropriate to evaluate progress from Reception to Year 6. However, it is evident that, despite the varying lengths of stay at St Mary's, pupils achieve well.
2. Children start the Reception class just before they are five with above average skills in all areas of learning because most attend a very high quality nursery school. They continue to make good progress in their learning because the quality of teaching in the Reception class is good and provision for this age group is of high quality. As a result, despite many of the children spending a very short time in the Reception class, when they start Year 1 of the National Curriculum they have exceeded the recommended levels for this age group in all areas of learning.
3. Pupils in the current Year 2 class have attained good standards in English and this compares favourably to standards at the time of the last inspection. Achievement is good because the quality of teaching and learning is good. In the 2002 standardised tests the pupils in Year 2 attained above average results in writing but in comparison to similar schools results were average. In the 2002 standardised tests results in reading were below the national average and well below average when compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence clearly shows that reading skills in the current Year 2 class are good with an appropriate proportion of more capable pupils achieving the higher level. Current standards in writing are average. The school has recognised that pupils in this particular cohort of pupils have not been encouraged to write independently and thus the more capable are not working within the higher levels. Pupils in the current Year 6 class have above average standards in speaking and listening and average standards in reading and writing. This is a similar picture to the last inspection but represents a dip since the standardised tests of 2002 when results in English were well above the national average and in comparison to similar schools. These results reflected the tremendous input made by the co-ordinator and the teachers in Years 3 to 6 who successfully implemented strategies to raise standards in writing. The decline in the current Year 6 English standards is because almost half of the pupils in this cohort have special educational needs and the mobility rate for this class is particularly high. It is evident that all pupils, including the most capable and those with special educational needs, are making good progress in their learning. Despite a dip in progress during the spring term when their substantive teacher was on maternity leave, the more capable pupils are clearly attaining the higher than expected levels and those with special educational needs achieve well. This is because the quality of teaching and learning in English is good throughout the school and teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs very effectively.
4. Pupils in the current Year 2 class have attained good standards in mathematics and this compares favourably to the last inspection when they were considered average. They also compare favourably to the 2002 standardised tests when results were below the national average and well below those of similar schools. Achievement is good because the quality of the mathematics teaching in this year is very good. Pupils in the current Year 6 class attain average standards in mathematics and this is similar to those reported in the last inspection and those attained in the 2002 standardised tests. In comparison with similar schools standards were below average. Inspection evidence confirms that all pupils, including the more capable and the high number with special educational needs, are making good progress. Despite a dip in progress during the spring term and the high mobility rate, these pupils achieve well because the quality of the mathematics teaching in this year group is very good.
5. Current standards in science in Years 2 and 6 are average and have been maintained since the last inspection. There are no national tests in science at the end of Year 2 but teacher assessments were below average. The current standards in science at the end of Year 2 represent an improvement since last year and this is as a result of good quality teaching and learning. In the standardised tests of 2002 results at the end of Year 6 were in line with the national average but in comparison with

similar schools were below average. Standards have satisfactorily been maintained. This indicates good achievement by the current Year 6 pupils, almost half of whom have special educational needs.

6. At the end of Year 2 standards in music are above average. This is as a direct result of the excellent teaching and learning they receive from the new headteacher. Standards in music at the end of Year 6 are as expected for this age group. However, the standards reflect the extensive and consistent progress in the development of their musical skills over the past few months. Standards in geography and physical education at the end of both Years 2 and 6 are as expected for these age groups. Standards in art and design, history, design and technology and information and communication technology are below national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in religious education in both Years 2 and 6 do not meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The subjects that fail to meet the expected levels of attainment are as a consequence of knowledge and skills not being progressively taught through the school. There are gaps in coverage and adequate schemes of work have not been put in place to ensure the consistent development of knowledge and skills. It was been identified as a weakness in all subjects, except English, mathematics and science, by the new headteacher when he took up his appointment at the start of the academic year. He has successfully improved standards in geography and music but is working hard to improve coverage and attainment in these other subjects.
7. The good achievements made in literacy and numeracy are not being used sufficiently well to develop pupils' skills in other areas of the curriculum. For example, their literacy skills are not being used to promote learning in history and geography. Minimal use is made of numeracy to support investigative work in geography and science. The use of information and communication technology skills to develop knowledge and skills across the curriculum is a weakness. However, despite these weaknesses the school adds value to its pupils and good progress is made towards the targets set.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the good quality of the teachers' planning for them which enables focused support in lessons. They make very good progress in relation to the targets on their individual education plans. These targets are measurable and reviewed regularly so that new targets can be set. Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well and plan work that matches their previous attainment. Although two pupils use English as an additional language, none are at an early stage of language acquisition. Their achievement matches that of the other pupils in school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. As at the last inspection pupils, including those in the Reception class, continue to have excellent attitudes to school and learning. The vast majority of parents report that pupils enjoy coming to school and this ensures that most arrive on time each morning. When they arrive, they are happy and looking forward to their day. Pupils are polite, cheerful and eager to learn. They have a very positive approach to school and try very hard to meet their teachers' expectations. For example, this was evident in a Reception class lesson when pupils worked hard at discussing their feelings. All children listened well and took part eagerly. Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning were seen in the vast majority of lessons. The safe, welcoming and calm atmosphere provides an environment that encourages pupils to do their best and pupils respond very well. They develop excellent habits of working and settle quickly to tasks. Sustained levels of concentration were observed in most lessons. For example, this was observed in a Year 3/4 numeracy lesson when pupils worked very hard at their activities and persevered in completing their tasks.
10. Behaviour in and around school is very good. When pupils are moving within school and in lessons they do so with a minimum of fuss and without wasting time. Examples of very good behaviour were also observed during lunchtimes in the hall and during a whole school assembly when all pupils listened very politely to a visitor. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour, bullying or racism. The school's very caring and supportive climate for learning encourages pupils to get on very well together and all pupils are fully included in the life of the school.
11. There are excellent relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults. Excellent levels of co-operation and collaboration were noted in most lessons; for example, in a Year 3 science lesson when pupils were looking at food chains where they worked very well together in groups and in pairs.

In a Year 1/2 literacy lesson, pupils were seen to have lots of discussion with their partners. More capable and less able pupils work very well together, readily sharing their knowledge and skills and this helps them learn better. They understand and follow school rules well and treat each other and adults with courtesy and respect. For example, this was observed in a Year 5/6 numeracy lesson when pupils were totally respectful and mutually supportive of each other. Teachers use personal, social and health education lessons well to help pupils recognise their worth as individuals and to see themselves as others see them. Through these lessons, pupils develop a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and learn to respect each other's feelings, values and beliefs.

12. Pupils' personal development is very good. They readily accept responsibility for performing tasks around the school; for example, in setting up the hall for assemblies, helping pupils new to the school to settle in and by looking after the younger children during wet playtimes. They help the school secretary with small tasks and they act as library monitors. However, there is no school council as yet, nor are there house captains.
13. Although attendance levels are satisfactory, being broadly in line with the national average, figures have dropped since the previous report. This is due to a very small minority of parents who do not sufficiently support the school in its efforts to improve attendance rates and is also due to more parents taking their children out of school in term time for extended holidays. The school is aware of the importance of high levels of attendance and is informing parents that these absences can have a detrimental effect on pupils' attainment, progress and personal development. There have been no exclusions during the past school year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was very good or excellent in half of the lessons observed; 40 lessons or part-sessions were observed. Six of these lessons were of excellent quality, 14 were very good, 14 were good and six were satisfactory. However, teaching in art and design, design and technology, history, information and communication technology and religious education have not, until recently, been consistently taught throughout the school. This is unsatisfactory because they have failed to sufficiently develop the pupils' knowledge and skills. Consequently, teaching is judged to be good overall.
15. Teacher expectations are very high and pupils are required to work at a brisk pace so that they gain new knowledge and skills. This was evident in a Year 3 literacy session where the pupils really showed very good concentration skills when they were learning about how to make sentences interesting by inserting different words into their text. In both the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6, the pupils are consistently managed very well. High standards are insisted upon at all times and this has a very positive impact on their learning. As a result, they always show interest in their work, sustain concentration and apply themselves to all areas of the curriculum. For instance, in a good physical development session in the Reception class the children knew that they must walk into the hall very sensibly.
16. In all classes time is used very well to develop pupils' learning. Lessons move at a very good pace and no time is wasted moving from whole-class sessions to group work. Learning resources are used to very best effect. For example, the outdoor area for the Foundation Stage children is not only used to develop physical skills but also promotes intellect and creativity. During the inspection the children were observed creating maps from different construction materials and drawing simple routes with chalk.
17. Throughout the school, effective use is made of the teachers' planning. Learning objectives are clearly identified and shared with the pupils. These objectives are revisited at the end of the sessions, which ensures that the pupils gain an understanding of what they are actually learning. For example, in an excellent Year 5/6 mathematics lesson the teacher clearly shared her planned learning intention with the pupils and explained what they would have learnt by the end of the lesson. This ensured that the pupils knew exactly what they were doing and they were able themselves to evaluate how well they had done.

18. A wide variety of teaching methods are used to best effect. Whole-class sessions provide effective situations for the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Good use of group work is made to increase the understanding of specific pupils and teachers spend individual time with pupils, helping them to develop their ideas. For example, in a very good mathematics session in the Year 3/4 class the pupils settled down very well in their groups and worked industriously. A very good art and design session was observed in the Year 5/6 class. During this session the headteacher arrived to share his expertise and this helped the pupils to confidently apply their own creative skills to their work. Teaching assistants provide very thorough support in lessons and ensure that pupils fully understand the concepts by interacting with the pupils. In fact, one of the very good features of this school is the way in which support staff are used so effectively to promote the pupils' learning.
19. The quality of teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects taught is good overall, but there are some particular strengths. The Reception class teacher has a secure understanding of the needs of this age group, which is clearly evident in the way that they present the learning activities. Activities are well balanced between formal input from adults and independent learning opportunities. The quality of the music teaching is excellent; this is because the expertise of the headteacher is used throughout the school to teach the subject, ensuring that pupils consistently acquire new musical knowledge and skills as they move through the school. The expertise of this individual has a very positive impact on standards. Teachers' knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy is of a very high standard and is used well very well to promote learning. All adults in school clearly have an enthusiasm for mathematical development and this has a very positive effect on the pupils' attainment. The quality of teaching in literacy is good and the National Literacy Strategy enables them to teach skills progressively through the school. However, teachers are less confident about information and communication technology and art and design and do not develop pupils' knowledge and skills sufficiently well. It is evident from work over time that teachers are not consistently planning to develop historical understanding and knowledge and skills in design and technology. This has a negative impact on the pupils' learning.
20. Overall procedures for assessing the progress made by pupils on a day-to-day basis are good and examples of very good practice were observed. All staff regularly praise the pupils for their work and ensure that they know what can be done to improve. Marking in mathematics is of a particularly high standard and comments ensure that the pupils know what to do to improve. Home/reading tasks are used well to promote learning in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 to 6.
21. Teachers ensure that the needs of pupils who find learning and conforming difficult are very well met during lessons. Individual education plans, written by the teachers in consultation with the special educational needs co-ordinator, have clear, concise targets, which are reviewed regularly. These individual education plans are working documents and are used very well by all teachers in planning. Teaching assistants are very well deployed to ensure that these pupils can access the curriculum and to help them with their tasks. All are well briefed and work extremely closely with the teachers to provide suitable activities to meet the individual needs of these pupils.

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

22. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are satisfactory overall. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities, which supports the curriculum. The youngest children are provided with an active curriculum well matched to their needs and the requirements of the Foundation Stage. This provision has improved since the last inspection when there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn through purposeful play.
23. The breadth and balance of the curriculum for Years 1 to 6 are currently unsatisfactory. Over the recent years the school has focused mainly on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to the detriment of other curriculum subjects, including science investigational work. The new headteacher has started to address this issue by raising the profile of art and design and music, particularly music, which he is teaching. Provision for history does not meet statutory requirements. The requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are not met and the school does not ensure that all aspects are taught in sufficient depth, particularly some of the world religions. The school is starting to make use of the nationally recommended guidelines for teaching the non-core subjects for

medium-term planning and this is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. There are also plans to introduce at least one modern foreign language into the curriculum for older pupils next academic year. Planning for literacy and numeracy is comprehensive and used well by teachers for short-term planning. The strategies for teaching literacy skills are good and are very good for teaching numeracy skills.

24. All pupils have equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum. The school has a satisfactory racial equality policy, which works alongside the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policy. There is no separate equal opportunities policy in place.
25. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school is committed to fully including all pupils and teaching assistants provide very good support. This help mainly happens in the classroom so that the pupils can participate fully in the lesson. At times some pupils are withdrawn at an appropriate time for specific programmes. This provision is much better than reported in the last inspection.
26. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The school has adopted a commercial scheme of work that is followed by all teachers but there is no written policy for this area of learning. '*Circle-times*', which are special sessions when pupils sit in a circle and discuss moral and social issues, are developing well, but are not yet used consistently by all teachers. Drugs, sex and relationships education are co-ordinated either within the programme for personal, social and health education or by members of the local community such as the school nurse and local police.
27. Some parents expressed concerns about the number of extra-curricular activities available for their children, but the inspection team found them to be good and perfectly adequate for a school of this size. Activities include a small range of clubs for younger pupils as well as art, gardening and sports clubs available for older pupils. The school also provides a range of visits to places of interest and welcomes visitors such as artists and authors to talk about their work. However a recent trip to Lichfield Cathedral was cancelled due to lack of parental support.
28. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. The school has close links with the Royal Air Force station and members of their community support the school well to enhance the curriculum. For example a member of the Royal Air Force spoke to the pupils about his experiences climbing Mount Everest and others have talked about living in other countries when posted abroad. Parents run the art and gardening clubs and members of the local community talk to pupils about their experiences in the past, particularly during the Second World War. The village also involved pupils in a '*scarecrow trail*' around the village. Each class contributed to this community event by providing a scarecrow.
29. Links with partner institutions are very good. The local group of primary schools is very supportive of each other and meets regularly for curriculum meetings and headteachers' meetings. There are also very good links with the local secondary school and pre-school settings.
30. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. Provision for spiritual development is good. Acts of collective worship are well planned and offer pupils lots of opportunities to reflect on their own actions and of others. For example the headteacher recently based his assemblies on '*Proverbs*' in the Bible. The calm atmosphere within the school contributes effectively to provision for spiritual development. All staff value pupils as individuals, giving them space for their thoughts, ideas and concerns. Achievement assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to celebrate success. However opportunities for exploring people's faiths and beliefs are limited.
31. Arrangements for promoting pupils' moral and social skills are very good. The headteacher and his deputy use assembly times very well to promote appropriate behaviour in and around the school and teachers regularly agree and review class rules with their pupils. As a result pupils have a clear idea of what is expected of them. Opportunities are provided for pupils to be rewarded for good behaviour and for good work in '*achievement assemblies*'. Very good opportunities to discuss moral issues are provided during personal, social and health education lessons especially during '*circle-times*'. Older pupils have responsibilities around the school such as ringing the bell, helping the school

administrator, delivering fruit daily to classrooms and preparing the hall for assembly. The school ensures that lunchtimes are a social occasion. There are also very good opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative. For example, a group of pupils recently asked if its members could tidy and improve the quiet area outside. However, the school does not have a school council, where pupils can air their concerns and contribute to some of the decisions made in the school.

32. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Recently pupils were involved in an extravaganza based on The Second World War and this provided opportunities for pupils to learn about British heritage. However there are limited opportunities to learn about their own local heritage because history is not consistently taught across the school. The headteacher is using every opportunity for pupils to appreciate cultural diversity through the range of different cultures pupils have experienced while travelling with their families in the Royal Air Force. Opportunities for cultural development are provided through music and art, although there are weaknesses in providing opportunities for multicultural development. The school has a visit planned to an art gallery and a museum in the near future and the '*Arts Week*', planned to take place the week after the inspection will provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils' cultural development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The care provided by the school for its pupils has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. Parents and pupils appreciate this very good provision. All pupils are valued and the school's very good ethos ensures that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for monitoring and eliminating anti-social behaviour. An appropriate race equality policy is securely in place. The senior management team ensures that there is a shared understanding by all members of staff of the necessity to promote consistently the guidance given in the school's behaviour policy. Teachers and their assistants make a significant contribution to providing a very caring atmosphere and a safe and calm environment for all pupils, both in and out of lessons. Good behaviour is encouraged in ways that make sense to the children. Playtimes and lunchtimes are very well supervised. The very occasional outbreaks of boisterous behaviour by a very few pupils, who act in immature and attention-seeking ways, are handled very well.
34. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Although no formal profiles for the personal development of each pupil are kept, pupils' personal development is monitored effectively. Staff know pupils well and respond sympathetically to them individually, taking good account of any personal circumstances that may affect their learning and general well-being. Staff give good praise and encouragement during lessons and achievements, large and small, are all celebrated. However, as yet there is no school council and there are no house captains.
35. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Attendance rates have dropped since the previous inspection and are now similar to the national average. The school follows appropriate procedures for registering pupils each day but does not immediately follow up any unexplained absences. Registers are not returned to one central place at the end of each registration session and this is unsatisfactory. The school works closely with the education welfare officer and staff ensure that parents fill in the appropriate application forms for holidays in term time. Such holidays are being actively discouraged as they often adversely affect pupils' learning. However, the school has great sensitivity to those families who are part of the Royal Air Force and who occasionally need special dispensation.
36. There are very good procedures in place for child protection and the roles of staff are made very clear. The headteacher is named as the designated person in charge. The academic progress and personal development of children currently at the school who are being cared for by the local authority are being well monitored. Staff are receiving appropriate training to enable them to keep up to date with aspects of first aid. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy, the Disability Act has been considered and regular risk assessments are carried out. The school has an appropriate policy for ensuring pupil safety when using the Internet.
37. The school uses its assessment procedures very well to identify pupils who find learning difficult, soon after entry into school. There is a comprehensive induction procedure so that all pupils arriving

from another school can be assessed within the first week of arrival and any special educational needs are identified so that the relevant support can be put into place as soon as possible. The teachers review targets on pupils' individual education plans at least three times each year. This includes behaviour plans for those pupils who find it difficult to conform to the school rules. The school has very good links with outside agencies, which provide advice for teachers and parents on the best way to support the pupils. Provision for pupils with statements of special needs is very good and the school ensures that all agencies outlined in the statements are fully involved.

38. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic work are satisfactory and have improved since the last inspection when they were considered weak. After analysing pupils' results in the annual national standardised tests and optional test papers, targets are set for the school. Individual targets are set for pupils in English, mathematics and science and these are shared with both parents and pupils. The results of national tests have been compared year on year and graphs show where progress has been made. Individual pupils have been highlighted for extra support where necessary. At the time of the last inspection there were no systems for tracking pupils' coverage of the curriculum or to judge pupils' attainment. There are now assessment systems about to be put in place in all subjects as well as English, mathematics and science. However, it is too soon to judge whether these systems are effective because they have not been implemented for long enough. Much of the work in developing checking procedures has taken place during the last two terms. A start has been made on collecting examples of moderated work in subjects other than English, mathematics and science but it is too early to see the impact of this within the progress that pupils are making.
39. The systems for marking work are better developed. There is a clear and simple whole-school system that works well. However, teachers do not always make sufficient comments on how the presentation of work in pupils' books could be improved. Consequently, there are occasions when some teachers accept work that is not good enough. Teachers plan their lessons well and write clear learning objectives on the board as a reminder to the pupils. Teachers also refer effectively to success criteria in their lessons to ensure small steps in learning are achieved. This good practice is a way of checking that pupils' progress is measured against the content of the National Curriculum.
40. The school checks pupils' attainment as soon as possible after they enter the school. Records about the progress of pupils with special educational needs are detailed and lead to individual plans being maintained and discussed with parents. These include targets for learning and others related to personal development, including behaviour, where necessary.
41. Teachers know pupils very well, they are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and they are very good at promoting good behaviour. The school has a very positive attitude towards all pupils being fully included in the life of the school. There have been no incidents where equal opportunities have caused concern during the week of the inspection. However, the school has yet to put in place a formal equal opportunities policy to guide its future work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. Overall, the school now fosters good views among parents, which is a good improvement since the last inspection. They warmly praise what the school has achieved since the arrival of the new headteacher. They value its caring attitudes and are satisfied that their children make good progress. They believe teachers know their children well and that such secure personal relationships help pupils to want to succeed. The vast majority of parents responding to the questionnaire stated their children like school and those seen during the inspection said their children are eager to come. They say the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best and is helping them become mature and responsible. They say that the teaching is good.
43. The vast majority of parents feel that the parents have high expectations and are happy with the quality of teaching. They also believe that the teaching is of good quality. At the meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection parents said that they feel very comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. They like the open door policy whereby parents can approach members of staff at any appropriate time if they would like to discuss concerns about their children. They speak highly of the good, informal links with the staff. They see the links as a two-way process ensuring pupils' interests are to the fore. The inspection team agrees with all these

positive views. A small minority did not feel that the school works closely with parents. The inspection team feels that the headteacher's direct approach may be taken badly by some parents, but he provides excellent leadership and always has the best interests of the children at heart. He has brought valuable and wider experience to benefit this school. He has a secure understanding of what needs to be done and has had to make some difficult but necessary changes within the school. He certainly does not mean to offend.

44. The quality of information provided to parents is good. They are given weekly newsletters, information on topics and curriculum areas to be studied and a new '*welcome pack*' has been prepared. A significant minority of parents did not feel well informed about the progress of their children and this was an area for development mentioned in the previous report. The inspection team found that, although reports were satisfactory overall, they did not consistently give particulars of pupils' progress in each subject, just stating what the pupils can now do. However, they do include targets for future progress. There are regular parent/teacher consultation meetings and the school has held open sessions for parents to give them more information on the curriculum. They also have evenings for parents when individual pupil targets are set and reviewed. The governors' annual report to parents and the new prospectus meet statutory requirements.
45. Parents are contributing well to their children's learning at home, through homework and at school. There is an appropriate home-school agreement. Several parents come into the classrooms to help with, for example, reading. There is a very dedicated parent/teacher association that has organised successful social and fund-raising events. They have raised substantial amounts of money that have been used to buy, for example, musical instruments and science equipment. The parent governors make a valued contribution to school life.
46. Induction procedures for children entering the Reception class are good. Parents are pleased at how their children settle in and enjoy school. They also like the care taken when pupils enter school at times other than at the beginning of the school year and when the oldest pupils transfer to secondary school.
47. The involvement of parents of children with special educational needs is very good. Most attend the regular consultation evenings where targets are set to support pupils with their individual difficulties. Parents and often pupils sign the individual education plans during the discussions.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The leadership of the new headteacher is excellent. His vision is securely rooted in his wish to develop all aspects of the curriculum to ensure that all pupils' skills are fully developed. In just over two terms he has inspired, motivated and influenced all staff. He has achieved this through leading by example and constantly evaluating his work in all aspects of school life. Consequently, he has built a high performing team who are constantly checking and evaluating their own practice. The headteacher does not make the high mobility of his clientele an excuse but builds upon the pupils' experiences to add new dimensions to the school. For example, at the start of the next academic year he will be offering the teaching of modern foreign languages which will include the German language, which several of the pupils have experience of when posted abroad. On appointment, the headteacher has been faced with a large number of issues relating to curriculum coverage and subject leadership but is managing the necessary changes at a good pace. The headteacher is strategically developing well the strengths of his staff and, although subject management is in the very early stages of development in a number of subject areas, he has initiated delegation very well. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher who also leads by very good example. The school meets most of its aims very well by creating a secure and caring environment where pupils are encouraged to be enquiring and a caring attitude to the environment is very well fostered. The school aims to provide a '*broadly based curriculum*' and currently this is not met. The headteacher is aware of this weakness and has put in strategic plans to remedy this situation. To date, he has successfully reintroduced a systematic approach to the teaching of music. However, he is fully aware of the need to fully implement the National Curriculum and meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.

49. Leadership and management of special educational needs are good. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator provides good support for colleagues. She has monitored provision effectively and undertaken observations of some pupils to ensure that their needs are met. All paperwork is well organised and easily accessible so that individual pupils' progress can be tracked and reviews completed appropriately. Teaching assistants are fully committed to their roles and are well trained to meet the specific needs of pupils with special educational needs. They feel part of the whole school team and know their contributions are valued. Resources are satisfactory and easily accessible to all staff.
50. Governors are delighted with their appointment of the new headteacher and they feel very well informed by him through his detailed reports, meetings and informal discussions. There is a very organised committee structure and all governors bring a wealth of expertise to their specific responsibilities. They have a good understanding of the strengths of the school, which they have rightly identified as the commitment of the staff and the provision of a happy environment. Over the past two terms they have started to make regular visits to the school and have begun to develop links with subject co-ordinators. Governors are fully involved in the preparation of the school development plan and have been discussing the many new policies that are being developed. They are aware of the need to establish a number of key areas to develop all the pupils' skills but have not been fully aware of the weaknesses in the curriculum in the past. Governors have a good knowledge of how the pupils are performing against national and similar school benchmarks and are fully aware of the impact of the high rates of mobility due to Royal Air Force postings and training needs. However, over the period of time since the last inspection they have failed to ensure the full implementation of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. They have not held the school to account and have failed to check on progress since the last inspection.
51. Over time, there has been some checking and evaluating of the quality of teaching and learning by the previous headteacher and representative from the local education authority. During the past two terms the new headteacher has been involved in teacher evaluations, particularly in relation to performance management requirements. He has a very good understanding of the strengths of his committed team. However, as yet there is no whole school agreed criteria for judging the quality of teaching, which means that strengths and weaknesses are not shared throughout the school.
52. All those involved in the life of the school are fully committed to raising standards and ensuring that all pupils are included into the life of the school. An effective school development plan systematically focuses on improvements and provides a detailed strategic management plan for the future. All staff are provided appropriate opportunities to widen their expertise and performance management procedures are firmly in place. Induction procedures for teachers and staff new to the school are satisfactory and the school provides a suitable venue for the training of new teachers. There is a real shared commitment to improvement and a very good capacity to succeed.
53. Financial planning is satisfactory and high quality management ensures that the school provides good value for money. All aspects of funding are carefully monitored throughout the financial year. Good use is made of specific grants from local industries and additional funds from the government. High quality involvement from a very active parent/teacher association makes a significant difference to the school budget. At the end of the last financial year a large surplus was generated because there was no deputy headteacher during the summer term of 2002. This excess has already been eroded to maintain current staffing levels. The principles of best value are not fully understood by governors. Whilst competitive prices are sought for major spending decisions, the governors have not fully consulted stakeholders on major financial decisions and are not sufficiently challenging in their work.
54. Day-to-day financial management and administration are very good and fully support the smooth running of the school. Routine administrative procedures operate efficiently and unobtrusively. The school administrator gives very good support to pupils and staff and provides an outstanding welcome to any visitor to the school. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology systems to maintain financial control and accountability. However, not all staff make sufficient use of new technology to support their work. For example, the office has only very recently been linked up electronically to the local education authority and not all procedures are undertaken using this new technology. Teachers frequently write out their planning by hand, assessment records are

maintained manually and insufficient use is made of new technology skills to link subjects across the curriculum.

55. There is an adequate number of staff to meet the needs of the pupils. The reception teacher is specifically trained for this age group and there is a good balance of new and experienced staff throughout the school. The school has extensive grounds outside, which includes a small space for the reception children. There is a spacious indoor hall that enables pupils to take part in gymnastic lessons or eat together as a whole school during the lunch-break. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in English but unsatisfactory in religious education and history.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In order to further improve standards of attainment, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

i. Raise standards in art and design, design and technology, history, information and communication technology and religious education at the end of both key stages by:

- ensuring that statutory requirements are met in all subjects; and
- broadening the range and breadth of the curriculum to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus in religious education are fully taught.

(Paragraphs 6, 89, 96, 104, 108 and 124)

ii. Implement procedures for tracking individual progress and ensure that assessment procedures are consistently used to inform teachers' planning.

(Paragraph 38)

iii. Devise a systematic approach to the monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning through the school by:

- agreeing a criteria for checking the quality of teaching; and
- further developing subject co-ordinators with responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.

(Paragraphs 48, 51, 95, 99 and 107)

iv. Ensure that the governing body fully understands its role as a critical friend of the school and holds the school to account for the standards and quality of education it achieves by:

- finding out for itself how things are going; and
- completely fulfilling its statutory requirements.

(Paragraph 50)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Ensuring that better use is made of information and communication technology skills to support pupils in their learning and help teachers in their work.

(Paragraphs 54, 76, 82, 94, 97, 102, 106, 117 and 128)

- Ensure that the annual pupil reports provide detailed information about progress in all subjects.

(Paragraph 44)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

40

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

25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 6 | 14 | 14 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 15 | 35 | 35 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 149 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 4 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 2 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 24 |

English as an additional language

No of pupils

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 2 |
|---|---|

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

| | |
|--|----|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 24 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 17 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.3 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.1 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2002 | 14 | 17 | 31 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 9 | 11 | 14 |
| | Girls | 15 | 15 | 16 |
| | Total | 24 | 26 | 30 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 77 (79) | 84 (95) | 97 (100) |
| | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 8 | 13 | 11 |
| | Girls | 15 | 16 | 16 |
| | Total | 23 | 29 | 27 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 74 (89) | 94 (100) | 87 (100) |
| | 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 | 13 | 8 | 21 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 10 | 10 | 12 |
| | Girls | 8 | 7 | 8 |
| | Total | 18 | 17 | 20 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 86 (81) | 82 (65) | 95 (85) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71) | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 9 | 10 | 12 |
| | Girls | 8 | 7 | 8 |
| | Total | 17 | 17 | 20 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 82 (62) | 82 (62) | 95 (62) |
| | National | 73 (72) | 74 (74) | 82 (82) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

| No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 117 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | 0 | 0 |

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|--------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 7 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 21.5:1 |
| Average class size | 25 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 82 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Financial year | 2002/2003 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 363,088 |
| Total expenditure | 321,610 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,345 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 15,850 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 41,478 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 5 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 5 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 0 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 149 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 82 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 45 | 44 | 9 | 1 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 39 | 48 | 10 | 0 | 4 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 28 | 61 | 4 | 0 | 6 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 27 | 54 | 13 | 1 | 5 |
| The teaching is good. | 48 | 41 | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 24 | 48 | 23 | 5 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 48 | 35 | 11 | 4 | 1 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 50 | 41 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 21 | 54 | 12 | 7 | 4 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 26 | 54 | 10 | 2 | 6 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 27 | 59 | 4 | 2 | 9 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 30 | 50 | 13 | 0 | 5 |

Other issues raised by parents

At the meeting held with the Registered Inspector prior to the inspection, parents raised concerns about the progress of pupils in the oldest class. This group of pupils have experienced a number of teachers during their time at St Mary's. Despite this, the inspection team were able to confirm that all pupils, including the high number of special educational needs in this cohort, and both boys and girls, have made good progress. This is particularly notable since their substantive teacher returned at the start of the new term. A small number of parents were also unhappy about the way the new headteacher dealt with their concerns. The inspection team feel that the headteacher is an extremely talented individual. He has the best interests of his pupils at heart and has brought with him much needed expertise to the school where many changes have been necessary. He certainly has no intention of offending parents and is in fact very keen to work in partnership with them.

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

57. Children are admitted into the Reception class at the start of the term in which they will be five. The reception children follow the Foundation Stage curriculum¹, a step in education prior to starting Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Most have attended a local nursery and start school with above average skills in all areas of development. At the time of the inspection there were 26 children in the Reception class.
58. During their first term in the Reception class almost all children work confidently within the third or final stage or '*stepping stone*' of the Foundation Stage curriculum. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum all children have made satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment and most are exceeding the final stage or '*stepping stone*' within all areas of learning. Children with special educational needs also make good progress because they are fully involved in all activities and are well supported.
59. All children make progress because of the good teaching and learning. This has been maintained well since the last inspection. Children quickly settle into the routines of the class because very good procedures ensure that good links are firmly established with the nursery and home, ensuring that they are well prepared to start school. The information collated from assessments made on entry into school is used effectively to provide appropriate support. Children with special educational needs are identified before entry into school and effective learning programmes are put in place immediately. The teaching assistant works very closely with the teachers and they are an effective team. Work is planned with a clear focus on children's individual learning needs and a wide range of stimulating activities in all areas of learning is provided. Adults give clear instructions and encourage children to listen carefully. Good use of praise motivates the children, encourages engagement in learning and promotes self-esteem. Both the indoor and outdoor areas provide a stimulating learning environment where there is a good range of learning resources available, which have a positive impact on the children's learning. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when opportunities for outdoor play were missed. The provision for children before they start Year 1 of the National Curriculum is well co-ordinated by the Reception class teacher.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. All children, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and all exceed the final progressive stage or '*stepping stone*' in the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage by Year 1. This is because the quality of the provision for personal, social and emotional development is good. Teachers and other staff successfully use all opportunities to further children's personal, social and emotional development. Children know that they must put on painting aprons before they start creative work and attend to their own personal hygiene after visiting the toilet. They are extremely well behaved and polite and have an excellent awareness of simple class rules. This has been very well maintained since the last inspection. The children take turns with equipment and happily share resources. For example, they confidently took turns playing with the water equipment and knew that they had to share the equipment. They are developing an ability to work together; children play happily together or beside each other in the '*Garden Centre*' or home corner outside. They know that they must take turns and this was clearly evident during a mathematics lesson when the children knew that they had to listen while one person talked about the two different sized boxes that were passed around. It was clear that the children had developed good listening skills and had made progress in their ability to be interested in their peers. They respond very well to the wide range of stimulating activities. The children show real interest in all activities and always sit quietly when

¹ This consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy development; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or '*stepping stones*', from which both progress and standards can be measured.

adults are talking. Excellent attitudes towards learning develop as a response to the skilful management of the teachers and learning support staff.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Although the intake is above average overall, within the group are a wide range of abilities in communication, language and literacy. By the time they enter Year 1 of the National Curriculum most children are exceeding the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. Most children are able to write their names and are using their knowledge of letter sounds to write simple words. The more capable children are beginning to form simple sentences using punctuation. The less capable children are beginning to form recognisable letters to communicate meaning and tell an adult what they have written. In the role-play area children confidently take on the roles of assistant at the checkout and customers and talk to each other sensibly, clearly, in complete sentences. In the writing area children make cards and books and are well able to explain what they are doing. Reading skills are good and children are able to read keywords and repeated phrases. They show they enjoy reading and handle books with care. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teacher appropriately provides children with good opportunities to reinforce and develop skills in communication, reading and writing. She has high expectations of behaviour and attainment of the children and classroom organisation is good.

Mathematical development

62. By the time the children are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, the vast majority of the current reception group will have exceeded the final level or '*stepping stone*' for their age group. All children make satisfactory progress; those with special educational needs are supported well to ensure that they are fully involved in all activities. By the end of the Foundation Stage almost all children count to 100 and put numbers up to 20 in sequential order. The more-capable children work on simple addition and are able to take two away from 12 and count on four from eight. Children identify two-dimensional shapes such as circle, square and triangle accurately and use them to create pictures. Average children match different types of coins with one another and sequence simple pictures accurately. However, the less capable children are still developing accurate number formation. The children are confidently developing their mathematical vocabulary and understand the terms '*more than*' and '*less than*'. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good. This was evident in a mathematics lesson observed where the teacher planned a wide range of purposeful activities that were comparisons of capacity. Activities for the different capability groups were very clearly planned and this ensured that all children were fully included in the session. High quality use was made of the outdoor area and good resources. A teaching assistant provided very effective support by focusing on a small group during the introduction to the session.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. Children start school with varying levels of awareness of the world around them. However, by the time that the current reception children are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, the expected levels in this area of learning have been exceeded. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and this has an important impact on the progress made. Children, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in the activities planned to develop this particular area of learning. They show an interest in the world in which they live and their learning is extended when they create simple maps. This was evident when they worked on a map showing the route taken by a bear. The class carefully followed a simple pictorial map, created by their teacher. They then made their own using chalk, plastic tracks and small wooden buildings. The children confidently explore their senses and enjoy experimenting with a wide range of differing materials. The children know that some animals live in the sea and others on land. They talk confidently about everyday occurrences and use words such as '*yesterday*' and '*tomorrow*'. They develop an appropriate understanding of changes over time. For example, they have discussed the differences between lightness and darkness and know that seeds grow into plants. When they first start school they talk about their own families and friends with growing confidence and this is developed into discussions about different traditions, such as Christmas and Easter. The children operate simple equipment, and their skills are stimulated through control techniques when they use computers to play a wide variety

of games. Control skills are developing well and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, children are able to build using a wide range of construction equipment. They select simple tools and most understand that simple levers and sliding materials are used to enable movement. For example, when they made flowers they were able to identify which part of it was able to 'slide'.

Physical development

64. On entry to school most children have standards above those expected for their age group. During the inspection the majority of children in the Reception class were found to have exceeded the Early Learning Goals by the start of Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Teaching and learning are good. Most children move safely and with confidence when working in the school hall. For example, children were observed developing good control of their bodies as they warmed up and were able to roll and catch a ball. They show good awareness of the space around them. This is a direct result of the teachers' enthusiasm and ability to motivate the children in physical education lessons.
65. The children's development of their fine control skills, when using scissors, paint, brushes and pencils, is progressing very well. They are eager to explore materials such as malleable materials, by squeezing, rolling and cutting out shapes. Most children in the Reception class are achieving above average standards of skill in their artwork. Most use small-headed paintbrushes with accuracy and create small intricate pictures of their own. However, much of the work is too adult directed and this limits the opportunities available for them to be independently creative.
66. Children in the Reception class have daily opportunities, weather permitting, to use large wheeled toys and climbing apparatus in the secure outside play area adjacent to the classroom. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection when there were no large toys available. Children also have access to computers, which they enjoy as part of their basic skills developments. Work on the computer effectively helps them develop hand-eye co-ordination as well as fine motor control skills.

Creative development

67. All children make satisfactory progress in their learning and, by the time they enter Year 1, most exceed the required Early Learning Goals. They are able to use pencils, paints and felt-tip pens appropriately. They use finger-prints to write their name and also make attractive patterns using paint and cotton reels. They mix colours to paint attractive portraits of themselves and paper faces using paper plates decorated with tissue paper. They mould, roll and squeeze malleable materials into shapes and talk about the shapes they have made. Other children use the small construction kits imaginatively to build unusual moving vehicles. They play co-operatively and imaginatively as a group. For example, three children were able to take on various roles within 'The Garden Centre' and use their imagination well. In assembly they join in singing familiar hymns and make a good attempt at singing 'a round' with the rest of the school. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teacher provides appropriate opportunities for children to experiment with a range of materials, particularly during the afternoons when children plan their own activities.

ENGLISH

68. Current standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and this is better than at the last inspection when they were in line at this age group. This also represents an improvement in reading since the national tests of 2002 when standards in reading were below average and well below those from similar schools. Standards in writing appear to have declined slightly since 2002 when they were judged to be above the national average and average when compared to similar schools. By the end of Year 6 current standards are average and this is similar to the last inspection. Standards are not as good this year in Year 6 as in the results of 2002 when they were considered well above the national average and in comparison to similar schools. This is because almost half of the small cohort of pupils has been identified as having some degree of learning difficulties; there have been significant staffing changes and high pupil mobility in this year group. Overall achievement is good. Those who find learning difficult are achieving very well because of the very effective support they receive from teaching assistants. No differences were noted between the attainment of boys and girls.

69. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards in speaking and listening are better than expected for their age. Most pupils listen carefully to each other and are very confident to adapt what they say to the needs of the listener. As they get older they talk with confidence in an increasing range of situations, including those of a more formal nature. Year 6 pupils are well able to discuss the structure of poems and prepare themselves for performances of their own poems. They speak clearly and are beginning to vary their expression and vocabulary to engage the interest of the listeners. Younger pupils answer questions well about the contents of non-fiction books and through relevant comments and questions show they have listened carefully. Pupils in Year 1 are able to discuss the contents of a story well from looking at the cover and the *'blurb'*. In all classes pupils often have the opportunity to talk to their partner before they contribute to class discussions. This strategy gives pupils confidence and has a positive impact on their learning.
70. By the end of Year 2 standards in reading are better than expected. Pupils make good progress in reading and most read fluently, confidently and with expression. Very good support and use of intervention programmes have enabled pupils who find learning difficult to make very good progress. By the end of Year 2 most pupils read independently, using a good range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. For instance, they use their knowledge of letter sounds to work out unknown words. They talk about their favourite books and all read regularly at home as well as in school. In Year 1, pupils use the title, the *'blurb'* and the pictures well to predict the contents of a book. In Year 2 most pupils know how to use a contents page in a non-fiction book. The co-ordinator has used a colour-coding system to grade reading books for the younger readers and this is having a positive impact on standards.
71. By the end of Year 6 attainment in reading is as expected. Most pupils show a keen interest in reading both for pleasure and for information. They offer opinions about different books and favourite authors. In Years 5 and 6, pupils identify the key features and structure of poems and use examples from the poem to express their opinions. Most pupils know how to use a library, although the school library has recently been relocated and is not yet running at its full potential. The school has rightly decided to focus on raising attainment in reading by having more focused *'guided reading'* sessions outside of the literacy hour. Whilst this is improving standards, some of the activities on offer for pupils who are not in the focus group are of a low level and do not challenge or extend their ability.
72. Attainment in writing is in line with national averages by the end of Year 2. Most pupils are using appropriate and interesting vocabulary and showing some awareness of the reader. They are able to write for a range of purposes. The more capable pupils are writing imaginatively in a clear and lively way. In Year 1, pupils write their own *'blurb'* for a story. In Year 2 pupils use information books to write some questions about an animal. By the end of Year 2 most are using basic punctuation appropriately and spellings are phonetically plausible.
73. In the current Year 6 pupils' attainment in writing just meets national averages. Evidence in pupils' books indicates that particularly good progress has been made this term in order to achieve this level of attainment. This is because their teacher has returned from maternity leave. Most pupils' writing is lively and thoughtful. Vocabulary choices are often adventurous and words are chosen for effect. This was particularly evident in an excellent lesson in Year 5/6 when pupils produced interesting poems about a *'train journey'* using a good range of adjectives and verbs for effect. Younger pupils in Year 3 work hard to improve sentences to make these more interesting for the reader. Pupils in Year 4 also write poems, experimenting with styles and structures. By the end of Year 6 pupils have acquired satisfactory spelling skills and spellings are generally accurate. Basic punctuation marks are used correctly and some pupils are beginning to use punctuation within sentences. Pupils capably use drafting techniques to develop their writing styles. Handwriting is satisfactory overall but general presentation of work requires some improvement.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan their lessons well and have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing. Some are beginning to adapt the literacy strategy well to meet the needs of the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, who receive additional help, are very well supported in the classroom by teaching assistants and make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Very good use is made of time at the beginning of the literacy session to address literacy targets on individual education plans, because teaching assistants focus

on work to meet these targets with these pupils. At the same time the teacher is working with the rest of the class developing their skills at a level to meet their needs. In all lessons teachers encourage pupils to think about what they have learned in the lesson and use this time well to assess individual pupils' knowledge and understanding. Management of pupils is very good and pupils are eager to learn and concentrate well in lessons. In an excellent lesson in the Year 5/6 class the teacher never missed an opportunity to develop pupils' literacy skills. She shared her love of literacy with the pupils. As a result, all pupils were extremely keen to work, were confident to ask for advice and support and all made excellent progress in the lesson.

75. Assessment procedures are good and are beginning to be used effectively to raise standards and to track individual pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers have recently been looking at samples of pupils' work and agreeing on the levels of attainment and they are now more confident to assess the pupils' work. However, the school has not yet reached the point where teachers are able to use the information passed to them to predict what they expect each pupil to achieve by the end of the year in relation to National Curriculum levels of attainment. Marking is good and clearly tells pupils what they need to do to improve, although pupils do not know what National Curriculum levels they have achieved. Teachers are using assessment information appropriately to set individual targets.
76. Improved literacy skills are beginning to have a positive impact on recording in other areas of the curriculum. For example, younger pupils wrote good descriptions of the bear's visit to Dublin that was linked to geography. There is some use of information and communication technology to record writing, but pupils' computer skills are limited and this often inhibits the quality of written work produced. For example, in a lesson in Year 1 the more capable pupils were asked to write a '*blurb*' using the computer but their lack of keyboard skills meant they worked slowly and did not complete the task in the lesson. Literacy makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, teachers have highlighted cultural, moral and social issues in stories during guided reading sessions. There is a satisfactory range of multicultural books available for the pupils to read.
77. The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator has recently returned from maternity leave so opportunities for recent monitoring of teaching have been limited. However, evidence from her file indicates that this was rigorous in the past and she plans to start monitoring again very soon. The co-ordinator is an excellent teacher of literacy and leads very well by example. She provides good support for colleagues and has a clear vision of how the subject should develop, which is detailed in an appropriate subject action plan. Resources have improved significantly over the past five years and are of good quality. Visits from theatre groups, writers and regular book fairs effectively enhance pupils' interest in literacy and their learning.

MATHEMATICS

78. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average and all pupils, including boys and girls and those with special educational needs make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of the good quality of teaching and learning. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average. All groups of pupils, including the more capable, those with special educational needs and both boys and girls have made good progress. This is as a result of the increased whole school focus on mathematical skills and the input of a leading mathematics teacher. Achievement has been made by all pupils in school despite the high levels of mobility in and out of school due to the Royal Air Force postings. At the time of the last inspection standards were average at the end of Years 2 and 6. There has been an improvement in standards in Year 2 since the national tests of 2002 when results were below the national average and well below those of similar schools. Standards in Year 6 have been maintained since the last inspection and when compared to the national test results of 2002 when they were average. However, in comparison to similar schools standards in 2002 in Year 6 were below average. Standards have been well maintained despite staffing changes during this year group, the large number of pupils with special educational needs in this particular cohort and the high numbers of pupils joining and leaving the group during the year. The school has worked hard to achieve the targets set.
79. Most Year 1 pupils confidently count in tens and recognise halves and quarters. They distinguish between heavy and light and solve simple money problems. Less capable pupils use plastic counting cubes to help them add up number problems but frequently reverse their numbers when recording

their findings. By Year 2 the more capable pupils add and subtract numbers up to 100. They classify whole numbers in 'tens' and 'units' and round up high value numbers to the nearest 100. Pupils understand that multiplication is just repeated addition and use simple fractions to calculate proportions. More-capable and average pupils confidently solve problems relating to weight, length and mass. They fully understand what lines of symmetry are and tell the time using both digital and analogue clocks. Less capable pupils have a secure understanding of number sequences and solve money problems. For example, pupils are given 20p to spend and are required to do this by using three coins only.

80. More capable and average pupils in Year 3 skilfully add and subtract using three figure numbers. They confidently work with mathematical data to solve problems and replace letters with missing numbers such as ' $a + 6 = 11$ '. Less capable pupils in Year 3 work comfortably with two digit numbers and are able to tell the time. In Year 4 more capable pupils understand the difference between 'even' and 'odd' numbers and confidently multiply and divide numbers. Average and less capable pupils recognise simple fractions and work confidently with negative numbers. Year 5 pupils solve money problems using percentages and change decimals into fractions. They name different types of triangles and skilfully estimate their area. By Year 6 the more capable pupils are using adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing to solve a range of mathematical problems. They have a solid understanding of the link between fractions, decimals and percentages. The pupils confidently use bar and pie charts to display their mathematical findings and represent data on a line graph. Average pupils also capably solve problems using the four rules of number and confidently discuss positive and negative numbers. They plot co-ordinates and consider probable outcomes to solutions. Less capable pupils multiply and divide with confidence. They estimate and approximate the sizes of shapes and mass and are developing confidence when they use fractions.
81. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and teach basic numeracy skills very well. Expectations of behaviour and work to be completed are extremely high and this ensures that time is used very well. This was observed in a Year 3/4 class where the teacher managed the pupils very well by using a wide range of strategies that kept them all involved. As a result, their behaviour was very good and they were able to work together sensibly in pairs. Lessons are planned carefully and very good use is made of questioning to challenge the pupils and ensure that they work at a good pace. Extremely good methods are used to stimulate pupils' interest and enable them to understand exactly what they are learning. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 2 the class sustained concentration when they were required to partake in a 'Smileyaire' competition during the final session of their numeracy lesson. This activity was based on a very popular television programme, which allows candidates to ask friends for help if required. The pupils were eager and keen to participate and this game fully consolidated what they had been learning during the lesson. Resources are used very well to stimulate learning. For instance, in the first part of a lesson in Year 1 very good use was made of 'digit fans' to recognise and extend number sequences. Support staff are used very well to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully involved in the lesson. Procedures for checking progress on a day-to-day basis are very good and over time their work is assessed well through a range of activities. This was evident in an excellent Year 5/6 lesson where the teacher expected the pupils to check the comments made on their previous day's work before starting on their current task. Pupils were then required to look at their targets for improvement. At the end of the session they were encouraged to reflect on what they had achieved through a specific success criteria. Mathematical lessons are used very well to develop social skills. For example, they are often asked to share ideas with a partner or work together in groups.
82. Subject management has recently been taken over by a very enthusiastic and skilful practitioner who has made a good start to identifying its strengths and weaknesses within the school. She has started to analyse performance in the standardised tests at the end of Year 2 but is still developing an awareness of standards throughout the school. There are no systematic procedures in place to check the quality of teaching and learning. Resources are adequate and are used well to promote learning. However, the use of information and communication technology to support learning is unsatisfactory and few links across the curriculum are made. For example, mathematics is not used to develop geographical or historical skills sufficiently well.

SCIENCE

83. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are average and have been maintained since the last inspection. In the teacher assessments in 2002 at the end of Year 2, standards of attainment were below average and well below average when compared to similar schools. Consequently, current standards are an improvement since then. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 in the 2002 standardised tests was in line with the national average but below average when compared to similar schools. Standards have been well maintained despite staffing changes during this year group, the large number of pupils with special educational needs in this particular cohort and the high numbers of pupils joining and leaving the group during the year.
84. The small numbers of pupils and high turn over in some year groups mean considerable caution should be exercised when making comparisons with national results. However, most pupils make good progress because curriculum planning is good over time and lessons have clearly identified objectives. Those with special educational needs make very good progress because of the additional help given by the skilled group of teaching assistants. There is no difference in the progress and standards achieved by boys and girls and all children have equal access to the science curriculum. The school has effective procedures in place to support the difficulties arising from a high turnover of pupils. Sufficient emphasis is given by staff and pupils to health and safety issues arising in connection with science work.
85. By the end of Year 2, pupils identify the main features of plants and different animals and understand what they need to live. They compare different materials in several ways. Pupils know that some changes made through heating cannot be reversed. They are methodical in experiments but still rely heavily on their teachers to help them with scientific vocabulary when recording results. Since the last inspection there have been more opportunities provided for investigative work but pupils are less confident when required to carry out tests independently. There is very little science work recorded in their books. Pupils enjoy science, they co-operate well with each other and have very good attitudes to the subject. This makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
86. By the end of Year 6 pupils' knowledge about living things and materials is satisfactory. They list the functions of many of the major organs of the human body and explain food chains. Pupils know why people need exercise and about forces such as friction. They experiment with an appropriate degree of independence. Pupils use planning grids as well as reporting their investigations in their own words. Since the last inspection, the introduction of set questions at the end of each science topic is a positive development and helps to ensure that the content of the curriculum is covered. Pupils are enthusiastic about practical investigations and have very good attitudes to the subject. However, presentation of work in books could be better and few pupils are working within the higher level of the National Curriculum.
87. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers' expectations are sufficiently high in lessons and behaviour management good. They have good subject knowledge and ensure pupils learn accurate information. Teachers' planning is effective; each lesson includes relevant learning objectives and success criteria that have to be achieved. They provide tasks and resources to match pupils' abilities, in order to include all in the learning process. Teachers adjust the level of support according to age and ability. They help pupils to make good use of their literacy skills, but there is room for greater use of numeracy and use of computers. Marking is positive and usually praises the pupils' achievements but does not always identify what needs to be improved.
88. The science curriculum is relevant to the needs of the pupils and all the required elements of the National Curriculum are planned. There is a balance of investigation and consolidation of knowledge, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. The school plans ways to develop understanding through links with other subjects. For example, during a dance lesson pupils were asked about the effects of exercise on the heart rate during sport. The subject co-ordinator has a satisfactory plan for the subject, which highlights appropriate developments. However, the use of teacher assessments to improve curriculum planning is not well developed. The co-ordinator has not monitored the quality of teaching or evaluated the recently introduced end of project assessment results to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The analysis of standardised test scores is

used effectively to set targets for the school. He has had the opportunity to lead staff training sessions, which has resulted in better lesson planning and a more balanced long-term plan for the subject. Resources to support the subject priorities are adequate, with the exception of the environmental area, which is in need of attention.

ART AND DESIGN

89. Until very recently art and design has had a very low profile in the school. Consequently, the attainment of most pupils in art and design by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is below national expectations. All pupils, including boys and girls and those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress. Prior to this year, skills and techniques have not been taught systematically and there has been very little time allocated to pupils for experimenting with materials and enjoying art and design lessons. As a result, standards have deteriorated since the last inspection. It is too late for pupils in Year 6 to acquire all the skills, knowledge and understanding they have missed over the last few years but inspection evidence indicates that pupils in the younger classes are achieving satisfactorily in some lessons. The school has recently introduced a scheme of work, which will be reviewed at the end of the year and this is beginning to have a positive impact on standards.
90. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of a range of printing techniques. Using fingers, leaves, flowers and vegetables, they create attractive patterns. Most have satisfactorily learnt the technique of weaving using paper or wool and have acquired a range of techniques using paper; for example, pupils use curling, scrunching, rolling and twisting to make interesting collages. In Year 1, pupils roll clay to make a slab and use things found in the local environment to make impressions and print patterns. Pupils in Year 2 satisfactorily use techniques to join clay together to make houses similar to those found on the Isle of Struay in the Katie Morag stories. Therefore, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to investigate and use a variety of materials and processes to communicate their ideas and meanings. However, they are still in the early stages of developing their art skills. Pupils are unable to talk about using various painting techniques and do not talk confidently about mixing colours to create differing shades and tones. They lack the knowledge and skill of using different types of paper for effect and have had little experience using pastels or charcoal.
91. By the end of Year 6 pupils are able to print using *'the block tiles method'* where designs from packages, transferred onto polystyrene tiles, are used to make repeated prints. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have undertaken some *'batik'* work to a satisfactory standard and a collage based on a visit to Ironbridge has been started. In Year 3, pupils have used scrunched tissue paper for large pictures of Anglo Saxons and Vikings. Apart from these examples there is very little evidence of what pupils can do in art and design. From talking to pupils they are enthusiastic but have very little experience of using a range of materials to communicate their ideas. They have limited knowledge of the works of different artists and can only recall some works by Andy Warhol, whom they have studied very recently.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. The lack of whole school planning for art and design in the past has meant that there has been insufficient guidance on learning outcomes. Some teachers need further training on the skills necessary to teach art and design satisfactorily. This has been identified in the school improvement plan and training has been organised for later in the year. However, during the inspection very good teaching was observed in two lessons. In these lessons the teachers had good subject knowledge and were confident to teach the necessary skills in order for the pupils to achieve very well. Classroom organisation and management was very good and, as a result, pupils were enthusiastic and eager to learn. In these lessons standards were average.
93. Sketchbooks have very recently been introduced and are being used for experimental and design work. However, only a few teachers are using them, so their impact on standards is limited. There are no procedures for assessing individual pupils' attainment and progress in art and design. The co-ordinator plans to collate samples of pupils' work to demonstrate expectations and to support teachers in their understanding of the National Curriculum levels of attainment.

94. Art and design makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on their work and to look at works by different artists. A visit to an art gallery is planned for the future and an arts week has been organised, when pupils in Years 2 and 5 will have the opportunity to work with an artist. It is hoped that these types of activities will enrich pupils' learning and make a valuable contribution to raising standards in art and design. However, pupils have very little experience of multicultural art or of using computer programs for art and design.
95. Leadership and management of art and design remain unsatisfactory. The school is still using a scheme of work from another school but has started to build an overview of skills and techniques to be taught each year, using the scheme and the nationally recommended guidelines. However, this remains in the early stages of development. There has been no monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by the co-ordinator. Resources have only very recently been improved and are now satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 for all pupils, including boys and girls and those with special educational needs, are below average, which is not as good as at the time of the last inspection. This is because teacher expectations are too low in the presentation of completed work, which frequently lacks care, detail and evaluation. As a result, all pupils, including boys and girls and those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress in their learning.
97. Taking into account pupils' work over time the quality of teaching across the school is unsatisfactory, pupils have too few opportunities to test, evaluate and improve their designs and products. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make lever and sliding mechanisms in their pictures of mini beasts. Pupils talk about these enthusiastically and demonstrate good attitudes to the subject. However, teachers' assessments do not provide pupils with enough indications on how they can improve their designs. In the lessons observed when pupils were investigating torches the quality of teaching was good due to the range of resources used by the teachers and the brisk pace of the teaching. However, work recorded by pupils in Years 3 to 6 is often not completed and spoilt by slapdash presentation. Pupils do not always get the help they need to improve because teachers are inconsistent in their assessments. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 enjoy the subject, work sensibly and safely together and support one another when they work as part of a team. They demonstrate good attitudes and this promotes their social development well. However, there is a gap in the pupils' experience in systems and control where their knowledge and understanding are unsatisfactory because teaching is not as good as it should be. There is insufficient use made of information and communication technology skills to support this subject in lessons. Teachers give due regard for health and safety issues when teaching this subject.
98. The school's scheme of work has been very recently adapted so that it contributes well to the cross-curricular themes that are taught and covers all the required elements of the National Curriculum. Teaching plans are organised into two-year cycles, which means that pupils in mixed age classes are able to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding without duplicating work or missing essential elements. Teachers' confidence and skills are satisfactory because of the sound long-term planning which is available. Resources to support the subject are adequate.
99. The subject co-ordinator has recently put together a good management file that includes pupil tracking and assessment documents. A satisfactory policy and action plan is in place for the development of the subject. Although the co-ordinator has been in post for three years he has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching or to compile a portfolio of moderated pupils' work in order to set targets for the school and help teachers assess and improve the pupils' standards. This finding is the same as the last inspection. Management of the subject is currently unsatisfactory but it is evident that the co-ordinator is capable of leading the development necessary if given the time required to monitor it.

GEOGRAPHY

100. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 meet national expectations. Although this indicates that standards have remained satisfactory since the last inspection, inspection evidence suggests that this subject has had a low profile over the past few years. Since the arrival of the new headteacher it has been appropriately reinstated into the curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. No differences have been noted between the achievement of boys and girls.
101. Geographical skills are now being developed systematically through the school. By the end of Year 2 pupils discuss the differences between houses, flats and bungalows. They know their own address and explain their route between home and school. Pupils ask questions about the local environment of Shawbury and compare it to the Isle of Struay, a fictitious island in the Katie Morag stories. For instance, they know that methods of transport differ from those around Shawbury. Pupils draw simple plans of their classroom and identify features from maps. By Year 6 pupils are familiar with rivers in the United Kingdom such as the Clyde, Severn and Tyne. They are also familiar with the great rivers of Europe, including the Rhine, Elbe and Danube. Pupils name the main countries of the world and highlight important cities of the United Kingdom on a map. They study maps of Shrewsbury and use six number grid references with confidence. Pupils thoughtfully discuss issues of pollution and have a clear understanding of how people cause damage to the local environment.
102. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. However, some good and very good teaching was observed during the inspection. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and work hard to plan lessons that are interesting. Expectations are high and this encourages pupils to be motivated. This was evident in a very good lesson in the Year 5/6 class when the pupils continued to work at a very good pace despite the fact that it was an extremely hot afternoon. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and this ensures that they are fully involved in the lessons. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good and this encourages mutual respect. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson the pupils responded very sensibly when they were required to sort out litter from a school waste bin that contained rotting fruit peel. However, there are as yet no consistent procedures in place to check progress and this is a weakness. The basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are not used sufficiently well to promote geographical knowledge and understanding and this results in missed opportunities.
103. The new headteacher has taken over subject management and has formulated a consistent two-year rolling plan, which is successfully developing the pupils' knowledge and skills. The appropriate school based resources are used satisfactorily to promote learning and the pupils' interest is motivated by the field study visits to local rivers.

HISTORY

104. Throughout the school standards are below national expectations and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, fail to make sufficient progress. This represents a decline since the last inspection when standards were in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. The reason for this decline is that the school fails to plan for and teach the full National Curriculum and does not meet statutory requirements of this subject.
105. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 understand that some people are famous and compare modern day heroes such as David Beckham to Houdini. Many of the pupils recall the story of Guy Fawkes and sequence the events that took place at the time of the '*Gunpowder Plot*'. They are aware that life was different in the past. For example, pupils know that the toys played with by Victorian children are very different to those popular today. However, they have little knowledge of major events in the past and their sense of chronology is weak. The pupils are given too few opportunities to make simple observations of the past and this results in considerable gaps in their knowledge and skills. Examination of work over time indicates that pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not have sufficient opportunities to develop historical knowledge and skills. Although the pupils have studied life during World War Two, they cannot recall details of the main events leading up to the war nor discuss issues such as the evacuation project. Despite a school visit to a centre with artefacts from this era, pupils are unable to answer questions about this period of war and, therefore, cannot explain the consequences of such an event in history.

106. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. It is evident from examination of books and discussion with pupils that history skills have been not planned for or systematically taught over a considerable period of time. The new headteacher is fully aware of the weaknesses in the subject coverage and has recently introduced a new cycle of topics. However, this is too new to have any impact on standards as yet. This means that pupils are not developing their ideas nor increasing their historical knowledge and this is unsatisfactory. Although pupils in Year 6 have used their literacy skills to discuss what it might have felt like to be evacuated, these skills are underused in the acquisition of historical knowledge. This has a negative impact on the development and use of library skills. Information and communication technology skills are not used to promote learning in this subject and this is unsatisfactory. History is not promoting cultural development and this is a weakness in provision.
107. Subject management is currently unsatisfactory. A member of staff has very recently taken over this role but it is too soon for the school's aims to be reflected in the subject leadership. Resources are unsatisfactory and the excellent local places of historical interest are underused.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 for all pupils, including both boys and girls and those with special educational needs, are below national expectations. This finding is the same as in the last inspection. The below average standards are because pupils' skills levels are low and there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn the necessary techniques. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use their computer skills in other subjects of the curriculum. The school has made insufficient progress since the last inspection.
109. With the use of grants and additional funding from the school's budget there have been substantial improvements in the quantity and quality of hardware and software available. Resources to support the subject are satisfactory, which is an improvement since the last inspection. There are desktop computers in classrooms and in the resources room, as well as laptop computers for pupils to use. Teachers use a data projector to model and demonstrate basic computer skills to the class. Unfortunately, this takes time to set up and put away at the beginning and end of lessons and not all pupils are able to remember the sequence of moves by the end of lessons. The library is not computerised and the school has yet to decide whether to create a computer suite to assist the teaching of basic information and communication technology skills and techniques.
110. By the end of Year 2, pupils are starting to name items of computer equipment, such as mouse, keyboard and screen. Keyboard skills are weak and most pupils have difficulty typing simple text, producing appropriate titles, phrases and short sentences. They are unable to accurately place gaps between words using the space bar. A small number are able to introduce capital letters and full stops into their writing but a significant minority need support in identifying the correct keys to use in producing their work. Most pupils show suitable control in using a mouse, although a small number continue to find this difficult. For example, there were instances when pupils attempting to use computer skills in literacy lessons lacked sufficient keyboard skills when word processing, which frustrated their progress and prevented them achieving the standards they should. Using an appropriate paint package, pupils produce an interesting range of pictures. In Years 3 to 6 good work was observed when pupils learnt how to send and receive emails from a school in another part of the country. Suitable measures are in place to protect pupils using the Internet and email and to keep parents informed. However, the majority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 require too much adult help when word processing and many are not able to draft, redraft, copy, or paste their work on screen.
111. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. In Years 1 and 2 there are too few opportunities in mathematics for pupils to use their computer skills to present their data findings in graphical form. Teachers lack sufficient knowledge of the curriculum and their expectations are too low; the range of work provided for pupils is limited. In Years 3 to 6 there are few examples of work being done on the computer for homework or encouraging the use of the computer for research purposes despite the fact that the vast majority of pupils have computers at home. Work on data handling, the use of databases and elements of control and sensing are at an early stage of development. Teachers have insufficient subject knowledge and lack confidence in the use of the

newly purchased computers and software. Teachers have limited expectations of what pupils can achieve and are therefore not maximising opportunities for pupils to use computers, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons.

112. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to the subject are good throughout the school. They are keen to complete their tasks and enjoy '*playing*' with their new skills as they learn them. Many pupils find the use of computers exciting. The after school club for Years 1 and 2 makes an appropriate contribution to pupils' positive attitudes and learning in information and communication technology.
113. The newly appointed subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well organised. She has developed a comprehensive management file with a good action plan to guide and develop the subject. The school has introduced national guidelines into its scheme of work and these are being systematically implemented. The co-ordinator has had the opportunity to lead staff meetings and to do an audit of staff needs, which has improved staff knowledge of the curriculum. However, it is too soon for these new developments to have improved the standards achieved by pupils. A portfolio of moderated pupil work has been created and this has started to help teachers set targets for pupils and to mark work accurately. The subject co-ordinator has introduced individual pupil assessment records, which is a satisfactory development. However, these records have not been in place long enough to impact on pupils' achievements.

MUSIC

114. Standards are above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and as expected for pupils at the end of Year 6. All pupils, including both boys and girls and those with special educational needs, make very good progress. This is because of the excellent quality of teaching and learning provided by the headteacher who is a music specialist. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be average overall. The difference in standards between Years 2 and 6 can be explained by the fact that until the arrival of the new headteacher, musical skills were not taught systematically. As a result, although very good progress is being made by the older pupils, they have missed a great deal of skills development in the past and are required to work extremely hard to catch up with basic subject knowledge.
115. By the end of Year 2 the pupils sing well with enthusiasm and interest. For instance, Year 1 pupils were observed singing '*How much is that doggy in the window?*' with good expression and voice control. They name a wide range of instruments and explain what they are made of. The pupils recognise and explore ways in which sounds can be combined and used. For example, they explore '*long*' and '*short*' sounds and use the correct terminology to explain what they sound like. The pupils use symbols to represent different instruments and follow simple musical scores to make compositions. By Year 6, pupils sing with expression and good quality diction. For example, the pupils were observed singing '*Moon River*' with real concentration on the appropriate breathing techniques. They are developing an understanding of relationships between sounds and how to reflect differing intentions. For example, they know that when notes are played closely together it depicts a '*fast tone*'. More capable pupils suggest the use of a flute to create the sound of water rushing. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are making very good progress developing their confidence in small group performances. However, they sensitively evaluate classmates' performances and make valuable suggestions for improvements.
116. The overall quality of teaching and learning is excellent and has improved since the last inspection. Teacher knowledge is of the highest quality and this ensures that the pupils acquire a good range of musical skills. The headteacher has very high expectations and ensures that pupils understand and make good use of musical terminology. This extends their learning very well. The headteacher also has very high expectations of behaviour and pupils know what is acceptable. For instance, he uses his hand and counts up to five when he requires their full attention. As a result, lessons move at a very fast pace. Use of an extremely good range of teaching methods ensure that concentration levels are very well maintained. For example, he makes excellent use of whole class, group and paired activities and this promotes concentration levels very well. The headteacher pitches his lessons appropriately and this enables him to meet the needs of all pupils. He uses relevant examples in their everyday life to help them develop their musical skills. For instance, in a Year 1 session he explained that they must open their mouth as if gulping a fizzy drink to ensure that they had enough

breath. The headteacher demonstrated exactly what he meant and the pupils were able to identify with this. He also works extremely hard to develop spiritual and cultural aspects of music. For instance, in a Year 5/6 lesson he linked the lesson to the pupils' geographical study of rivers. He played an appropriate piece of music that accompanied a multimedia presentation on rivers. The pupils listened attentively to the music and watched the presentation with respect and appreciation. Pupils are encouraged to work in pairs and this has a good impact on their social development. Although there are no assessment procedures in place, the headteacher uses challenging questioning and effective recap sessions to ensure that pupils have gained the relevant skills.

117. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management of the subject. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection when it was considered unsatisfactory overall. He firmly leads by example and has used his expertise to raise standards by teaching all classes. Teachers accompany their pupils to these lessons and this ensures that they gain high quality professional development. The headteacher has devised a very detailed policy and scheme of work that is based on nationally recommended guidelines and a commercial scheme of work. It progressively develops musical skills and ensures that coverage throughout the school is detailed and consistent. This is also a very good improvement since the last inspection. There are a good number of very well organised and easily accessible musical resources that reflect and promote cultural diversity well. However, the use of computer programs to support work in musical composition is underdeveloped.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

118. Pupils' standards of attainment in physical education at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national average. Pupils meet the expected levels in their swimming skills by the end of Year 6. These findings are the same as at the time of the last inspection. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls. All pupils are encouraged to take part equally in all elements of the curriculum on offer. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards. Teachers conscientiously remind pupils of health and safety issues and ensure that pupils are properly warmed up before starting and cooled down at the end of lessons. Staff and pupils wear appropriate footwear and dress when taking part in physical education lessons. This good practice has a positive impact on the standards achieved in the subject. Pupils' attainment is also improved through the good range of extra-curricular clubs such as playground games, rounders, athletics and cricket.
119. By the end of Year 2, pupils work enthusiastically in gymnastics. For example, they use movements that involve travelling and balancing on the apparatus using different parts of their body. They thoroughly enjoy their work, co-operate well and have very good attitudes to the subject. This makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils show increasing control when balancing and holding their position but there are sometimes missed opportunities in teaching when teachers do not challenge pupils to improve on their efforts.
120. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand the basic rules of several games such as football, rounders and cricket and have taken part in athletics. The school recently won a five-a-side football competition, which has boosted the confidence and enthusiasm of both staff and pupils. The effect of this has been improvements in the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in games activities. During dance lessons pupils displayed good body shape, poise and spatial awareness. There were good opportunities to increase pupils' knowledge of British cultural heritage in folk dancing lessons, which made a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils sustain physical activity for a reasonable length of time and are aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies and the benefits to their health and fitness. For example, during a dance lesson pupils were asked to take their pulse, which linked effectively to their science investigation on exercise and the body. Pupils work well with partners and in small groups, they concentrate very well and have very good attitudes to the subject. However, boys and girls are hesitant when asked to work together as partners and do not always have adequate opportunities to evaluate their work and that of each other.
121. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall with evidence of better teaching in some lessons, when teachers give clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their skills and extra

challenges are set. However, at other times some teachers do not always have high enough expectations to challenge pupils' capabilities and ensure that pupils achieve their full potential.

122. Resources are satisfactory. Recent spending has ensured that there are sufficient resources of good quality that are accessible to pupils to support the curriculum. Good use is made of the well-equipped hall and the outside play areas provide good space for games. Time allocation for the subject is satisfactory. Good use is made of the annual residential visit to develop pupils' skills in outdoor and adventurous activities. However, information and communication technology skills are not used to promote learning such as multimedia presentations. The school has adopted the nationally agreed scheme of work that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. All aspects of the subject are satisfactorily covered including swimming.
123. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for only six months and the governors have not yet endorsed the revised policy statement. There is an appropriate list of actions for the development of the subject but the majority have yet to be implemented. The subject is at an early stage of development as the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching, develop pupils' attainment records or set targets for standards. Taking this into account, management of the subject is unsatisfactory and has not improved since the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

124. Overall standards in religious education are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Religious education has had a low profile in the past and, as a result, has not been taught systematically throughout the school in order that pupils can gain knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world religions. Achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards have deteriorated since the last inspection because of this. Currently the school does not meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
125. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding that Christmas is a special celebration for Christians, whose special book is '*The Bible*'. They know that Muslims, whose special book is 'The Qu'ran', celebrate 'Eid' each year. Pupils also know that over two million Muslims make a journey to Makkah (Mecca) each year. However, pupils remember very little about the stories in the Bible except the Easter story. They know that Christians worship in a church but do not recall the names of buildings where people of other faiths worship.
126. Year 6 pupils understand that a christening is a milestone during the journey of life for Christians. Most pupils can recall the significant signs and symbols and what they represent during the christening ceremony, many using their knowledge from first hand experience rather than using information they have been taught. They have looked at Moses' journey in the bull rushes and made a study of Canterbury Cathedral. In Year 4, pupils begin to identify qualities that Jesus had, such as courage, strength, wisdom and kindness. Some pupils think of special occasions when Jesus showed these particular qualities. Younger pupils have touched very briefly on a Sikh wedding ceremony and the way in which Hindus welcome a new baby into the family. However, few pupils have studied any of the religions in sufficient depth for them to have a reasonable understanding of two religions as well as Christianity by the end of Year 6. They are not able to produce organised descriptions of how a religion impacts on a person's life or make judgements on a range of religious and moral issues.
127. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall. Many teachers lack confidence and secure subject knowledge and this has a negative impact on pupils' learning. Few teachers are using the locally agreed syllabus in enough detail to ensure that religious education is not confused with personal, social and health education, the outcomes of the latter being recorded in the same book as their religious education work. Teachers are currently spending the absolute minimum on religious education and are following the units outlined in the syllabus. However because of the format of the syllabus, which is currently being reviewed, teachers are choosing the aspects they are comfortable with and are not teaching in sufficient depth. There is still insufficient emphasis on teaching about religions other than Christianity. There are no assessment procedures in place.

128. Religious education makes only a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development mainly through assemblies. Use of information and communication technology and the school library to search independently for information is very limited. However, some pupils in one class have used the Internet to research Sikh weddings.
129. The new headteacher is managing the subject and has identified it as a weakness. He has an appropriate plan in order to raise standards in religious education and this subject is his next focus for improvement. This includes raising the profile of the subject, training for staff and improved resources, which are currently unsatisfactory. The school has good links with the local church, which is visited by pupils as part of the religious education curriculum. However, there are no visits organised to places of worship of other faiths and a recent planned trip to Lichfield Cathedral for pupils in Years 5 and 6, organised by the headteacher had to be cancelled through lack of parental support.