

INSPECTION REPORT

WEST HILL SCHOOL

Hednesford, Cannock

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124072

Headteacher: Mr D Clarke

Reporting inspector: Brian Aldridge
17454

Dates of inspection: 10th to 13th February 2003

Inspection number: 248540

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Mount Street Hednesford Cannock
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Parkes
Date of previous inspection:	12/01/1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17454	Brian Aldridge	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT)	What should the school do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed
14178	Pat Willman	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents
23566	John Iles	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
2766	Rashida Spencer	Team inspector	Educational inclusion English as an additional language Science Design and technology	
2818	Graham Warner	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography History	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

West Hill Primary School, a larger than average sized primary school, is located near to the town centre of Hednesford. Most pupils come from the surrounding area, which is well below average socio-economically. A total of 404 pupils (201 boys and 203 girls) aged between four and eleven are taught in the school. There are fifty-nine children in the reception classes, which make up the school's Foundation Stage. Most pupils in the reception classes have benefited from some limited pre-school educational experience. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, none of whom speak English as an additional language. An average proportion of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. There are 137 pupils (34 per cent), with special educational needs, almost twice the national average. Seventeen of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is more than twice the national average. Their needs range across moderate learning, emotional, behavioural and social and physical difficulties. There have been some changes to the school since the last inspection. Children's attainment on entry has fallen and is now generally low, particularly in the areas of language and mathematical development. The number of pupils has fallen by approximately one hundred and pupils change schools very frequently. In the current Year 6 only half the pupils started school in the reception year. After a period of change linked to building refurbishment, staff changes and a reduction in the number of pupils, the school is now more settled. There were two temporary teachers in the school during the inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school providing a satisfactory quality of education. Many of the systems necessary to make further improvement have been set up, although some are in the early stages of development. The headteacher, the recently formed senior management team and the governors now provide a powerful lead to school improvement. There is an increasing sense of optimism in the school and standards, though generally below average, are improving. The quality of teaching is satisfactory but has improved and the school now provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The rate of pupils' progress is increasing
- The provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children make good progress
- Special educational needs pupils make good progress because of the good provision
- The school is well led and managed
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well
- Pupils are very well cared for
- The relationship with parents is good

What could be improved

- The standards achieved by higher attaining pupils
- Important aspects of the quality of teaching
- The frequency with which art and design, design and technology and religious education are taught
- The attendance of some pupils

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The rate and quality of improvement since the last inspection in January 1998 has been good. The quality of teaching has improved as a result of good appointments and the monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and senior managers. Good improvements have been made to the assessment systems in English and mathematics, which now provide a good model for other subjects in the curriculum. Standards are rising as these changes begin to have an impact on levels of attainment. This is particularly the case in Years 3 to 5, although there is still work to do to increase the challenges

throughout the school. The key issues identified in the last inspection have been addressed well and the school is well placed to make further improvements.

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	E	E	D	C
Mathematics	E	D	E	D
Science	E	E	D	C

Key

well above average A
 above average B
 average C
 below average D
 well below average E

** These figures have been altered to account of high proportions of special educational needs and high mobility*

A number of factors need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the school's results. Children enter the school with attainment well below the levels expected for their age and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and statements of special educational needs is about twice the national average. In addition, the number of pupils who change school each year is high; for example, in the current Year 6 only half of the pupils started this school in the reception year. Similar school comparisons are based on free school meals and do not take into account these factors. The school's standards trend is in line with the national trend and the gap between this school's performance and the average of the country's schools has narrowed since the last inspection. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests, Year 2 pupils achieved well below average results in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Compared to similar schools, pupils' performance in all three areas was well below average. In Year 6 last year the school exceeded its targets.

Inspectors see an improvement in the rates of pupils' progress and found that in Year 2 and 6 standards in most subjects, including English, mathematics and science are below average. In both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils achieve higher, that is average, standards in design and technology, music and physical education. They also achieve average standards in ICT and art and design in Year 2 and in history and geography in Year 6. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress but do not reach the early learning goals in most of the six areas of learning. The exceptions are creative and physical development. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Higher attaining pupils do not do well enough because they are not sufficiently challenged in lessons.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and school generally.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well around the school. They are very orderly when moving from class to class.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils develop well; they are sensitive and mature although older pupils need more opportunities to develop independent working skills.
Attendance	Attendance is below average. The school tries hard to impress on families the need for children to attend regularly and most do. However,

	a small minority do not come to school and this hinders the progress they make.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In the lessons seen, including English and mathematics lessons, the quality of teaching was good. However, when the evidence of the quality of teaching drawn from the scrutiny of pupils' work is taken into account, the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. The proportion of good and better teaching has improved since the last inspection. In the very good lessons in Years 1 to 6, pupils are interested and concentrate well to complete their tasks because teachers capture their imaginations. Throughout the school, teachers use a good range of interesting methods. They take seriously their obligations to teach pupils the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and consequently pupils work hard, show self-disciplined and are very mature when they move from lesson to lesson. Homework is used well and most pupils are keen to complete the tasks, effectively extending their learning beyond lessons into their homes. Generally, teachers' expectations of the amount of work pupils can complete are too low and higher attaining pupils do not have enough opportunities to set up and run their own investigations and experiments. In general, the quality and consistency of marking and target setting is too low and the pace of a minority of lessons is too slow.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum concentrates on improving pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy and is generally successful in this aim. The curriculum is broad but the balance between subjects is unsatisfactory. The time allotted to English and mathematics on one hand and to subjects such as art and design, design and technology and religious education on the other is not well balanced.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good but better use could be made of learning support assistants' skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall with the provision for moral and social development being good. Not enough is done to prepare pupils to live in a culturally diverse society
How well the school cares for its pupils	The care and welfare of pupils are addressed very well.

The school works well with parents and they think very highly of the school and its work. There is a good programme of extra-curricular activities and assessment systems are good and improving.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a good leader and very good manager and he is well supported by the senior management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors work well and successfully on behalf of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, senior managers and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and offer good solutions to meeting these needs.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses the funds available well.

The number of teachers and support staff are good. The school is a very orderly community and uses the complex but limited building, playgrounds and green space to the best possible effect. Learning resources are generally satisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children make good progress • The quality of teaching is good and pupils work hard • Children like school, behave well and are helped to become mature • Parents feel welcome in the school and receive good information • The school is well led and managed and is improving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The after school activities • The information pupils receive

The inspection team agree with parents' positive views and that the school is improving; teaching in Years 1 to 6 needs further improvement. The inspection team judge that the activities, which take place before and after school, are good in quantity and quality. The school's trial of a new format for parental consultation has meant some disquiet but the school is aware of this and has well considered plans.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Since the last inspection the school's intake has changed in a number of important ways:
 - at the last inspection the school roll was rising but since then has fallen by 100 due to a shrinking local population
 - the proportion of pupils with special educational needs has increased from about 9 to 37 per cent, only partly due to better identification
 - the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs has increased from 1.4 to 4.2 per cent. This shows itself in particular year groups, for example, in the current Year 5 over 10 per cent of the pupils have a statement
 - the number of pupils moving in and out of the school has increased; for example, only 50 per cent of the current Year 6 started at this school in the reception class
 - a higher proportion of the pupils who join the school have special educational needs and lower attainment and those pupils who leave are generally from the higher attaining groups.

These changes to the school's intake, related to the fall in the employment rate in the local area, point to a fall in the levels of attainment since the last inspection. However, the proportion of pupils gaining the expected levels in the National Curriculum tests has increased and the school's results have improved in line with the national trend.

2. The Year 6 national tests for 2002 show that:

National test and tasks results for 2002			
Year 2		Year 6	
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• well below the national average• below the average of similar schools	English	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• below the national average• in line with the average of similar schools.
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• below the national average• in line with the average of similar schools	Maths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• well below the national average• below the average of similar schools
Maths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• well below the national average• well below the average of similar schools	Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• below the national average• in line with the average of similar schools

The comparisons with the results of similar schools are based on the proportion of pupils who are known to take up free school meals. The similar school comparisons given above have been adapted to take account of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the high level of pupils who change schools at non-standard times.

3. The inspection team's analysis shows that children enter the school in the reception year with poor learning skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. Children make good progress in their first year and by the time they are ready to join Year 1 of the National Curriculum their attainment is as follows:

Areas of learning	Standards achieved by children
Communication, language and literacy	Well below average
Mathematical	Well below average
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Well below average
Creative	Average
Physical	Average
Personal, social and emotional	Below average

Children make good progress in this stage of their education because of:

- high quality teaching
- a clear focus on what children need to learn, particularly their communication, language and literacy skills
- practical activities which are based on children's needs and assist in the development of speaking and listening skills during creative activities

4. Inspectors also found that standards in the current Year 6 are generally higher than levels suggested by last year's national test results. The school appears to be on an upward trend following very low attainment in 1998 and 1999. Inspectors could find no differences between the attainment of girls and boys. Teachers involved both groups in answering questions and solving problems. Boys and girls work well together in mixed groups.

Standards in the work seen in English, mathematics and science.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6 • In reading, writing and speaking skills standards are below average in Years 2 and 6 • Number skills are average in Year 6 but knowledge and understanding of shape, space, measures and data handling are below average • Investigation skills in mathematics and science are not as well developed as other aspects of the subjects

There are a number of reasons for the variation in standards.

English:

- the school has made a concentrated effort to improve English skills but there is still insufficient emphasis on pupils writing at length and producing sufficient written work
- the assessment systems for English have been at the forefront of recent developments in the school and are comprehensive
- more curriculum time than is usual has been set aside for English
- the systems in English, such as assessment and teaching in single age groups, are successful, well developed and are being used as a model for other subjects

Mathematics:

- achievement in number is higher than in shape, space and measures but there are insufficient investigations which stretch the higher attaining pupils
- the concentration on number and the improvement in teaching has increased the overall rates of achievement

Science:

- there are not enough opportunities in Years 3 to 6 for pupils to design their own investigations and experiments

5. Generally standards in other subjects have been maintained since the last inspection, even though the attainment on entry has fallen.

Standards achieved in other subjects		
Subjects	Year 2	Year 6
Art and design	Average	No judgement
Design and technology	Average	Average
Geography	Below average	Average
History	Below average	Average
ICT	Average	Below average
Music	Average	Average
Physical education	Average	Average
Religious education	Below average	Below average

Art and design

- standards have been maintained well since the last inspection
- the use of sketchbooks is an important tool in the development of pupils' skills

Design and technology

- the appointment of a specialist subject leader has raised expectations and improved the learning opportunities; this has brought about the good rate of improvement in the subject

Geography and history

- in Years 1 and 2 too much reliance is placed on worksheets for pupils to record their work
- in Years 3 to 6 this is not the case and pupils have more opportunities to record their work independently and this helps pupils learn effectively

ICT:

- the recent improvement in resources has helped younger pupils make up lost ground
- older pupils have more to do to move up to the expected levels although they have made good progress

Music

- the standards have been maintained in this subject because there is some specialist teaching by teachers with good subject knowledge

Physical education

- the subject is well led, older resources have been replaced and over half of the pupils attend after school sports activities

Religious education

- teachers' subject knowledge is not as good in this subject as it is in other subjects

6. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, make good progress. A very high proportion of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and, overall, these pupils make good progress toward achieving the targets in their individual education plans. This is because of the school's well organised arrangements to meet the needs of statemented and non-statemented pupils. The school makes good use of group targets. However, because some targets are not precise enough, progress can be difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless, the good progress made by pupils with specific learning difficulties is well tracked because they follow detailed and effective programmes designed to target specific language skills. Pupils with more general difficulties benefit from these programmes to a lesser extent and their progress in reading is satisfactory. Most pupils with special needs make good progress towards their mathematical targets because they have good support from

learning support assistants. In other subjects, because of careful planning and good level of in-class support, many of these pupils make satisfactory progress. Nurture group sessions for pupils in reception and Year 1 foster well the development of language and social skills in the school's youngest pupils. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties make good progress because of the support they receive and the good relationships that underpin teaching and learning in the school.

7. Higher attaining pupils do not make enough progress. This is because they do not have enough opportunities to plan enough of their own learning and are not pushed to think hard often enough. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are a given opportunities to plan their own investigations in mathematics and science and are working through to other year groups. In Years 3 to 6 these opportunities are less frequent as teachers control many of the investigations. Teachers with good levels of subject knowledge tend to be those who enable pupils to work independently.
8. The improvement in standards in some subjects and the maintenance of standards in others, despite a decline in the attainment on entry to the school, is due to a number of factors:
 - the assessment systems have been improved
 - the quality of teaching has improved, partly due to better systems of checking on the quality of teaching and providing relevant feedback.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The great majority of pupils, including the children in the Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs, have good attitudes to their learning and to school life. They respond well to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural values promoted by the school and this has a positive impact on the orderly and happy community in school. As a result, during their time in school, most pupils develop into sensible and friendly individuals who have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. These aspects of pupils' development remain a strength of the school.
10. The children in the Foundation Stage are beginning to develop positive attitudes to school. Most are happily settled into what, for many, is their first experience of formal education and they respond with enthusiasm and growing confidence to the interesting and well-structured lessons. Because of teachers' good knowledge of how these young children learn, lessons are fun and the children enjoy their time in school. They carry out instructions carefully, moving around the classroom and to and from the main school sensibly and quietly. Groups of children became completely engrossed in their role-play activity in the Chinese restaurant, showing that they have some understanding of the Chinese culture and how they celebrate the Chinese New Year. Several children show reluctance to try new foods but others smell and taste with enthusiasm, expressing their opinions with both facial expressions and words. Several tried really hard, with some success, to use the chopsticks. As a result of the many new experiences they are offered, they are becoming inquisitive and well-motivated learners. They share resources and volunteer to help each other, for example, with the zips on their coats. The children understand how they are expected to behave and try hard to please their teachers. They generally get on well with each other and have very good relationships with their teachers and other staff who work with them.
11. Pupils' positive attitudes to school and to their learning are a major factor in the progress they make and their involvement in school life. They are enthusiastic about many aspects of school, enjoying their lessons and playtimes. They particularly enjoy the practical nature of many of their lessons. For example, the photographs of the

recent design and technology projects, building large structures with dowel rods and rubber bands, create high levels of interest. They explain carefully how this was done and express their amazement that the structures did not collapse. They comment that lessons are often interesting and acknowledge that homework helps them to learn more. Because the work planned for pupils with special educational needs recognises their individual needs, they are usually fully involved in lessons and contribute well. In whole class discussion sessions, pupils are eager to answer questions and many older pupils express their opinions clearly and thoughtfully. They respond well to the competitive nature of the mental mathematics sessions, trying hard to get the right answers as quickly as possible. Lunchtime and after school clubs are supported very well and pupils enjoy the interesting range of opportunities offered. They talk with pride about the success of the football teams and the singing club have enjoyed performing at the Birmingham Symphony Hall and at the local secondary school. The pictures from the Shugborough visit show many happy faces. Pupils in Year 5 say they can't wait until it is their turn to go. Parents who expressed an opinion prior to and during the inspection feel that their children like coming to school and many pupils confirmed this view.

12. Because all staff expect pupils to behave well, the standards of behaviour in lessons and around the school are generally good. This creates a very well-ordered community in which pupils clearly understand the boundaries set. They know and respect the school rules and disapprove of those who misbehave. The behaviour of all pupils in assemblies is usually excellent and this contributes well to the sense of community in the school. Pupils are courteous to adults and most treat the school building and resources carefully. The highly competitive football games at playtimes do sometimes cause disputes but pupils generally sort out their disagreements quickly in order to get on with the game. One pupil was properly excluded during the last academic year for five days. This was the result of aggressive and violent behaviour. There has been no recurrence of this type of behaviour and there have been no exclusions so far this year.
13. Pupils' personal development is good. They mostly get on well with each other and many form strong friendship groups. They work and play happily together and there is no significant evidence of any systematic bullying or unkindness. Pupils do talk about bullying but they understand the need to tell someone and trust their teachers to sort out the problem. The school representatives provide a useful "listening ear" for younger pupils who feel unhappy and they take their responsibilities as role models seriously. The relationships between the pupils, their teachers and other adults who work with them are good and sometimes excellent. They say that if they do not understand something in their lessons, they feel confident enough to ask for help and are never made to feel awkward. In a Year 6 mathematics group, pupils quickly and confidently intervened when they recognised a mistake. They gain an insight into their own and others' feelings during their personal, social and health education lessons and this encourages them to care for and respect each other. They take part in fund raising for major charities and learn about the lives of those less fortunate than themselves. Through this fund raising, they have established a link with a boy living in India with whom they correspond. They understand that what they do has an impact on others and learn to value the differences between them. However, because pupils do not have many first hand opportunities to learn about the wide range of beliefs and cultural influences that motivate others' actions, their level of tolerance and understanding of different lifestyles is not as well developed as it should be. Pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6, show good levels of initiative in the way in which they quickly move tables and efficiently transfer from one classroom to another, carefully observing the clockwise flow. All pupils tidy up carefully and carry out their classroom jobs sensibly. They celebrate each other's achievements in assemblies and in their classrooms, for

example, in a Year 1 and 2 science lesson, the pupil who blew the ping-pong ball the furthest was congratulated by the rest of the group. Pupils are very friendly and outgoing individuals who, during their time in school, develop useful social skills and the ability to get on well with adults and with each other.

14. Although the level of attendance has improved since the last inspection, it is still below that found in most primary schools. Over a quarter of the pupils are missing in excess of ten per cent of their lessons and this inevitably has a detrimental impact on the progress these pupils make. Unauthorised absence, however, is well below the national average and this is because of the school's very good systems for following up absence and parents' recognition of the importance of advising the school early about reasons for absence. A small number of pupils take more than one holiday during the year and exceed the ten days that can be authorised. Most pupils arrive at school in good time, registration is quick and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT

15. During the last inspection teaching was judged to be satisfactory although, teaching generally required some improvement. Since that time there have been many changes to the teaching staff and procedures to monitor the quality of teaching have been developed. During the last inspection teachers worked in isolation; there is now joint planning and teachers work together in well led teams. Inspectors now judge teaching in the reception classes to be good; the areas for improvement there identified in the last inspection have been addressed well. In Years 1 to 6 there has been an increase in the proportion of lessons where teaching is very good or excellent. Examples of this were seen in each year group although, with the exception of the reception year, no one year group showed consistent strength. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall. Its weaknesses are centred on the inconsistent application of year group plans, particularly a lack of challenge for high attainers, insufficient opportunities for pupils to write and record their work and some weak marking. In some lessons learning support assistants are used effectively, in others not enough use is made of their well-developed expertise and knowledge. There are some weaknesses specific to certain subjects. For example, in English pupils do not have enough opportunities for pupils to write at length. In mathematics pupils do not study shape, space and data handling enough and in science some teachers' subject knowledge is not strong enough. Where teaching is very good or excellent, lessons are brisk, imaginative and capture pupils' imagination. As a result, pupils work hard and complete a good deal of work in the allotted time. The following tables highlight the strengths of lessons where the quality of teaching was very good or better. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory these strengths were not often apparent.

16. Teaching strengths which result in effective learning

- Teachers use a wide range of methods → These methods ensure pupils, whatever their needs, learn effectively

Teachers recognise that pupils' skills of reading and number are important to ensure that pupils learn effectively in other subjects. There is also a good understanding of the need to involve pupils in the practical application of these skills. This is shown particularly well in Years 1 and 2 in science and mathematics. In these subjects pupils are challenged to arrive at original solutions. In some classes in Years 3 to 6 this is also the case; for example, in ICT and design and technology. In a Year 2 group the teachers asked pupils to discuss issues with their talking partners and in the same class, handwriting shapes were reinforced by pupils following their teacher as they drew the shapes of the letters in the air.

17. ▪ Teachers manage behaviour well → This ensures pupils concentrate and that lessons and learning are not interrupted by unacceptable behaviour

Adults are kind but insistent and firm when pupils work in classrooms, move about the school or play. Pupils develop very mature working habits from the earliest days in school. Young pupils set to work quickly, find their own equipment and do not need to refer to their teachers over simple matters. Pupils move about the school and from lesson to lesson in a very orderly manner. Because they have developed these good working habits, they do not waste time.

18. ▪ Teachers inspire and challenge pupils → Because pupils are interested they contribute well, make new connections between subjects and try hard

In a Year 3 and 4 class, pupils were asked to '*draw three right angles, each in a different orientation*' which immediately challenged pupils and they had to think hard to succeed. They managed this task well because they were interested and the task was very practical in nature. Because the teacher used the correct technical terms, pupils could explain their thinking by adopting the same words. In a Year 2 class a very lively presentation captured pupils' attention and, by devising a set of interesting tasks and subtly introducing terms such as subtraction, the lesson was very successful and all pupils were challenged.

19. ▪ Teachers plan practical tasks → Pupils have to plan investigations and select their own resources

As the teacher blew a soap bubble and pupils had to explain why the bubble dropped to the ground, they learned about air pressure and gravity. Pupils were given the task to see how many ways they could make a ping-pong ball move. Sensible and practical solutions were devised. High attaining pupils were required to predict which method would move the ball the greatest distance and hypothesise about the reasons.

20. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good teaching. In the reception class, work is thoughtfully planned and, because of good quality on-going assessments, is well tailored to further extend children's developing skills. In Years 1 to 6, lessons are often well modified to meet the needs of statemented and non-statemented pupils and there are good opportunities for these pupils to work individually with an adult and to learn in small group settings in or out of the classroom. During class sessions, almost always, teachers through their explanations and questioning ensured that pupils with special needs were thoroughly included in the lessons. In the best lessons, learning support assistants played an active, yet unobtrusive role during whole class teaching sessions; they monitored behaviour and progress and helped pupils to maintain their focus on what the teacher was saying. Consequently, at these

times progress was very good. Learning support assistants are generally well briefed for their work with groups and they give good support when pupils are engaged in written work. Effective support is also given, during class time and in the lunch hour, to individuals following specific programmes, particularly in building up phonic skills.

21. Teaching weaknesses that result in ineffective learning

- Expectations are too low in → Pupils do not learn at the same rate as in some classes, particularly of other classes because not enough is high attaining pupils expected of them

This weakness has a number of effects:

- The work in some pupils' books is of good quality and teachers show in their marking that they are unwilling to accept work which is below par. In other classes, a model of good quality work is not shared and this means that lessons lack pace, pupils do not complete enough work and because they do not complete enough work, improving quality takes longer to achieve.
- This lack of expectation also leads to the use of a restricted range of teaching methods. Pupils are less motivated, learn less well and do not remember what they have been taught. Pupils never misbehave or show inattentiveness; they try to work hard. However, pupils are not engaged with their activities and this shows particularly in their written work when not enough is achieved
- Brighter pupils are not stretched enough and this is the case in some mathematics and science lessons. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to plan their own experiments and investigations

22. ▪ In some classes → Pupils lack an understanding of how well they have marking and day-to-day done, what needs to be achieved beyond the scope assessments are not of the current lesson and what they need to do to used to build on what improve pupils know and can do

In some classes marking is good; teachers develop a dialogue between themselves and their class which results in pupils having a very clear understanding about how well they are working. However, in too many classes marking is narrow and limited to simple ticks or one or two word comments. This means that in the classes where pupils' work is well marked, pupils make more progress because they know what to do to improve. Where work is lightly marked, pupils continue to make common errors, develop little understanding about what should be improved and do not see their work improving. This limits their confidence and hence the rate of progress they make.

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

23. The school provides a broad curriculum. All subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. The school uses the syllabus followed by most schools in the local education authority for religious education. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is good and they make a good start in their learning.
24. Since the previous inspection, the school has prioritised the development of the basic skills through the literacy and numeracy strategies, which have been implemented satisfactorily. However, partly as a consequence of the concentration on basic skills, the allocation of time to art and design, design and technology and religious education does not allow for the efficient development and maintenance of skills in these

subjects. These subjects are taught in blocked units of time with long gaps between learning. This leads to inconsistent rates of progress and a lack of depth in pupils' understanding of what has been taught. They often find it hard to remember important processes, techniques and information. In religious education pupils do not make enough visits to a wide variety of places of worship. This means that pupils do not have practical experiences on which to base their learning. The issue of the allocation of time between subjects is the focus of a current review which includes discussions between curriculum teams. The teams are also monitoring planning and assessment procedures in each subject with the objective of promoting a faster pace of learning through greater continuity.

25. The school has policies for all subjects; it uses the national guidance to support planning. The new headteacher provides a strong lead in developing curriculum provision and improving the range of opportunities to enhance teaching and learning. Parents are pleased with the range of extra-curricular activities and visits the school organises. A good range of clubs provides opportunities for pupils to extend their learning beyond the school day, for example through the strong sporting tradition and success in local competitions such as football and cricket. Boys and girls take part in these events and all pupils are included in the full range of school activities.
26. All pupils have access to the National Curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities. The school has an appropriate policy for equal opportunities and staff are aware of the needs of individuals and different groups of pupils. The provision for ICT has been improved and pupils use computers in a range of subjects. This subject is a priority for further development in the school and the plans made are of good quality. In a complex building the organisation of lessons ensures that all pupils participate in ICT sessions.
27. Overall, curricular opportunities for pupils with special educational needs are good. The very good range of ways in which extra help is provided includes nurture groups, lunchtime clubs and individual sessions for speech therapy and physiotherapy. The school provides a good level of help in classes and this is successfully designed to ensure that all pupils with special needs, including those with learning difficulties, have access to the full range of subjects that other pupils in the school study. The use of language programmes designed to combat specific language difficulties is well established in the school and pupils who have identified language difficulties benefit well from these programmes. However, pupils with general learning difficulties also use this programme and could benefit from a wider range of strategies and, although these pupils derive some benefit from the structured sound-based programmes currently being followed, their learning needs are not yet being fully met. The school is aware of this and is in the process of reworking some pupils' targets and programmes.
28. All pupils on the special educational needs register have individual education plans. In general, targets set in these plans are well linked to statements but are not always sharp enough to enable progress to be identified and measured. Plans are regularly reviewed and targets are annotated or rewritten to reflect any changes.
29. The school makes good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and generally prepares pupils well to become good citizens. There is an appropriate health education programme which covers sex and drugs education. The newly appointed coordinator is reviewing the current provision to make more effective links between PSHE and other subjects. The use of time is to be reallocated to prioritise specific time for the direct teaching of aspects of the provision. The provision for PSHE

has a good impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils are enthusiastic participants and take their commitment to these activities very seriously.

30. The school has good partnerships with the local community and neighbouring schools. The school has worked with the local museum to provide a venue for a puppet day workshop and displays work in the local shopping centre. Pupils also sing for the local residents in a local supermarket at Christmas. Teachers attend curriculum meetings with other local schools to share expertise and practice and a working group is currently looking at ways to support pupils who are gifted and talented.
31. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Moral and social provision is a strong feature of the school and lays a firm foundation for the orderly and caring community in the school. The quality of this provision has been maintained since the last inspection.
32. Pupils sing well in assemblies and acts of worship are carried out with appropriate respect and reverence. In an interesting presentation by a Year 5/6 class in the whole school assembly, pupils listened carefully and understood the message inherent in the performance. They led the school in prayer. Reception children composed their own prayer which they presented in a lower school assembly, proud to perform in front of the older pupils and their parents. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to express their feelings and to listen to those of others. Teachers value pupils' questions and allow them opportunities to develop their own thoughts and ideas. Year 1 and 2 pupils, for example, when examining artefacts in their history lesson, were mystified by the "mystery object" and the teacher built on this well to create excitement. Religious education lessons, however, do not contribute sufficiently to pupils' understanding of the spiritual beliefs of other major faiths.
33. The school provides a clear moral code which is promoted well throughout the school. The school rules are displayed in each class and around the corridors there are posters that reinforce the school's approach to bullying. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. All members of staff are good role models, courteous, kind and sensitive to individual needs. Pupils' achievements, both academic and personal, are celebrated and valued and this contributes significantly to the development of their self-esteem. In religious education lessons, pupils learn about caring for others and selflessness. Moral issues, such as bullying and racism, are discussed in personal, social and health education lessons and pupils learn how to make the right choices.
34. Pupils' social development is promoted well. There are opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for day-to-day life in the school community, for example, collecting registers and tidying up, often volunteering to help teachers during the mid-day break. Social education is enhanced through a good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and the popular residential visit. Pupils learn the value of teamwork and co-operation. Pupils are encouraged to take turns and share resources and ideas during group work in their lessons. In a Year 5 and 6 science lesson, for example, pupils improved their work by sensible discussion and listening to each other. The weekly newsletter, compiled by a member of staff, is designed and published by volunteer pupils and gives a good overview of current affairs. The study of the new toll road by Years 3 and 4 provides pupils with an awareness of local issues. The school representatives, chosen by teachers, provide a good example for younger pupils and they take their responsibilities seriously. As pupils mature and show they are able to take on responsibilities in school, there is a need to promote greater independence and allow them to take a more active part in the decision making process in the life of the school.

All staff continuously and consistently praise pupils for thoughtful and caring acts which promotes pupils' self-esteem and self-discipline. The pupils take part in presentations and productions which are enjoyed by many parents. Those that represent the school on the sports field or performing do so with pride and enhance the reputation of the school within the wider community.

35. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. Music lessons and the extra-curricular provision give pupils good opportunities to enjoy this aspect of their cultural development. Although art lessons give pupils the chance to appreciate the styles of mostly European artists, there is little evidence that pupils have opportunities to emulate those styles. They learn about European culture in history lessons and from their studies in literature, developing skills in writing poetry and appreciating the qualities of good writing. A visitor from Ghana provided pupils with interesting first hand information about life in that country. Years 5 and 6 pupils have studied the problems of flooding in Bangladesh in their ICT lessons. In their physical education lessons the pupils were taught how to perform the Haka and had enormous fun in so doing! Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about life in an Indian village through their geography studies. In the reception classes, there has been a very good focus on the Chinese New Year and pupils have had the experience of tasting food and learning about how the Chinese celebrate this important time. They have also learned about the Divali Festival of Light. Whilst there are a number of opportunities for pupils to learn about the lifestyles and beliefs of people from other countries, in this predominantly all white school, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop the skills and knowledge to live in a culturally diverse society and, through that understanding, learn tolerance.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS

36. The kindness and commitment of all adults who work with and care for the pupils ensures that the day-to-day personal support and care for individual pupils is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is the result of the fundamental priority that the governors, headteacher and all who work in the school place on ensuring the welfare of the pupils. Although the procedures to monitor pupils' academic progress are good, the application of these procedures is not yet consistent in all subjects and the overall monitoring of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory. The provision made for those pupils with a statement of special educational need is good. Parents say that they trust the school to take care of their children and are confident that they will be kept informed of any problems that may arise.
37. The school has very good procedures and established practices to govern health and safety and child protection. A programme of good quality risk assessment has been established and staff have an appropriate awareness of the importance of health and safety in the daily routines of the school. The provision for first aid is very good and fire drills take place regularly. Fire and electrical equipment is tested annually, an important issue for the school to address, identified in the last inspection. A member of staff has attended appropriate training for the role of child protection co-ordinator and has provided in-school training for several other members of staff. Recommended local guidelines are followed and detailed confidential records are kept. All staff have a very good awareness of the particular needs of the pupils in their care. The same member of staff has responsibility for monitoring those pupils who are looked after by the local authority. The school is well supported in this work by outside agencies. Teachers ensure that pupils understand how to use resources safely and the importance of good hygiene and diet. Pupils receive appropriate information about sex and drugs through the personal, social and health education programme, their science lessons. There is a thriving first aid club for Year 6 pupils who work through three levels of basic skills,

certificated by the St. John's Ambulance organisation. Visitors come to school to talk to pupils about issues of personal safety. Supervision during playtimes and lunchtimes is very good and pupils are very well cared for at these times.

38. Because of the good quality of the relationships that teachers have with the pupils, the formal and informal procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are good and pupils receive a good level of personal support and guidance. There are very effective systems to monitor attendance and to follow-up absence. The majority of parents inform the school of reasons for absence and any unexplained absence is followed up swiftly. Parents and carers are contacted on the first day of absence if no message is received. The school is well supported in its commitment to raising attendance by the education welfare officer and newsletters continuously remind parents of the importance of regular attendance. There are, however, few measures to improve the overall level of attendance by motivating pupils themselves to attend more regularly. Morning and afternoon registration procedures comply with legal requirements. There are good formal and informal procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour. Pupils try hard to receive their teacher's praise for good behaviour and to be awarded merit points. Pupils receiving certificates in assembly show pride in their achievement and others are generous in their applause. Staff are generally consistent in applying the rewards and sanctions and pupils say that they are fairly treated. Pupils understand what is expected of them and trust the staff to handle any poor behaviour effectively. Appropriate records are kept of any repeated or persistent poor behaviour and measures are adopted, with parental involvement, to modify this behaviour. Pupils learn about the nature of bullying and name calling through their personal, social and health education lessons and in assemblies. Pupils understand the need to tell someone if they are unhappy and are confident that they will be helped.
39. Clear criteria are set to identify pupils who have special educational needs. From the time teachers express initial concerns about pupils, their names are entered on the special needs register and staff are asked to monitor their progress more closely than that of other pupils. Overall, there are good procedures for assessing the progress of pupils with individual education plans. In common with all other pupils, they are regularly assessed in the core subjects. In addition, regular assessments are made of the progress of pupils following individual language programmes. However, the progress pupils make against all the targets of their individual education plans is not always noted carefully enough. Therefore, progress against the some targets cannot always be measured accurately. Assessment information is generally well used to review the progress pupils make and to inform the setting of new individual education plans. There is clear guidance for staff on the procedures for statutory assessments.
40. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress are satisfactory overall and good for literacy, numeracy and the Foundation Stage. Procedures have improved considerably since the last inspection. The youngest pupils are assessed on entry to the schools. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has a systematic and comprehensive set of procedures to identify pupils' levels of learning in mathematics, reading and phonics and aspects of personal and social education. The information is then used effectively to track individual pupils' progress and how assessment from these is related to the early learning goals and then subsequently how pupils are prepared for Year 1 work in English and mathematics.
41. There are effective procedures that are both comprehensive and analytical for assessing pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy. Termly assessments are carried out in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This information is then used to

analyse gaps in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding, for example, poor achievement in simple addition and subtraction work. As this was done recently, it is too early to judge the impact of these strategies. The co-ordinators are very aware that there is a range of assessments being carried out for different subjects. They are now in the process of rationalising and are being more focused on what information they need, how to collate it and what it tells them. For example, individual targets are set for pupils but, currently, there is insufficient evidence how these are monitored. In other subjects, National Curriculum coverage records are kept but the school has not linked these systematically with classroom activities. The curriculum team and a member of the senior management team are now in the process of evaluating which aspects of units need tailoring for the future. This information is critical to enable subject co-ordinators and year group leaders to identify activities that match the range of abilities reflected in each class and sets.

42. The new policy for assessment is in draft form but is already providing useful guidance to all the staff. In some classes marking is a weak area and pupils do not receive comments which help them to identify their errors or how they might improve. Pupils do keep their own individual Record Of Achievement from an early age which provides pupils and parents with a useful record of progress.
43. The newly appointed assessment co-ordinator is providing a very good lead and the school is well placed to calculate how much value they have added by setting individual targets and monitoring them. This is particularly important, given the level of mobility and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

44. The school's partnership with parents has improved since the last inspection and good constructive and effective links have been established with the majority of parents. Those parents who expressed an opinion prior to and during the inspection have very positive views about most aspects of school life. Some concerns were raised about how parents are kept informed of the progress of their children and the provision of after school clubs. Inspection evidence indicates that the school provides good formal and informal opportunities for parents to keep up-to-date with their children's progress. The range of lunchtime and after school clubs is good although, in common with most primary schools, most of the clubs are for the older children.
45. The information provided for parents about the school is good. The prospectus and governors' annual report contain useful and practical information about the school. Parents receive regular newsletters and curriculum information that keeps them up-to-date with events in the school. The school offers two opportunities for parents to come into the school to discuss progress. The format for the first of these in the autumn term was changed last term to an open evening to meet class teachers and to see the children's work. The spring term provides an opportunity for individual discussion with each child's teacher. A teacher from each year group is available one day a week after school for parents to talk to and parents can arrange to see class teachers or the headteacher at any time should they have a concern. Each morning parents can go into the school and have the opportunity for a quick word with teachers. Parents of the Reception children are given very good information about the school and both parents and children are familiar with the teachers and environment prior to joining through a good programme of visits. The written annual reports on pupils' progress give good information about what the children have done and clearly indicate targets for future improvement. However, apart from those for Years 2 and 6, which include details of the test results, they do not give parents a clear idea of their child's attainment.

46. The school strives to establish a good working partnership with parents of children with special educational needs. Parents are contacted when the school has concerns about their progress and are kept informed about how well their children are doing. Most accept the invitations to attend and contribute to reviews of individual education plans and, in the case where pupils are statemented, to the annual review of the statement. If parents are unable to attend, the school takes good steps to see that parents are informed of outcomes and are consulted about any proposed course of action.
47. The school recognises the positive impact of parental involvement in raising attainment and actively encourages it. Parents' views are sought on aspects of school life and development and the contribution of the parent governors to the decision making process is valued. A few parents help regularly in classes and a small team have begun to make story sacks. The parents' association is run by a group of hard working parents and the events organised are well supported and successful. The funds raised are used to purchase extra resources, for example, the playground equipment which the pupils thoroughly enjoy. The majority of parents who expressed a view prior to and during the inspection feel welcome in the school. The large number of parents who came to the lower school assembly during the inspection confirmed this opinion. Many children say that their parents help and encourage them with their homework. Evidence from the home school diaries supports this sense of cooperation and parents consider the diaries to be a useful channel of communication and are well used. There are, however, a small number of parents who do not value education and whose children have little help at home. Most parents send their children to school regularly, on time and ready to learn and appreciate all that the school does to care for and educate their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

48. The headteacher is a good leader who manages the school very well. After taking up the post after the last inspection, when leadership and management were judged to need improvement, he has improved the strength, quality and impact of team working. At the time of the last inspection teachers worked in isolation from each other. There was a lack of consistency in a number of areas, including the quality of teaching, and a lack of leadership from senior managers and coordinators. Processes such as school improvement planning did not include staff or the governing body. The school has moved considerably from this point to one in which groups within the school are committed to working within teams with shared aspirations. He has patiently and intelligently set up teams, consisting of staff, governors, parents and pupils to ensure that everyone in the school is committed to seeking improvements in the school's provision. He has led and managed the setting up of effective systems to oversee the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and the formation of links between the school and the wider community. Parents and governors praise the headteacher's commitment to involving the whole school community and developing the positive learning environment of the school. Indeed, it is due to the headteacher's efforts that learning, for pupils and adults, has such a key place in the school.
49. The senior management team provides a powerful lead to the school. Their analysis of the school's work is acute and reflective. They have a good understanding of the needs of the school and have a range of practical solutions with which to address priorities. Their leadership of the year teams and aspects such as special educational needs, English, mathematics and assessment are critical to the school's continuing improvement. They share with the headteacher and other subject coordinators and curriculum teams ambitions to raise standards and improve provision.

50. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed. The special educational needs co-ordinator and assistant co-ordinator are well informed and give good leadership to the team. Because of the large proportion of pupils identified as having special needs, learning support assistants have undertaken appropriate training. In general staff are well deployed to support in a wide range of settings. The deployment of teaching and non-teaching staff during the lunch break is a strength of the provision and a measure of the commitment of staff. The special educational needs policy provides clear guidance on procedures to be followed in identifying pupils who may have special needs and to a graduated response in providing for their needs. The school's documentation reflects its practice of ensuring that pupils with special educational needs have full access to all the activities the school has to offer. Reviews of statements and individual education plans are regularly carried out. However, systems to measure the progress pupils make against their targets are not as always as precise as they need to be because targets sometimes lack sharpness and because small gains in learning are not always well enough recorded. Funding for special educational needs is well spent. The school has well established and very effective links with outside agencies.
51. The governors have a thorough understanding of the school's activities, its strengths and areas for development. They receive very good reports from the headteacher and coordinators and often receive oral reports at governors' meetings from coordinators about current priorities. They use this information to look critically at the school's work, pupils' progress and how to improve provision. After a comprehensive appraisal of the headteacher's work as leader and manager they set relevant targets for the further improvement of the school. New staff are cared for properly and the school's training plan for all staff members is of very high quality.
52. The school improvement plan is a much improved tool which charts and prioritises school developments. The process, which involves all groups within the school, is particularly powerful and rests upon a widely held view that the school is improving and has more work to do in order to achieve the school's aims. The school improvement planning process results in a complex and sophisticated document, which nonetheless, members of staff and governors use appropriately to review the school's progress, monitor the effectiveness of decisions and action, and plan forthcoming improvements. It is linked critically to the school's budget that is administered well by the office manager and headteacher. Regular budget reports are provided for the governing body to support an analysis of spending decisions. Administration of the school's systems and procedures supports teachers' work without being obtrusive. Computers are used well to generate reports and plans, including the high quality headteacher's termly reports.
53. The school uses consultation widely. Parents, governors and staff have open access to all of the school's development process. The regular parents' questionnaires are used to review progress; parents talk highly of this access and appreciate the time and effort taken to inform them of the school's work. The governing body and staff use local and national comparisons to check on the school's work and use a systematic procedure to allocate financial resources to developments. A good example of this is the purchase of a trolley of laptops to be used in the various parts of the school.
54. The supply of teachers is good and that of learning support assistants satisfactory. The school's plans to effectively use learning support assistants' skills whilst seeking to employ further assistants is a worthy development. The school makes the best

possible use of a difficult school building and pupils are managed very well and behave in a very orderly manner to ensure that everyone coexists happily.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

55. In order to continue the improvement in standards and provision the governors, headteacher and staff should

(1) * **Raise standards and improve the quality and consistency of teaching generally by**

- increasing teachers' expectations of high attainers
- raising the quality and consistency of marking and target setting
- making more effective use of learning support assistants
- increasing the pace of some lessons
- enhance the emphasis on the use of skills of investigation
(Paragraphs 2, 4, 5, 7, 22, 42, 75, 78, 79, 82, 85, 86, 88, 108)

in **English** by:

- increasing the opportunities for pupils to use their handwriting skills by writing at length and enhancing the expectations of teachers of the quality and quantity of pupils' writing
(Para 68, 69, 70, 75,)

in **mathematics** by providing more opportunities for pupils to:

- study shape, space and data handling
- apply what they have learned in practical situations
- use mathematical vocabulary
(Paragraphs 78 and 79)

in **science** by

- improving levels of teachers' subject knowledge
- comparing the progress made by pupils in single and mixed aged groups
(Paragraphs 84 – 91)

(2) * **Revise the curriculum arrangements in order to provide pupils with more frequent and regular opportunities to**

- study aspects of science, art and design and religious education
- prepare pupils more effectively to live in a culturally diverse society
(Paragraphs 24, 35, 91, 92, 133)

(3) * **Continue to improve the attendance rate of some pupils**

(Paragraphs 14, 38, 47)

* *Issues already identified by governors and staff and in the process of development.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	82
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	12	44	21	2	0	0
Percentage	4%	15%	54%	26%	2%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		404
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		65

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		17
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		120

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	23
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	34	30	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	25	27
	Girls	23	25	23
	Total	49	50	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (76)	78 (80)	78 (85)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	25	27
	Girls	24	23	24
	Total	48	48	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (82)	75 (80)	80 (93)
	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	33	42	75

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	26	27
	Girls	32	25	36
	Total	54	51	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (60)	68 (73)	84 (80)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	20	25
	Girls	22	20	31
	Total	37	40	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	49 (51)	53 (60)	75 (64)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	396	1	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	2		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2		
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		
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			

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)	16.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	324

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	842770
Total expenditure	829320
Expenditure per pupil	2052
Balance brought forward from previous year	13450
Balance carried forward to next year	12360

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	10
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	404
Number of questionnaires returned	176

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	44	5	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	45	51	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	63	3	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	56	13	1	2
The teaching is good.	42	52	2	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	21	48	27	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	41	6	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	49	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	23	60	16	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	36	52	5	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	38	54	6	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	40	23	2	15

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents were very supportive of the school and the work carried out on behalf of their children. They appreciate how welcome they are made to feel; how the school invites their opinions and that their views are valued and acted upon.

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

56. The school has a much lower attaining intake compared to the time of the last inspection. The children now enter the reception classes with well below levels of learning in all areas of learning and poor learning skills in communication, language, literacy and mathematics. The level of attainment in the area of communication, language and literacy particularly affects their ability to develop their skills in all areas of learning such as mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. In these areas their progress is slower than in the other areas of personal, social and emotional development, physical and creative development. In all areas the children make good progress and are set on the way to achieving the early learning goals even though they are unlikely to meet them in most areas of learning before they join Year 1 classes. The progress they make is the result of the hard work and commitment of all staff who work with the children. The children, few of whom have any previous pre-school experience, have a flying start to their education. The school pays a great deal of attention to developing good relationships with the children's parents and carers. There is a comprehensive programme of visits before the children start school when parents and carers are invited to stay with the children if they wish to do so. At the time of this inspection there were fifty-nine children in the two reception classes. They begin in the reception class in the year in which they become five years of age.
57. Both boys and girls are given an equally good start to their education in the reception classes. In relation to the quality of education at the time of the last inspection the school has sustained many aspects of the provision and improved others. The children's learning is planned to the same format in both reception classes. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is an effective mentor to the newly qualified teacher who is teaching one reception class. Together with the nursery nurse and classroom assistants they work as a very efficient and effective team. They all make careful observations of the children to ensure a secure baseline assessment. The observations made effectively support the tracking of the children's progress.
58. Teaching is good in all areas of learning and there is some very good teaching across the Foundation Stage. The systematic approach to planning supports both teachers in compiling imaginative tasks that interest the children. The support staff make invaluable contributions to plans. They make a good team, meeting the children's needs well. The staff all join in the children's activities as good role models. They interact successfully with one another as well as with the children. The staff often act out situations in order to make things clear to the children and this helps them to intervene so that children have to respond to them. They work briskly and this has a positive impact upon their learning and progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Children have limited experience when they begin in the reception classes. They have some difficulty in relating to adults and one another at first. There is a good range of table top activities waiting for them when they come into classrooms which encourages children to work together in pairs and small groups. Adults patiently encourage the children to join in discussions with them that go beyond nods of the head or single words. They initiate discussions more formally that encourage the children to identify the characteristics of their friends. When they learn about the Chinese New Year, groups form themselves very quickly as they look forward to sharing food. Some

experiment and successfully use chopsticks. They help one another by waiting patiently whilst these experiments take place and when they need to dress appropriately to move from their mobile classrooms across the playground to the main school building hall. The steady progress being made is prepares them well for Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Although they make good progress towards achieving the early learning goals because of good teaching, attainment remains below average in this area of their learning.

Communication, language and literacy

60. The staff pay a great deal of attention and time to developing the low level of the children's skills in these areas of learning. Initially there is often a focus on the development of poor listening skills. The children gather on the carpet to share weekend experiences with one another and the adults who work with them. The adults are constantly testing out how well children have been listening by returning to what has already been said and how it compares with one another's experience. Words and phrases are gradually built up into sentences that are well structured. This takes time but the teacher targets questions effectively to include those who are most reluctant to join in. The teacher then extends the children by getting them to ask questions of one another to confirm that careful listening skills are developing appropriately. Children begin to extend their understanding of how words are built up as they concentrate on a new letter every week and they enthusiastically find objects and words that begin with the letter of the week. The children enthusiastically focus on "Sonny's Wonderful Wellies" as the story of the week, a good connection to the letter of the week. The children enjoy books together in the book corner. They confirm that they understand the sequence of a book as they move from the front to the back using picture clues to tell the story without being secure in building words efficiently. Teachers prepare them thoughtfully to take part in their later learning as they get the children to identify key features of fiction texts and children take part in some imaginatively planned group activities. The group activities develop a range of skills effectively. Some take roles in their role play area whilst others either begin to develop writing skills using whiteboards or books according to whether or not the teacher wants them to be a permanent record of learning. Children begin to move well along the stepping stones of the early learning goals because of good teaching but remain well below average as a result of starting from this low base.

Mathematical development

61. The children have a low level of understanding of all aspects of mathematical development. In whole class starting points the staff concentrate upon the initial skills in dealing with numbers in their mathematical work. They deal with numbers from five to twenty with reasonable measures of confidence as they are well supported with the use of a number line. The best learning takes place in smaller groups when the children work in a focused way. Some of them are at the initial stage of matching numbers and to do this accurately. Another group use cubes and stamp sets to record their understanding of how numbers are being built up to ten and twenty. The children understand because they sing songs such as "five currant buns" and "ten teddy bears" with children representing these figures. This is reinforced as the teachers use ten flowers and snowmen on a washing line to build up and take away. Children are then able to make sets of numbers using these concrete objects. The children receive intensive support from teachers and support staff in order to ensure their understanding. The children make sensible graphs as a result of adult support when they are making decisions about their favourite Chinese foods when celebrating the Chinese New Year. This is a regular way of developing the children's learning by getting one area of learning to support another one. In other activities that are less structured but closely monitored children find out about the use of space and capacity as they play

in the sand and water trays. Although children benefit from good teaching they move slowly along the paths of the stepping stones in developing their mathematical understanding. They are well below average as a result of starting from a low base.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. The children come into the school with a very limited knowledge and understanding of the world. The staff make sterling efforts to overcome the difficulties that this gives the children in developing their knowledge and understanding of many aspects of the world. The children find out about other places in the world in a practical way. In the inspection week they were discovering many facets of the Chinese New Year through sharing food, recording likes and dislikes in graph form and taking on roles as staff in the Chinese restaurant that they have set up in their classroom. Language such as “crispy” and “hot sauce” is being applied to prawn crackers whilst learning how to use chopsticks. The children find out about direction and space when they move around with care in the large hall and rather inappropriate outdoor space around their classrooms. The children have appropriate opportunities to use the mouse successfully as they experiment with the computer. Like many of the activities in this area of learning the skills are well below what could normally be expected. However, when the children are using the plastic construction materials they are able to apply more skill to their use because their physical skills are better developed. Nevertheless, overall the children’s skills in this area of learning are well below average despite good quality teaching.

Physical development

63. The children are developing their physical skills well due in the main to good teaching. These skills are developed in the large hall space that they are able to use regularly. In the hall the children are taken through an effectively sequenced learning experience. The focus on control and co-ordination is successful as the children achieve levels of movement that are in line with those that could normally be expected for their ages. They have moved along the stepping stone pathways of the early learning goals appropriately and are well prepared for their work in the Year 1 classes. Their sequence of learning begins with the children listening and responding to instructions to confirm their awareness of space. The children stretch and curl on spots that the teacher has placed carefully in different places around the hall. They walk to them before jumping over them forwards and backwards and sideways as they listen carefully to the teachers’ tambourine. The teacher acts as a good role model by joining in with many of the movements. This enhances the understanding of the children effectively. The children’s skills are extended as they respond accurately by balancing in different ways on their knees and legs. The children really enjoy their accomplishments because they have been so accurate and have received the teacher’s praise. The children’s finer physical skills are being equally well developed in the classrooms as they cut paper carefully to create lanterns as part of their celebrations of the Chinese New Year.

Creative development

64. The children are given a range of opportunities to develop their creative skills. They have time given to them to experiment with paint when use bold colours to make imaginative versions of dragons. The children then use their initiative as they create dragons as they cut and join different sorts and colours of papers together successfully. Chinese lanterns are cut out equally carefully as different coloured sugar papers are formed by children who are enjoying the chance to make their own decisions about which of the bright colours to use. The children also have the opportunity to illustrate a Chinese couplet card beautifully because they work at it with such patient care. The teacher supports throughout the carousel of activities that gives all of the children the chance to take part in all of them but at no point does she prevent

the children from making their own creative decisions. This stimulating range of activities supports the children in attaining to the sort of level that could be expected for their ages. The children's creative abilities are confirmed when they join in singing and making music with infant classes in the school hall. They show a good level of awareness of rhythm and pitch in their singing that is comparable with infant pupils. The children are well along the stepping stones of the early learning goals. They are well prepared for their work in Year 1 classes.

ENGLISH

65. Standards in English are below average in Years 2 and 6. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriately. When pupils enter Year 1, the language skills of most are well below average. Because of effective teaching methods, good relationships and the generous ratio of adults to pupils, they make sound progress from Year 1 to Year 6. Some inspiring teaching, for example that observed during the inspection in Year 2, leads to occasionally more rapid progress.
66. In last year's national assessments, standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 were below the national average. However, the performance of these eleven-year-olds compared favourably with their performance in the national tests when they were seven. The school's general trend of improvement is broadly confirmed by the inspection findings. More pupils in Year 6 are now achieving the expected levels despite the fact that there are more pupils joining the school in reception and in other classes with language skills which are poor.
67. Overall, standards in speaking and listening are below average. In most lessons, pupils listen attentively and, by the end of Year 6, average and higher attaining pupils have listening skills close to those expected. Speaking skills are well promoted. In Years 1 and 2, pupils often work in small group settings, gaining confidence as speakers and in lessons, teachers very effectively model language for their pupils. Some pupils respond well to stimulating opportunities for talk and begin to use language imaginatively to express their ideas. For instance, in a Year 1 and 2 art and design lesson one pupil said a photograph of a tree root; "...looks like witches' hands." In Year 5, pupils described the characteristics of heroic figures as "lion heart" or "sword swashing" Other Year 5 pupils give straightforward accounts of their roles in the school's dramatic productions.
68. Overall, standards in reading are below average. However, pupils' attitudes to reading are good. The school has worked hard to encourage a growing number of parents to listen to their children read at home and this is paying good dividends. For instance, a lower attaining pupil in Year 6 tries to read at home up to six evenings each week. Higher attainers have reading skills that are appropriate for their ages and in Year 6, effectively use texts to search for information. They use their reading skills when using computers for research purposes. Some pupils with a particular need in reading are given a very graduated approach to learning letter sounds and how these sounds make up words in English. For some pupils this limits their rate and learning and the special educational needs co-ordinator is rewriting individual education plans to take this into account. Generally pupils know letter sounds, use them in their reading and correct their own errors.
69. Handwriting skills are above average by Year 2. Because of the effective regular handwriting lessons they have, pupils in all ability ranges are writing in a well formed cursive hand during their handwriting sessions. From Years 3 to 6 handwriting lessons continue as a regular component of pupils' English lessons. However, not enough is

done to encourage pupils to use their good handwriting skills across all subjects, including English.

70. Because of the effective teaching methods used, pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge of the letter sounds in the English language. In Year 2, they use white boards very effectively to demonstrate their growing skills in using phonemes in words and their attainment in spelling is broadly average. Because of some inspiring teaching some of these pupils make very good progress in their ability to aurally distinguish the different vowel blends in words spoken by their teacher. Spelling skills are systematically extended through Years 3 to 6 and spelling tests show that pupils in all ability groups make the expected progress so that in Year 6 their spelling is usually accurate.
71. Standards in writing are below average. In Year 1, pupils write simple sentences and their most interesting work is linked to stories they have heard. In Year 2, the range of writing increases, but because the amount of writing done is sparse, pupils do not have enough opportunity to express their ideas in writing using their developing handwriting and spelling skills. From Years 3 to 6, in general, the quality of work pupils produce is insufficient to enable them to develop well enough as writers. Nevertheless, there are some instances of lively vocabulary and well-crafted phrases being used in poems written in Year 6. There is clear evidence of improvements in the different strands of writing. Skills in handwriting, punctuation and spelling are securely in place and, in response to stimulating and challenging teaching, pupils express their ideas using lively language orally and, more rarely, in written form. Nevertheless, only a minority of pupils are yet weaving all these strands together to produce writing of an appropriate standard.
72. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their literacy targets. This is as a result of the good level of support they receive from learning support assistants and the wide variety of extra literacy support that is available. In Year 1, pupils have opportunities to join a nurture group where their oral language and social skills are fostered in a homely and affirming setting. Not enough is done to enrich pupils' language outside the nurture groups. Language programmes help pupils with specific language difficulties make good progress in developing phonic skills. These programmes are also followed by pupils with more general difficulties, and provide more limited benefit. There are good arrangements for pupils to be taught in small groups and the curriculum is often appropriately modified to meet their needs. Most individual education plans include at least one language target and these, which while generally appropriate, need to be sharper if gains in learning are to be measured accurately.
73. Appropriate use is made of language across the curriculum. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use scientific language well to describe their observations about forces. In art lessons they recall past events and respond enthusiastically to images of sculptures. In most lessons, pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to one another. In Years 3 to 6 they write about religious festivals and in Years 5 and 6 music lessons, perform their rap poems to a rhythmic accompaniment. The school library is well used by pupils at break and lunch times. Pupils in Year 6 value the good opportunities they are given to exercise responsibility as librarians. Sound use is made of ICT programs to build up pupils' language skills. In some lessons teachers very effectively demonstrate how text can be edited using ICT. Although there is some evidence of pupils following this example their keyboard skills are below par.

74. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some strong features. Uppermost in these is the good relationships teachers establish with pupils. Pupils respond well to teachers' encouraging and supportive approach and an enjoyment of books and stories is well fostered. In an instance of exceptional teaching, the teacher's enthusiasm and very well planned activities inspired high quality learning for a group of Year 2 pupils and they made very good progress in developing phonological awareness. Effective methods, for example, the use of white boards, promote accurate spelling. Good routines in handwriting lessons include requiring pupils to underline the most well written words or characters in their handwriting exercise. This very effectively encourages pupils to evaluate their own work and helps to promote good standards in handwriting. Teaching in some lessons is successful in stimulating talk and inspiring the use of more extensive vocabulary thus enriching pupils' language skills. In some of the best lessons, team teaching was highly effectively used to 'plant ideas' and extend pupils' thinking about fact and fiction.
75. A shortcoming in teaching is that not enough is expected of higher attaining pupils. The tasks that pupils are given to do are not always well enough matched to pupils learning needs and do not offer sufficient challenge for higher attainers. Therefore, these pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. The pace in some lessons is too slow and consequently, the rate of learning is not as brisk as it needs to be.
76. The subject is well led by co-ordinator and a relatively new curriculum group supports her. A range of procedures has been introduced to raise standards. Teaching and planning are regularly monitored and this is having a beneficial impact on the quality of learning. A key feature of the school's approach to improved reading standards is to more actively involve parents in hearing their children read at home. There has been a good measure of success in this. The lunchtime reading club is another way in which pupils are encouraged to become regular readers. The curriculum is well linked to the National Literacy Strategy. Good opportunities for termly assessments of progress have been introduced and are now becoming embedded in the school's practice and linked to planning. These are having a positive impact on several strands of literacy learning. A curricular weakness is that pupils do not have enough opportunity to behave as writers in response to an inspiring stimulus. Tasks set in literacy sessions do not allow enough scope for pupils, and especially higher attainers, to use and extend their skills more fully than their usual work sheets allow and this limits the progress they can make.

MATHEMATICS

77. Standards for pupils in this Year's 2 and 6 are below average. In Year 6 pupils' knowledge and understanding of number is at the expected levels. Since the last inspection the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels has risen despite the fact that the proportion of pupils with special educational needs has increased and there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils leaving and joining the school at non-standard times. The concentration by teachers on improving pupils' number skills has paid dividends in increased rates of achievement although there is more work to do to bring other aspects of mathematics up to the same standards.
78. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their low level of attainment on entry into school. There is little difference in the progress and achievement of boys and girls. In number work, standards are broadly average. Although some progress has been made in other strands of mathematics, there is a need to ensure a more systematic approach to developing pupils'

understanding of shape and handling data across the age ranges. The pace of learning for some pupils, particularly the more able, is too slow.

79. The school's recent emphasis on developing strategies to improve pupils' skills in number is helping pupils in Years 1 and 2 to understand the links between addition and subtraction and to recognise relationships between numbers. In other areas of mathematics pupils need more opportunities to solve problems and reason through every day situations and practical experiences. Too often pupils complete an exercise or worksheet and they do not understand how to apply their learning to other situations. Another weakness lies in the level of understanding of mathematical vocabulary. Teachers do not always use and reinforce language effectively enough in lessons to develop pupils' confidence to use new words in their responses. In the most successful lessons teachers repeat words frequently and link them to calculations and problems. They require pupils to respond to questions using the language that has been introduced. This promotes positive learning experiences and pupils begin to use the broader vocabulary independently.
80. By Year 6 pupils' number skills show competency in multiplication and division. They have a good understanding of place value and decimals and more able pupils calculate work involving percentages and ratio. In general the focus on developing number skills disadvantages learning in other aspects of mathematics. Too much time is spent completing number exercises and there are too few activities to help pupils to gain a secure knowledge of shape, space and measures. They recognise the names of two- and three-dimensional shapes but cannot describe their properties.
81. Pupils' knowledge of data handling is extended through the use of ICT. In discussion, pupils report programming robots to explore angles and turns and they create graphs to display information. They are beginning to use spreadsheets to record information. Pupils benefit from the early morning and after school sessions which operate daily and extend pupils' experiences of linking ICT and mathematics. Pupils' progress in using and applying mathematics is less rapid but improves when teachers give pupils opportunities to discuss their work and learn different ways of achieving the same conclusions. Most pupils say they like mathematics. They behave well in lessons, listen to instructions and persevere. They are enthusiastic during mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of lessons.
82. The teaching is satisfactory but expectations are not high enough, particularly for higher achieving pupils. Better use could be made of teaching assistants to reinforce the main learning points for pupils. Teachers make regular assessment of learning but do not make enough use of the information to set precise targets. This aspect of their work is a current priority. There are good features in many lessons. The teachers make appropriate use of the National Numeracy Strategy when planning lessons. They have benefited from training and guidance from monitoring of teaching and learning by local inspectors. Most teachers match their questions accurately to the ability of the pupils and this good practice improves the pace in learning. The teachers capitalise on this competitive spirit in some classes and through effective questions and encouraging comments foster a positive atmosphere in which pupils want to succeed. Teachers develop very good relationships with pupils and use praise to develop self-esteem. There is a good level of trust and mutual respect and pupils with challenging behaviour and those who have special educational needs are full participants in lessons. Teachers mark the pupils' work regularly but there are insufficient comments to help pupils to recognise ways to improve. Pupils with special educational have good support and achieve well in relation to the targets set in their individual plans. Homework is set regularly and pupils are encouraged to learn their tables.

83. The subject leader provides good support for staff and is a good role model. She is leading the development of target setting and has a clear understanding of how to raise standards.

SCIENCE

84. Attainment in the current Years 2 and 6 is below the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining the national average since the last inspection has increased. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
85. In Year 2, there is a smaller than usual amount of written work, most of which is recorded on commercially produced worksheets. These worksheets do provide a structure for below average and average pupils with limited language skills but they do not provide sufficient challenge or offer opportunities for independent work for more able pupils. Pupils have completed a focused topic on physical processes. They know that both push and pull are examples of force; they can identify many different sources of light and, in an experiment where they shone light on materials, they can describe whether it was dull or shiny. There is no work on materials in books but discussion with pupils indicates that they know different types of materials and their simple properties. When pupils are given opportunities, they can demonstrate a lively sense of enquiry. This was exemplified in all three Year 2 classes during the inspection week. Pupils were encouraged to identify various forces, for example, pupils knew when blowing bubbles that gravity makes bubbles fall to the ground but also air coming out of an empty washing up liquid bottle can combat the forces of gravity and prevent a bubble from falling to the ground. Whilst pupils demonstrate that they are acquiring knowledge and understanding broadly in line with the national expectation, their inability to prepare written work prevents them achieving national expected levels.
86. Pupils have worked on materials and they know how to sort different types of soil on the basis of texture, appearance and size of particles. They reach simple conclusions; for example, trees could not grow in compost because roots could not anchor properly. However, much of the work was below the level appropriate for Year 6. Work on electricity was at an appropriate level and pupils could include a switch in a circuit and explain how it functions. In a topic on light, however, pupils identified sources of light, work which was completed at the same level in Year 2.
87. In Year 5 pupils develop their skills in using data and predicting outcomes when carrying out scientific enquiry. For example, in an experiment to identify which materials muffle sound effectively, pupils demonstrated that they understood the control of variables. They predicted which materials would be most effective and to what extent. These Year 5 pupils made good progress. Their standard of work and their graphical drawings show that they are acquiring a competent level of skills.
88. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good in lessons where teaching is exciting, the pace is brisk and resources are prepared well, as evidenced in Year 2 classes during the inspection. Joint planning ensures consistent expectation and outcomes. The quality of teaching varies significantly. Where teachers lack secure knowledge of the subject requirements and, as a result, control the lesson too tightly, as seen in one Year 3/4 lesson and one Year 6 lesson, more able pupils' progress is not fast enough. At times teachers confuse activities and learning objectives. Also, activities are not differentiated in mixed-age classes or even when sets of single aged pupils are drawn together. As there is a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, the need to plan work to match the range of abilities reflected in

each class is not sufficiently well recognised or planned for. Teachers' expectations are pitched at the pupils of lower ability. In many lessons the higher attainers finish their work before the rest of the class. They are given extension activities but these do not challenge them sufficiently. In the statutory assessments of last year's Year 6 pupils, teachers significantly underestimated the proportion of high attaining pupils.

89. While there is assessment at the end of each unit, the results are not analysed and used to provide a basis for future work. In most classes the marking of pupils' work does not identify errors or contain helpful comments to move pupils' learning forward. In fact, many incorrect statements, observations and conclusions are marked as correct. Incorrect spellings are not identified. These factors impede pupils' learning.
90. Most pupils have positive attitudes and are keen to learn. Many more able pupils show remarkably good perseverance, particularly when the pace of the lesson is slow. Both boys and girls work well together, share resources and listen to each other's ideas. In one very good example in a Year 6 class, pupils were asked to work in groups of four with one person to scribe. A very sensible, mature young lad showed much common sense in handling an outburst from a girl who wanted to scribe and control the group. The other two waited for the 'storm' to calm down and all then worked sensibly. Many such incidents show that the pupils are capable of achieving well.
91. The curriculum coverage is inconsistent. There are science attainment targets which are not followed in depth, partly due to the two-year rolling programme. Sometimes pupils repeat work at the same level as in the younger classes. However, the co-ordinator is aware of some of these difficulties and has recently introduced single classes for Years 5 and 6. Additionally, the school organises a whole week of 'enrichment science activities' in an effort to raise standards. Courses organised for the co-ordinators by the local education authority are supporting further development of assessment, planning and the use of ICT in the curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN

92. Standards reached by Year 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs, are in line with those expected for the age group. Art and design was not taught in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection and consequently no judgment can be made about standards as there was insufficient work displayed. The subject is paired with design and technology and during the current term junior pupils are being taught design and technology. This arrangement has implications for progression in learning and the development of skills in both subjects, particularly when the high mobility of pupils is considered.
93. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in painting and stencilling techniques. Attractive pictures using blow-painting methods are proudly displayed in the school corridors. Pupils are interested in drawing and all pupils have sketchbooks that indicate pupils' increasing skills as they make their way through the school. Although the school does not keep portfolios of pupils' work, on the work seen standards in art and design have been maintained with in Year 2 since the previous inspection.
94. The pupils enjoy art and design and work hard during lessons, concentrating throughout and behaving very well. This was evident in a mixed class of Year 1 and 2 pupils when they were challenged to work in groups to produce sculptures made from natural materials and plants. The quality of the teaching in this lesson was very good. Good quality photographs supported teachers to promote ideas with the pupils. An

excellent range of materials was assembled for pupils to use and through negotiation with group members' sculptures were created and named. This work provided excellent opportunities for speaking and listening as pupils favoured certain materials in preference to others. Additionally, very good social and moral implications were evident as pupils took turns and showed consideration for the views of other group members. The work was completed with pupils drawing the sculpture in their sketchbooks.

95. The school has a suitable scheme of work, based on national guidelines, which provides guidance for teachers on developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. This includes opportunities for pupils to use computers to copy, paste and position illustrations and design their own with paint programs. The subject co-ordinator was not in school during the inspection and discussions about the subject took place with another member of staff. There have been few opportunities to monitor work in classes. Assessment procedures monitor pupils' achievements in painting but not in other aspects of art and design. There are plans for the school to organize an Art Week to raise awareness of the importance of art in education

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. Pupils make good progress and in Years 2 and 6 and attain standards appropriate for their age. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection due to the appointment of a specialist design and technology co-ordinator who has brought more efficiency to teaching and learning in the subject.
97. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are rapidly developing their skills and understanding. They have produced designs and sketches for making a wooden toy with moving parts. Pupils have made choices in selecting tools and materials. Their written instructions show a developing understanding of the need to give step-by-step processes with measurements. The completed models work well and are properly finished. Planning and evaluation booklets are used throughout the process and provide pupils with a very clear framework which enables them to see the whole context of designing, planning, making and evaluating. Pupils' evaluations at this stage are too general but these skills are developing rapidly. They use tools well and measure out accurately but sometimes tools are not of sufficiently good quality to support them. For example, the top juniors had planned and designed how to make sandals and had planned to make the base of the sandals from cardboard. Cutting thick cardboard with ordinary scissors hindered their progress and prevented them from cutting neatly. In their study of food technology, Year 6 pupils accurately costed different types of bread and tested them. In groups they successfully made dough and the school kitchen baked the bread which was shared by all.
98. In making a Christmas cracker Year 1 and 2 showed the beginning stages of an understanding of designing and planning. They have successfully made a shelter for a teddy bear. They can explain their selection of materials and they talked enthusiastically about an enjoyable competitive activity in designing apparatus for the playground and then making a slide using paper straws. Discussion with pupils indicates they considered the structure and the type of adhesives to use. 'Glue was no good; it made the straw wet and they folded. We used tape because it was harder', said the pupils. The group who had designed the slide with a rubber hoop to act as a swing won the competition. 'They won because their design had a slide and a swing' chorus the group. This lively, informed debate indicated that pupils were increasing their understanding and knowledge at a good pace. Overall, most pupils have a good awareness of health and safety.

99. The quality of teaching is good in Years 5 and 6 where teaching includes that by the subject specialist. In other year groups teaching is satisfactory, with some clear strengths in Years 1 and 2. There are weaknesses in teaching in Years 3/4 where there is a lack of clarity about the subject requirements. Making and designing a torch in Years 3 and 4 focused more sharply on the science aspects rather than design. However, pupils did not design the switches; they were presented with three models. Teaching is most successful when pupils are given clear instructions and resources are well prepared so that pupils can make choices from a wide range of suitable materials. This was the case in one of the top junior classes. However, in another class the selection of resources was not carefully considered when pupils were presented with a range of largely inappropriate materials. In a good lesson, the teacher judged well when to intervene and when to leave pupils to learn from their own mistakes. The pace of the lesson was well judged. Pupils are given sufficient time to ensure they can produce an article of good quality. Giving pupils the opportunity to make choices and work independently within a well-explained framework encourages pupils' confidence and willingness to explore.
100. Pupils were keen to initiate tasks, levels of concentration were high and they worked with purposeful excitement. When tasks had limited scope and lacked clear instructions, as when designing and making torches, the pupils spent too much time trying to attract the teacher's attention or sometimes distracted other pupils from working.
101. The newly appointed design and technology co-ordinator has made a significant impact in a relatively short time. Using government guidelines as a scheme of work, she has set about ensuring each year covers the National Curriculum requirements. She has evaluated the current position through discussion with staff, monitoring pupils' work, evaluating teachers' planning and reviewing and auditing resources. She has generated enthusiasm and provides in-service training for the staff to develop their expertise of the subject. She is fully aware that cross-curricular links with other subjects are underdeveloped. A portfolio of work and photographs of pupils' work at different stages has been started. She plans to establish close links with the secondary school which has been awarded a technology specialist school status. The co-ordinator is providing very good leadership for design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

102. Standards in written work in geography are below average by the end of Year 2 and average by the end of Year 6. In Year 1 and 2 classes there is too much reliance on the use of worksheets for pupils to record their work. There is a greater opportunity to record their work independently in junior classes which pupils grasp to confirm their growing geographical skills effectively. This ensures that the pupils are able to develop their accuracy in the way that they record geographical knowledge and understanding. The school has sustained the standards found at the last inspection in Year 6.
103. All pupils are making at least satisfactory progress with better progress seen in lessons in Years 3 to 6. This is confirmed in the displays of work around the school that show that all pupils' work in geography is valued. Those pupils who have special needs receive extra support from both class teachers and support staff. There is, however, too little difference in the level of tasks for pupils in Years 1 and 2 particularly. The pupils do as well as they do because of the good level of support.

104. The sample of work in Years 1 and 2 confirms adequate coverage of the development of mapping skills through making imaginative use of routes in stories. Pupils secure their knowledge of location through helpful visits to the local park where they identify focal points that need improvement. Thoughtful consideration is given to a contrasting environment as the pupils make a seaside study. The same tasks arising from these opportunities are too often lacking challenge for more able pupils but are too challenging for the less able.
105. In Years 3 to 6 pupils in the mixed age classes are completing similar work. There is a focus on a cycle in an appropriate range of work. This ensures that the different ages cover national guidance in their topics over a period of time. In lessons in Years 3 and 4 where the focus is on weather around the world pupils are able to use atlases systematically to locate countries and cities. The accuracy of their work on maps usefully helps them to find out about conditions in different parts of the world. Information slips prepared by their teachers directed learning particularly profitably for the more able pupils who are able to read the instructions. Class teachers usefully help less able pupils who have more difficulty with the language of the instructions by interpreting the language for them. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 give thoughtful consideration to the needs of others in the world as they focus on the topic of water. They effectively contrast their own conditions with those of people in Africa as they keep their own diary of the use of water at home with the use made in an African village. They use photographic resources confidently to pose questions in order to ascertain further useful information about conditions in Africa. The sensible range of questions pertinently looks at the cleanliness of water, for example, to see how it might affect the health.
106. Pupils work co-operatively in pairs and small groups as well as individually and whole classes in order to develop their knowledge and understanding in junior classes. They are able to summarise findings for one another clearly in whole class plenary sessions that invariably complete lessons. They give careful consideration to one another's views that supports their social and moral development effectively
107. Teachers plan work thoughtfully. They structure the way that lessons develop learning upon previous learning skilfully. Learning is resourced imaginatively with atlases, photographs and the use of the Internet to research, for instance, the building of the new toll road. Through systematic teachers' planning the pupils are able to give logical consideration to the issues that arise in different countries of the world. Contrasting work using the more local environment continues with visits, including a residential visit to Shugborough where the pupils study a more rural environment than the place where they live.
108. The subject is being satisfactorily led and managed by a subject leader who has recently become part of a curriculum team that has representatives from all areas in the school. Care is being taken to support class teachers with appropriate resources, an updating of the policy and scheme of work and more structured opportunities to monitor the pupils' learning. However, there is a need to strengthen the different levels of work particularly so that more able pupils are better challenged by their tasks. There is too little care taken with the consistency of marking to help pupils to improve their work.

HISTORY

109. Standards in the written work in history are below average by the end of Year 2 but were better in the lessons observed in the inspection week. By the end of Year 6 standards were average in both lessons and in the sample of work. This is because there is less dependence on the use of worksheets to record knowledge and understanding in Years 3 to 6. In lessons pupils confirmed their sound knowledge and understanding of historical ideas, including chronology of events. They do this in both their verbal contributions to discussions and written work. Pupils use computers for historical research on the Internet and CD-ROMs. The school has sustained the standards found at the last inspection in Year 6.
110. All pupils are making at least satisfactory progress but progress is good when tasks are carefully targeted at meeting pupils' needs. The satisfactory progress is shown in both the sample of work and in the lessons observed. Those pupils who have special needs receive extra helpful support from both class teachers and support staff. However, they are not given enough consistent opportunities to tackle different levels of work according to their abilities, particularly in Years 1 and 2.
111. The cycle of work in mixed age group classes throughout the school is completed so that there is adequate coverage of knowledge and understanding of historical skills. In infant classes the pupils have their learning made more meaningful for them as they build up their class museums of objects from different times in the past. They bring a number of objects from home that are effectively extended by examples from their teachers. The pupils are able to form their time lines visually in their classrooms as they place the objects along a line for one another. They are carefully labelled so that the pupils can accurately record their understanding of how to compare the past and the present times. Knowledge is extended by the mystery objects brought by their teachers such as the cobblers last which sharpens the accuracy of the historical language used by the pupils'
112. In Years 3 to 6 the practical nature of the learning is continued as the pupils make use of a wide range of resources to re-enforce their understanding. In Year 3/4 classes when the focus is on learning about Roman Britain the pupils recall previous learning purposefully as a whole class before moving into group activities. The pupils listen carefully and confirm their understanding by the sensible points that they make in the discussions. Class teachers work patiently and persistently with the pupils in order to ensure accuracy in final conclusions even when knowledge is limited initially. The pupils make good use of research skills as they find information from an appropriate range of books. However, the books are not supported by the use of ICT. Nevertheless boys and girls work together enthusiastically and skilfully to gather facts that develop their understanding effectively. Different levels of tasks are more in evidence in these classes as some pupils build collages of Roman roads whilst the others research the books. However, literacy skills are developed for this group of pupils too as they are expected to report back to the whole class about what they have been making. They are able to do this successfully. This effective method of learning is continued by the end of Year 6 work as shown in the sample of work. Pupils are becoming self sufficient learners by the time they are in Year 6 classes.
113. Teachers plan carefully. They pay particular attention to the effective resourcing of activities. They make learning meaningful because it is so practically biased. Teachers ask pertinent open-ended questions of pupils as they work alongside them in their group activities. They lead whole class discussions purposefully as they distribute questions to involve as many pupils as possible. Teachers give clear instructions that

help pupils to get on with tasks briskly as well as enthusiastically. Support staff are well deployed in order to maximise the support that they give to all pupils.

114. A keen and enthusiastic subject leader is part of a recently formed curriculum team that has representation from all age groups in the school. She is leading developments satisfactorily. The provision of adequate resources confirms the secure management of the subject. An appropriate scheme of work is ready for review with clear actions drawn up over a suitable time scale to complete this review. There is too little attention given to consistently helpful marking of work and assessment of where pupils need to improve. This is recognised by the subject leader as needing to be focused upon in the review.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

115. Attainment is at the expected levels for Year 2 and just below for Year 6 pupils; not enough is expected of brighter pupils. Generally, all pupils have regular access to computers. This is a relatively recent occurrence. As they grow more familiar with the capabilities of ICT their rate of achievement improves. The plans for the improvement of resources, including the purchase of laptop computers, means that all pupils in the school will have more frequent access to good quality resources and the Internet. There are some good examples of using ICT skills in other subjects of the curriculum, for example, in geography charting the progress of a local toll road on the Internet. Generally computers are used sufficiently to, for example, complete graphs in mathematics and science, and word processing programs are used to enhance the presentation of writing and illustrate pupils' work.
116. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 draft their work directly onto the screen and understand how to control how their work looks. For example, they change the type and size of the font as they consider the nature of their work. They use these skills when they plan the weekly newssheet for publication throughout the school. They calculate the scores in tests using spreadsheets to come to the totals. They do not know how to apply other formulae to the cells in the spreadsheet. Pupils use the Internet and CD-ROMs for research purposes and study the development of the new toll road in the West Midlands by following its progress on the Internet. In these year groups pupils are producing an animated presentation on a theme of their own choice. Pupils understand how to programme a point about a screen to create two-dimensional geometric shapes. They work well in pairs and quickly understood the procedures for preparing their presentations by using their developed skills of copying, cutting and pasting maps and text from other files. In Year 2 pupils save and print their work but do not know how to retrieve it from their files. They use the computers in their classrooms to copy and paste illustrations in their work on houses. They label parts of the human body in an interesting link to science. They show a sound understanding of how to use the keyboard and mouse. Keyboard skills are not well developed throughout the school and this means that by the time pupils are in Year 6 they still 'hunt' for keys with one finger.
117. In the lessons observed teaching was generally good. Teachers know enough about the subject to teach skills effectively. They plan work which is interesting and with sensible links to other subjects. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 worked on decision trees to sort fruit and vegetables, to help in their science work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use computers to help with their spelling and number work. In Years 5 and 6 pupils used computers to make presentations of floods in this and other countries such as Bangladesh. In the lessons observed teachers paid good attention to the different learning needs of some pupils, including those with special educational needs. This

group of pupils makes good progress. Learning support assistants provide good advice in lessons, never interfering with learning and giving just enough advice to support for pupils to do well. Lessons are well organised and teachers in Years 5 and 6 make effective use of the projector to show pupils step-by-step procedures. Pupils are managed well and they are keen to learn.

118. The co-ordinators are skilled leaders and share a firm commitment with senior managers and the governors to continue to improve the school's facilities. The decision to buy laptop computers so that pupils' have access to ICT in all parts of the school is sensible. The development plan for the subject is of good quality. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection, maintaining the quality of teaching and improving the resources in the subject.

MUSIC

119. Standards in music are much the same as they were at the time of the last inspection. It was only possible to see a limited number of music lessons during the inspection period. Nevertheless, perusal of school documents and discussions with teachers and pupils support the evidence from lessons that pupils attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music making activities. Pupils achieve well, often because their music lessons are taught by teachers with good subject knowledge.
120. Throughout the school, pupils sing tunefully and with good articulation. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' singing is well pitched and confident. Their rhythmic skills are well developed and in Years 5 and 6 they incorporate quarter and dotted note values into clapping patterns. Because of challenging teaching, four groups in the class are able to successfully maintain different rhythmic patterns at the same time. This work provides a very good basis for pupils' rap compositions, the focus of work developed over several weeks. The compositions, based on pupils' poems about winter, incorporate well the elements of timbre and rhythm. Pupils concentrate and co-operate well in their rehearsal, their performances are spirited and they make effective use of a microphone. They have good opportunities to evaluate performance, their own and that of others, and they do so thoughtfully and in a generous and sensitive manner. In Years 3 and 4 pupils, know some note values and are able to improvise rhythmic patterns. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. However, pupils' written compositions show that they are developing the ability to graphically represent longer and shorter sounds.
121. Pupils enjoy music. As they left one lesson they told their teacher how much they enjoyed music. "I like this lesson too," she responded. They enjoy different types of music and know that music can be produced in many different ways. They recall visits from a brass band, from a Ghanaian drummer and from a jazz group. Some recall with great enthusiasm their participation in the school choir's performance in Symphony Hall, Birmingham. Many pupils belong to the school choir, which meets weekly. The school also offers good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a range of musical instruments, including the cello, under the tuition of one of the visiting instrument teachers.
122. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. The school has deployed staff well to make good use of the specialist subject knowledge available and this was a significant factor in promoting the good progress seen in Year 5 and 6 lessons during the inspection. Planning is satisfactory and based on government guidance. Pupils are normally well managed and consequently behaviour is usually good.

123. A new co-ordinator has recently joined the school and she is well supported by colleagues in the curriculum group. The school has been without a music co-ordinator for two years but believes it has maintained its aim of helping pupils to read, write, create and enjoy music. One of the new co-ordinator's objectives is to help non-specialist teachers develop confidence in their ability to successfully teach music. The school hopes to invest in a scheme of work which can be used by non-specialist teachers. At present, the school's teaching is based on the QCA guidance and assessments are incorporated into the school's regular programme. Resources are adequate and there is an appropriate range of instruments. There has been satisfactory improvement since the time of the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. Standards in physical education are in line with those expected for pupils in Years 2 and 6 and are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. The areas of physical development are built upon consistently and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
125. Swimming is a strength of the school's provision. Pupils travel to the local leisure centre and are taught by their teachers and instructors employed by the local authority. Swimming lessons are very well organised. Good attention is given to water safety and this encourages pupils to behave responsibly. There is no time wastage and pupils swim for all of their allocated time. Pupils are taught in groups that reflect their level of competence. Some pupils work in the learner pool developing their confidence in water. Other, more advanced groups, refine their techniques using a range of strokes, such as front crawl and backstroke. Pupils look forward to their swimming lessons and are pleased to share their enthusiasm for swimming. By the time they transfer to secondary school, well over eighty per cent of pupils swim 25 metres. Many receive private coaching and can swim significantly further.
126. Gymnastic lessons encourage pupils to improve control and poise. By Year 2 pupils travel and balance using three parts of their bodies to support them. They combine shapes into sequences of challenging movements that are transferred to free-standing apparatus. Well-performed dismounts, which sometimes include turns, complete these activities. Dance is an important part of the physical education programme in the school. Pupils in Year 4 work in pairs and improvise to create and link phrases within a structure. The work is extended in Year 6 with pupils working in groups to contrast the normal and strong movements of the Maori Haka dance. The dance has a demanding structure that challenges pupils. Success depends upon pupils working cooperatively to create menacing movements, facial expressions and chanting voices. Pupils are justly proud of themselves for achieving a high level of performance.
127. Rugby for boys and girls is the focus for games in Year 6. Pupils learn how to run with the ball, how to pass and how to place the ball in 'try' positions. They begin to learn the complicated rules of the game and work together in teams.
128. The quality of teaching is good with examples of very good and excellent practice. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this helps to maintain a lively pace in lessons. Pupils' interest is held and they are enthusiastic to improve their skills. Lessons are well structured. Warm up activities prepare pupils for rigorous activities. Teachers know their pupils very well and prepare work to ensure that they make good progress. A feature of the work is the link teachers make with speaking and listening and assessment when pupils are asked to suggest ways in which performances can

be improved. Pupils' responses indicate good knowledge of the requirements, for example, in dance when ways to improve group work were considered.

129. The subject is very well led by the subject co-ordinator. Her enthusiasm and subject knowledge offer good support to teachers. She has high standards when teaching and her example has contributed to developing positive attitudes in the subject. Resources at the school are very good. Old equipment has been replaced with new to more precisely meet the needs of pupils. The playing field is too small and all matches are played away from home. However, pupils still enjoy supervised after school football practices. Well over half the pupils in the school attend after school activities, many of them associated with sport. The hard play area, while marked for a range of games, is situated on a slope. This does not reduce enthusiasm and pupils often regard these disadvantages as a further challenge. The school has won a range of sports awards. Physical education makes a good contribution to the social and moral development of pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. Of the three lessons observed, one was seen in Year 1 and 2 and the other two in Years 5 and 6. Conversations were held with pupils and samples of their work examined. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 attain standards below those anticipated by the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special education needs, make unsatisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding. However, religious education makes a sound contribution to pupils' personal, social and moral development.
131. Pupils' standards in writing limit their overall attainment level. Discussion with pupils indicated significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding of the basic requirements of Step 1 of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus and Assessment; namely, 'recognise words and items associated with religion and recall the outline of stories'. Pupils struggled to recall the story of the Good Samaritan, which was the focus of the recent Year 2 lesson. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicated a very thin coverage of the syllabus, for example, 'to express their knowledge and experience of the world around them and how people relate to one another'. Work is often at a very simple, low level. On Sikhism, for example, pupils used a poorly labelled diagram of a Sikh man with no explanation of the important symbols particular to this religion. Pupils learned five basic facts about Islam but show a misunderstanding of the different qualities attributed to Allah and confuse these with different names for Allah. Overall, the quality and quantity of work is not satisfactory. As there is greater emphasis on oral rather than written work, there is very little work in either infants' or Year 5/6 books. In Years 3/4, there is wider coverage and the standard of work is better. Pupils' completed work rarely does justice to the work undertaken in class and does not provide an insight into pupils' understanding. This makes it difficult for teachers to check how well pupils are doing and for the pupils themselves to see the progress they are making.
132. Overall, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory but it does have a few significant strengths. In the observed infant lesson, pupils were keen, worked hard and showed good attitudes to the subject. In a good lesson in Year 1/ 2, pupils learnt to think of others and how to care for them. They made cards for a range of people and animals, including a sick cat. The teacher gave clear instructions and prepared resources well. Teaching in the Year 5/6 focused on the theme of 'Thinking about God' from the agreed syllabus. Pupils gave thoughtful responses to the question; 'What message would God give us today?' They were asked to respond with a slogan or logo. Many referred to the current situation in Iraq and wrote simple comments such as; 'Please don't kill my

creatures because they are all important to me'. Opportunities to explore what the pupils were trying to say in greater depth were missed. The pace of the lessons was generally slow and the teacher lacked confidence and overall, sufficient subject knowledge.

133. The co-ordinator has successfully encouraged all staff to teach religious education. The newly formed curriculum team will now have responsibility for monitoring the curriculum, standards and teaching. Good resources have been purchased and these support teachers well. Discussions with pupils show they understand Christian values and humanitarian issues, although many pupils confuse elements of other faiths. In this all white school, pupils do not meet people from diverse backgrounds holding different beliefs and values and there are too few opportunities for pupils to visits places of worship. The school successfully promotes strong Christian values and benefits from a strong relationship with the church.