

INSPECTION REPORT

HOWARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Elford, Tamworth

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124080

Headteacher: Nicky Poore

Reporting inspector: Joyce Taylor
4275

Dates of inspection: 11th – 12th November 2002

Inspection number: 248543

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Square Elford Tamworth Staffordshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	The Reverend John Fagan
Date of previous inspection:	November 2000

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Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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11084	Jane Hughes	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
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17907	Mike Bowers	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Religious education Educational inclusion	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Howard Primary School is situated in the village of Elford, several miles west of Tamworth. The pupils are aged between 4 and 11 years. Currently there are 77 children who attend the school. The area is one of social advantage. Most children live in the immediate area, which is mainly privately owned housing. Just over one per cent of the children are eligible for free school meals, which is well below average. A well below average proportion of children (nine per cent) is identified as having special educational needs for learning difficulties. No children have a statement. Most children enter reception achieving more than is usually seen for children of this age. A very small number of children are from minority ethnic groups or speak English as an additional language. There is roughly an equal number of boys and girls. All the classes have mixed age groups. The school has four full-time teachers and one was absent during the inspection due to illness. The headteacher took up her appointment just before the last inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some very good features. The teaching is good overall and the older children's progress has been much faster than average during their time in the school. The standards are well above average by the time the children leave Year 6. The school is led and managed very effectively and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The children make good progress and reach well above average standards by the time they leave the school;
- The school is led and managed very well;
- The teaching is particularly good in the junior classes;
- The children are cared for most effectively and their personal development is supported very strongly;
- The school works very closely with the parents who support the school extremely well.

What could be improved

- The standards at the end of reception and Year 2 are not high enough and the children make unsatisfactory progress.

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

At the time of the last inspection the school was judged to be underachieving; this is no longer the case.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 2000 and has made good improvements since then. The older children reach high standards in English, mathematics and science and they have made very good progress. The quality of teaching is better because of rigorous monitoring, evaluation and support provided by the headteacher. Very thorough developments of curriculum planning have ensured that the provision for all subjects is at least satisfactory and in the junior classes it is very good. The school has worked successfully to reach above average standards in science, history and geography by the end of Year 2. Very clear and thoughtful plans are in place to further improve the teaching and learning of English and mathematics for these children. The care and personal development of the children is now most effective and they thoroughly enjoy coming to school. The way the school is led and managed has strengthened, particularly in developing a committed staff and in finding ways to move forward. These aspects are very good. The governors now play a much more effective role in the life of the school and provide very good support.

STANDARDS

In the national tests in 2002, the number of Year 6 children who took the test was below ten and no results are published. The data drawn from such small numbers is not reliable enough to show comparisons with other schools.

The current Year 6 children are reaching standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science. They started in reception with standards that were higher than average but by the time they took their Year 2 tests their standards had fallen to average or below. Since then they have made very good progress. This is much better than at the time of the last inspection when the Year 6 children were making unsatisfactory progress. The school focus, on working towards higher level skills, has been extremely successful for the children in the junior classes. The standards reflect a sudden, and continuing, change for the better since 2001. The school sets high targets for the Year 6 children to reach in their national tests and the children have reached these targets over the past two years.

In Year 2, the children are reaching average standards in reading, writing and mathematics with slightly above average standards in numeracy and above average standards in science. When these children started in reception their standards were higher than expected for their age. This shows that they have made unsatisfactory progress in aspects of English and mathematics. In the national tests for 2002 the children reached average standards in reading and writing, below average standards in mathematics and high standards in science. Strategies for improving standards, particularly in mathematics and aspects of English, have been recently introduced and are already becoming effective.

By Years 2 and 6, standards in history, geography and singing are above average. In the junior classes, art and design and swimming are also above average. In religious education, information and communication technology (ICT) and art and design in the infant classes, standards are average. Most of the reception children enter school with standards that are above average. By the time they move into Year 1, their standards overall in reading, writing and mathematics have drifted down to average, and they have made unsatisfactory progress in these areas. This is because they already understand much of their learning and can complete tasks relatively quickly and easily. They have made satisfactory progress in the other areas of learning and their standards have been maintained.

Higher attaining pupils across the school, including those who are gifted or talented, achieve well and are given opportunities to work at a considerably advanced level for some aspects of the curriculum. The very small number of children who speak English as an additional language are given good support and are making very good progress, particularly in mathematics and science. Lower ability pupils are supported well to do as much as they can.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The children thoroughly enjoy school. They work hard in lessons and many make the most of the extra learning opportunities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The children understand and appreciate the code of conduct because they helped to write it. They follow it even when thinking they are unobserved.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils take responsibility whenever they see a chance. They form excellent relationships with each other and the adults.
Attendance	Above average. This is better than most schools.

The children are eager to talk about their work and show what they have done. They are confident and mature in their relationships.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection, almost half of the lessons seen were very good or excellent, about two fifths were satisfactory and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Overall, satisfactory teaching in reception maintains the children's above average standards in several areas of learning, particularly in their personal development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Weaker teaching in reading, writing and mathematics means they are not pushed hard enough in these aspects. As a result, their standards in these areas have drifted to average by the time they enter Year 1. Good teaching in Year 1 begins to remedy this and the children learn effectively. The teaching is satisfactory in Year 2 with some strengths. This term the children have experienced several different teachers and their learning has been less smooth but, over the past few years their progress has not been fast enough. Consequently, standards in English and aspects of mathematics have drifted down again. In other subjects, for example, science and numeracy, standards are now above average. Further, very sensible initiatives are planned to develop this improvement across all subjects. Teaching and learning are very good for the older children and they make very rapid progress. The children carry out challenging work that moves them forward to well above average standards. Teachers in all the classes are very good at helping the children become confident about trying things out. The higher attaining children are taught well and are reaching appropriate standards. Lower attaining children are also taught well and make good progress. The few children who do not speak English at home receive effective attention to ensure they understand their work.

There is a very comprehensive assessment and planning system that ensures work can be provided that will move the children forward regardless of the mixed age classes. This is used extremely well to support the oldest children and is being reinforced to support the others. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is very good for the older year groups and good for Year 1; it is satisfactory overall for the other children. Speaking and listening are taught very well across the school and the children are encouraged to explain and express themselves confidently. By the time the children leave the school, they read and write confidently and they understand and can talk about what the text means. They are skilled mathematicians and can use mathematics well in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, and very good for the older children. The school has organised the curriculum very thoroughly to ensure that in mixed age classes the children are provided with opportunities for good progress.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The systems are organised well and staff teach the children carefully to ensure they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The children are taught English well and their progress is carefully monitored. They are confident and happy learners who play a full part in the life of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good, especially the provision for moral and social development. The children understand the effect their behaviour has on others and are concerned not to upset each other. There are many good opportunities for spiritual and cultural development. The school implements its racial equality policy very effectively.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. This is a very happy and stimulating school. Assessment procedures are very good for the older pupils and are developing steadily, though rather slowly, through the rest of the school.
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The school works very well with parents, who have developed a firm trust in the good work of the school. The parents contribute very well to the children's learning, particularly through supporting homework and helping run after school clubs.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The school is moving forward quickly. The older children now make very rapid progress. The headteacher has an extremely clear picture of how she wants the school to be and she has identified and knows how to make further necessary improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors check how well the school is doing and provide very good support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The way the school identifies and improves weak areas is very good. All weaker aspects have been identified and most have been improved to high standards. Remaining weaknesses are listed as priorities for development.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school measures its success against other schools and constantly seeks to improve. The budget is used carefully and very effectively to improve opportunities for the children. The school applies the principles of best value very well.

The school has a very good match of teachers and support staff to meet its needs. The accommodation is unsatisfactory because it has no hall space but this is due for improvement in the near future. The school is maintained very well by the caretaker, janitor and cleaner. Administrative office staff provide good support. Learning resources are satisfactory and contribute appropriately to improving the children's standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is led and managed well; • There is an interesting range of activities outside lessons; • The children are expected to work hard and achieve their best; • Behaviour in the school is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views about the school. Some parents expressed concern because they thought there was too much homework and some were concerned because they thought there was not enough. The inspection team feels the amount of homework is appropriate for children of this age.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In Year 6, the children are now reaching well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Almost three quarters of them are already working within higher than average aspects of the national curriculum and are likely to reach the above average Level 5 when they take their national tests in 2003. They are making extremely good progress as their standards were average when they took their Year 2 tests. At the time of the last inspection, the standards at the end of Year 6 were average and the children's progress was unsatisfactory. The improvements in literacy and numeracy are the result of strong, specialist teaching that provides challenging learning opportunities for the children and ensures rapid progress. In 2002, the number of children in Year 6 was less than ten. With such a low number it is not appropriate to make comparisons between their standards and the standards in other schools. These children, however, made good progress and reached appropriate standards according to their ability. In 2001, the children reached standards that were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science, when compared with similar schools. Over time the standards, by the end of Year 6, show a higher trend for improvement than is typical in most schools.
2. In Year 2, the children are reaching average standards in reading, writing and mathematics with standards in numeracy just above average. This is very similar to the last inspection and, given that they were above average when they started school, the children are still making unsatisfactory progress. In science, there have been good improvements; their standards are above average and their progress is satisfactory. In the 2002 national tests, the children reached well above average standards in science, average standards in reading and writing and below average standards in mathematics. When compared with similar schools their standards were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. These children, now in Year 3, are generally making very good progress and almost two thirds of them are already working at a higher than average level. Some good improvements to the curriculum planning and support to improve teaching strategies are proving successful. Standards are beginning to rise. Further thoughtful developments linking specialist and team teaching, as for the older pupils, have been introduced as the latest strategy for improvement in the series of developments.
3. Standards in history, geography and singing are above average by Years 2 and 6 and swimming is above average by Year 6. Standards in ICT are average and have improved since the last inspection. Standards are average in religious education. Standards in art and design are above average by Year 6 and average by Year 2.
4. The children come into reception with standards that, overall, are above average. They make satisfactory progress in speaking, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development, most aspects of creative development and in their personal development. In reading, writing, mathematics and art and design, not enough is expected of them, and although the children reach average standards, their rate of progress is unsatisfactory.

5. The school works particularly effectively to ensure that the highest attaining children in all year groups make good progress, and there are successful strategies that support these children well. Children who speak English as an additional language are also supported well by the school. Although their standards in English are below average, they are reaching above average standards in mathematics and science. The school has a small proportion of pupils with special educational needs and some of them attain standards that are below the national averages in English and mathematics. This is because the rate at which they acquire literacy and numeracy skills is slower. However, the children make good progress because the work in these subjects is adapted at the correct level. The work is carefully structured and based on regular and accurate assessment, of what these children need to do next. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. This aspect of the school has improved since the last inspection; pupils are keen to come to school and make the most of their time there. Howard Primary School is a cheery place where strong friendships flourish.
7. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. In particular, the oldest pupils consistently approach every activity with great zest and determination; they are excellent examples for the younger children. Pupils of all ages are very willing to try their hardest and they concentrate well during lessons. They are really eager to learn and embrace the wealth of new experiences offered by the school. For example, a large number of pupils attend extra-curricular activities available at the end of each school day. Pupils listen carefully to what teachers ask them to do. As a result, no time is wasted and pupils make the most of every minute in school. They approach any tasks, including those outside lessons, with equal measures of resourcefulness and pride. Above all, their welcoming approach and great desire to tell visitors about so many exciting aspects of their school experience are remarkable and demonstrate how much they value what the headteacher and staff offer each of them.
8. Standards of behaviour are also very good; older pupils take great pride in offering support to and providing excellent examples for younger children with less well developed self control. For example, during assembly two older girls sat either side of two very young boys and modelled how to participate effectively in the hymn singing, discussions and prayers. The boys practised the actions which accompany the hymn 'He's got the whole world in his hands', after watching what the girls did. As a result, the teacher leading the assembly was not distracted by any inappropriate behaviour and the boys learned how to participate effectively in the singing. Most striking is the understated way in which pupils offer this support. They have an unerring understanding of what adults expect and they guide children who are less familiar with these expectations. There is no fuss. 'They've only just come to school and don't know what to do yet' is the explanation given as a quick aside.
9. No instances of unacceptable behaviour were seen during the inspection and there have been no exclusions from school. Pupils understand and value the very strong code of conduct that they help to draw up and implement it very well. The school is very calm and orderly, although there is no lack of fun and laughter as staff encourage pupils to take up the many opportunities on offer.

10. Occasionally, the youngest children can become restless and fractious in lessons. This happens when teachers do not set challenging enough activities for them and the children complete tasks quickly and become bored.
11. Relationships throughout the school are of a very high order and enable pupils to become increasingly mature and socially skilled. Delightful conversations can be overheard around the school between pupils as they cement friendships and learn to live together in a very supportive 'family' community. During a change in lessons, one boy came out of class, apologising to another about having tripped him up. His friend went to considerable lengths to reassure his companion that it had really been an accident. 'Well, actually, your foot got caught inside my lace like that...', he illustrated as the two walked off together, perfectly at ease. Pupils are able to establish very productive working relationships with adults who listen carefully to what they have to say and make the children feel valued. During wet playtimes, pupils happily organise their own activities. Many older pupils play chess, in fact they hone each other's skills; others read or play alternative games, all in an excellent spirit of fair play.
12. Pupils' personal development is extremely good because they jump at every opportunity to extend their independent skills and increase their awareness of their place in the school community. They are skilled at identifying what they do well and contribute to their own targets for learning at the start of each term. All the older pupils experience three residential weeks away during their last three years at the school and this helps them to develop in confidence, both physically and emotionally. The School Council is used very well by pupils to learn more about how the democratic process works and, in particular, how this can be used to benefit the whole school. Successful projects include, choosing colour schemes for the cloakrooms and having an input into the new building plans. One girl is very efficient in her role as clerk to the council, recording and typing up the minutes of meetings before she submits them to the headteacher. Members of the Eco-committee are equally committed and ensure classroom debates take place on a number of issues, such as recycling which is the current focus. Pupils have a clear understanding of what they know and can do and are always eager to discuss what happens in school with adults or their peers.
13. Levels of attendance are now well above the national average, after a previous, uncharacteristic dip. There is no unauthorised absence and, although some pupils regularly arrive slightly late, the school is aware of the extenuating reasons for this. The majority of pupils arrive on time and there is a prompt start to lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching during the inspection was good overall. Almost all the teaching seen in Years 3 to 6 was very good or excellent. Across the school, more than half the teaching was good or better and about two fifths of lessons were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The best teaching is linked to those year groups that the school has regarded as priorities for improvement. Weaker teaching sometimes occurred in parts of lessons, in reception for example, and this slowed the children's progress.
15. There has been considerable improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. This is particularly noticeable in the older pupils' classes where there have been staff changes, training and new ways of organising the teaching groups. As a result, these teachers accurately assess what the children need to learn next. They plan lessons very carefully in order to move the children forward at a rapid pace. They know the children well and recognise when they are stuck or can work at a higher

level. When this happens the teachers respond immediately to challenge the children's thinking or question them closely to check understanding and help them grasp new ideas. These lessons are lively and the children work confidently despite the rapid pace because they like and respect their teachers and feel successful. This was seen during a science lesson in Years 5 and 6, when the children's standards were checked as they drew and wrote what they knew about shadows. While the pupils made carefully labelled sketches and diagrams, the teacher identified aspects that needed questioning and clarifying. During the next part of the lesson, she skilfully drew information together to ensure the children understood the range of terms used to describe materials that light passes through, such as translucent and transparent, and what happens to the light when it meets such materials.

16. The older children are taught literacy and numeracy very effectively. The teachers know the subjects extremely well and ensure the children learn at a fast pace. The teachers work as subject specialists and swap over the classes so each teaches English or mathematics to the majority of the junior age children. This means they know what earlier learning has taken place and they know how far the children must go in their work in order to reach high standards. The lessons are fun and the children are confident and enthusiastic. In an English lesson for the Year 3 and 4 children, the teacher pursued her focus for the lesson by saying 'You haven't answered my question. How has the author told us about this character's experiences?' The children were able to suggest that the author was conveying several possibilities. Perhaps the character was fantasising and the experiences could not really have happened. This high quality questioning ensured the children gained a deeper understanding of the text and looked for inferences as well as facts.
17. Numeracy is also taught by a knowledgeable teacher who very effectively uses her own understanding to help the children make rapid jumps in their grasp of the subject. In Years 5 and 6, for example, the children quickly realised that if the side of a triangle was extended into a straight line, and they were given the outside angle, they could calculate the inside angle by subtracting from 180 degrees. From this they recognised how to use an acute angle to calculate the degrees around the outside of the angle by subtracting from 360. These leaps of understanding are the result of learning through mathematical exploration when the teacher encourages the children to follow their own ideas and find out as much as they can.
18. Teaching in Year 2 is satisfactory overall, although some aspects of the children's work show where improvements in the teaching are required. There were two supply teachers working with the Year 2 and 3 class during the inspection. The school's very clear planning systems enabled the lessons to carry on as intended in the class teacher's absence and some of these lessons were good or very good. The children are reaching average standards in most aspects of reading, writing and mathematics. They are capable of higher standards and need extended opportunities to help them move to the next level more quickly. For example, the children have been working at the level identified in the literacy strategy for their year group, but could accelerate their learning and pull ahead of this average standard. The school has identified this concern and work has already begun to increase the children's progress. New ways of managing the curriculum are leading to more challenging lessons and the children have already reached above average standards in science, history and geography. The children are beginning to develop a good understanding of number calculations and, when questioned carefully, they can make the links for example, between the combinations of numbers that total ten and twenty. Their learning in numeracy is beginning to accelerate and the standards are rising accordingly. This is because of the changes to the planning and organisation of the lessons that have already been

put in place. Further developments, including team teaching and specialist teaching, as for the older pupils, have very recently been introduced and are already providing more rigorous work for the children.

19. In Year 1, the tasks are challenging and the children learn well but have some ground to make up. The teaching is usually good and the children are encouraged to work with independence and to concentrate on their work. In a science lesson, for example, they were given opportunities to experiment with musical instruments and group them according to how they are played. Most children already had good background knowledge of the methods used to play the instruments. The teacher used this well to help them learn and link terminology such as tap and strike, and to decide which group the instruments belonged to. Teaching in reception is satisfactory overall. The children are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and personal development. Sometimes the children could already do the work, in mathematics for example, and on occasion were not taught the reading and writing skills they needed to make rapid enough progress. In these cases, aspects of the teaching were unsatisfactory.
20. There is a very effective system for identifying the detailed targets that small groups of children need to work towards. The system works extremely well for the oldest children but is less effective for the children in the younger classes. While their targets are helpful, some of them are too general and have not picked out exactly what must be learned next. Across the school the targets are discussed with the children but are not clearly displayed to them as a regular reminder of what they are to achieve.
21. Teaching provision for all pupils with special educational needs is good. Staff are strongly committed to moving the children's learning forward in a steady and systematic way. The quality of learning plans is good overall but occasionally some targets are too broad. Those children who speak English as an additional language receive extremely sensitive and careful support and make good progress. The children with the highest attainment receive good support. They work with older pupils for part of the week and are given sensitive support by the staff who are careful not to apply undue pressure while encouraging them to work to the more advanced levels.

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

22. The overall quality and range of the curriculum is good. The school is very effectively developing a curriculum that takes the needs of every child into account. The curriculum for pupils from Years 1 to 6 meets statutory requirements to teach all National Curriculum subjects as well as religious education. This is strongest in Key Stage 2. Some aspects of the curriculum for the Year 2 children need improvement. In particular the children need tasks of higher levels, for several aspects of reading, writing and mathematics, to be drawn from the long-term plans. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is based on the national recommendations. It meets the needs of the children in many aspects, but, as with Year 2, the children need more tasks that stretch their thinking to a higher level. The school needs to include more advanced skills in the Foundation Stage curriculum.
23. At the time of the previous inspection, there were concerns about ICT and aspects of physical education. These problems have been remedied. All subjects now have schemes of work and clear, precise long-term planning ensures that the time given to subjects is used effectively. The use of the national literacy and numeracy strategies is bearing most fruit for the older children in raising standards, particularly in the

practise of basic skills through other subjects. However, this is less well developed in Year 2, particularly in the teaching of reading, writing and handwriting. Speaking and listening skills are taught well but some mathematical tasks are not advanced enough. The careful analysis of pupils' levels of achievement in Key Stage 2 has enabled the school to organise its teaching groups according to the stage children have reached rather than age. This has challenged many younger pupils to extend their skills to respond positively to the higher levels of work set by their teachers.

24. Good curriculum planning overall identifies what will be taught over a unit of work or a half-term. Subjects are often paired and taught alternately, for example, geography and history, design and technology and art and design. This ensures that the time allocated to these subjects is used effectively. On many occasions, visits out or visiting speakers are arranged to enrich the curriculum. The school places a strong emphasis on extra-curricular activities. A very good range of clubs take place, some organised by parents who have gained coaching qualifications. All pupils are invited to attend some activities. These include sports and drama clubs, recorders, art and gardening. There is a very good take up for the residential visit to a local authority outdoor education centre where pupils gain confidence and new skills in rock climbing, canoeing, team building and other adventurous activities.
25. The school's provision for the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. All staff work very hard to make the school a happy, harmonious, tolerant and welcoming place. Provision for all four of these aspects of the curriculum has improved.
26. Spiritual awareness is supported well during daily assemblies and worship. For example, each week the school holds a 'spotlight' assembly where individual children are praised for good work, good behaviour or being polite, kind and caring. As part of their religious education lessons, the children consider how people are confronted by emotional experiences, for instance the positive changes made by Zaccheus after his encounter with Jesus. They are encouraged to link this to events that have caused changes in their own lives. As part of their music lessons, the children compose music to reflect moods such as being sad or frustrated. Residential visits made by older pupils give opportunities for children to experience a range of emotions such as excitement or apprehension, and they learn how to be self-confident when they are away from home.
27. The school makes very good provision for the children to develop their moral skills. Each class writes its own rules on how they should behave. The school places a high priority on good behaviour and policies on behaviour and anti-bullying are applied consistently and sensitively. This is continued at playtimes and lunch times; older children take responsibility for the welfare of younger children and encourage and look after them. Provision for the children's social development is also very good. The school council is consulted about a wide range of issues. They make decisions, for example, about paint colours in the recent redecoration in school. There are many extra-curricular clubs held after school or at lunchtime. Some children attend four or five different clubs. There are opportunities to raise money for worthy causes. Provision for considering issues of conservation and pollution are very good, with a committee of children, parents and a member of the governing body who take this work seriously. One child said 'It's run just like the council you know, we take minutes of our meeting.' There are many opportunities for the children to work together or help each other in order to develop important personal skills.

28. The school recognises the need for children to have a wider experience of the cultures represented in Britain today and has made good improvements in this area since the previous inspection. The pupils recognise that differences in cultures enrich a community. Older children remember a visit they made to hear a group of Japanese drummers; it is an experience they will remember for a long time. The children's own cultures are respected and used well. There are regular opportunities to take part in performances in the local church and to use the church and churchyard as part of their studies. Taking part in the May Festival children sing songs around the village, and entertain senior citizens at Christmas. Visiting music ensembles perform to the children extending their repertoire of music.
29. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) and this makes a valuable contribution to their personal development overall. The PSHE co-ordinator has a clear picture of how she wants this area to develop and staff are very supportive of her. Sex and drug education programmes are at the centre of the scheme and these are delivered through subjects such as religious education and science. The school provides regular times for each class to meet together and discuss different topics. The school nurse and community safety officer also play a valuable part in this programme of study. There is a positive emphasis on active learning as pupils are involved in problem solving, investigations and discussions. They participate in practical exercises that promote active citizenship, such as charitable fundraising and devising entertainment for more elderly residents living nearby. Involvement in residential trips encourages the emergence of pupils' leadership and organisational qualities. Formal provision for pupils' personal, social and health education has not enjoyed a high priority until recently but, nonetheless, it forms a core part of the school and the programme already has a very clear focus for the future.
30. The local community makes a good contribution to pupils' learning and enables them to play an important role in a wider social setting. Several parents provide useful links with business enterprises and help the school to save money with a variety of purchases such as carpet and furniture. Staff encourage pupils to develop relationships with the local senior citizens who are regular visitors to the school. Family lunches include grandparents and friends and these are very popular occasions that provide effective community liaison. The school maintains a keen interest in local initiatives and is currently involved with the Memorial Playground Bid.
31. Effective links with Birmingham University ensure a regular supply of students work in the school; they bring a new perspective and different ideas from which pupils can learn. Close liaison with local secondary schools enables staff to organise a smooth transition programme for the Year 6 pupils when they move on to Year 7. As part of the local small schools' cluster group, pupils from all the schools meet from time to time at quizzes, sports events and concerts and, in this way, get to know other children they will meet at secondary school. Primary school sports days are also organised by older students and a recent Fashion Show on an ecological theme was organised in the school by Year 11 pupils.

32. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A particular strength of the provision is that children are involved in compiling their own learning plans. The school's policy for gifted and talented children is good. It takes account of the need to ensure children work at an advanced level, sometimes with older pupils. This policy works well and these children make good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. There is a very high priority to maintain a happy and stimulating school environment for pupils and this shines through all aspects of the school's pastoral provision, educational guidance and support. The headteacher takes her duty of care very seriously and very effective child protection procedures are in place. Staff are provided with regular information about any changes in guidance and the school establishes effective links with outside support agencies.
34. Health and safety procedures are very well considered and the headteacher has instigated a far more regular, whole school audit of concerns. She is supported very well by the governing body and also by the school janitor and caretaker who make sure any concerns are speedily resolved. The site is attractive and well maintained and makes a significant contribution to the learning environment for pupils. Emergency drills are regularly practised and several members of staff are qualified first aiders.
35. Satisfactory systems are in use to promote good attendance and punctuality among pupils. Parents are conscientious about informing the school of any reasons for absence. Informal monitoring by the headteacher ensures that any potential concerns are identified and discussed with an educational welfare officer during her visits.
36. Very effective behaviour management systems are in place; although unobtrusive, staff apply these consistently to ensure pupils respond to very high expectations and maintain very high standards. Most of this behaviour management occurs during lessons and it is only infrequently, and among one or two of the youngest children in the school, that behaviour dips slightly. This is in direct response to the lack of challenge offered to pupils by some activities set by the teacher. The headteacher ensures that lunchtime supervisors receive guidance on how to maintain good standards of behaviour. As a result, lunchtimes are very entertaining social occasions, where adults and children interact very well.
37. Staff know these children well and ensure that they receive appropriate levels of support and guidance; this enables them to make good progress in their learning. Where necessary, teachers include personal and social targets in the pupils' termly reviews. This allows any concerns to be identified and addressed quickly. Pupils are encouraged to bring in contributions from home to add to their records of achievement. Parents agree that the staff have a good understanding of their children.
38. The procedures and systems for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress have significantly improved since the last inspection. The system for monitoring progress in English, mathematics and science is implemented extremely well for Years 3 to 6. The older pupils are assessed regularly and the data is used to chart their progress during the year and from year to year. Using this information, the school is able to set extremely accurate targets for groups of children to improve, for example, aspects of writing skills. Progress towards them is regularly monitored by the children themselves and by the staff. These targets could usefully be written into the children's

books. The system is applied less rigorously for the younger children and the school is planning to review these areas in the near future. Some of the targets for the younger children are too general and sometimes they are not high enough. Class work is regularly assessed and the pupils know what they need to work on next to raise their standards. The pupils and staff also discuss the children's progress with their parents. They are all involved and the system successfully helps to move the children forward.

39. When the children enter reception their standards and progress are assessed using a nationally recommended scheme. This also provides the school with clear information about the children's progress in reception when they are reassessed before going into Year 1. This is a good system but has not been fully used and some unsatisfactory aspects of the children's progress have been missed. Careful analysis of the test results would have revealed that, in some cases, children who entered with above average standards are average when they enter Year 1.
40. Each year, there is an extremely thorough analysis of the national test results for the Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. Changes to the curriculum and the teaching have been extremely effective for the older children and have dramatically improved standards. This work is now becoming effective for the younger children. The weaknesses in what the school provides, that are revealed by assessment information, are clearly recognised by the staff who have useful plans in place to improve the situation.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Parents offer very favourable opinions on all aspects of the school's provision. They are particularly fulsome in their praise for the headteacher and the impact she has had on the school. They feel welcome in school and tell other parents in the area how good the school is; as a result, pupil numbers are increasing.
42. The school produces very high quality information for parents on all aspects of school life. The draft prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents and the frequent letters sent to parents all supply a very clear picture of what happens in school and what the staff want pupils to achieve. Bright, eye-catching displays decorate the walls; the school secretary offers a warm welcome to visitors who are immediately drawn into the bustle of daily routines. Parents enjoy informal contact with staff as often as necessary and they express their satisfaction at the amount of information they receive. The school sends a half-termly curriculum overview to parents and this enables them to have a clear idea of what their children are studying and how they can support them at home.
43. Parents receive very good quality information on the progress their children make in school. The school organises three meetings each year for parents, one at the start of each term. The teachers and parents can discuss what each child has achieved and what their target for the term should be. Children also help to set these targets. At the end of the school year, parents can come into school again to discuss the written progress report they receive from class teachers. The annual written reports are useful, particularly in the information they provide about pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Comments are detailed and provide a very clear picture of what a child can do. The commentary about other curriculum areas is variable in quality; some is merely descriptive, illustrating the topics covered and does not provide succinct evaluations of what a pupil can do. Parents do not find these descriptions helpful, particularly as the school provides this information at the start of each term when it is identifying future, rather than completed, work.

44. Parents make a very good contribution to the life of the school and to their children's learning. A number of parents help regularly in classrooms and some have also undertaken coaching qualifications, at their own expense, to ensure pupils have access to trained football and netball coaches. The headteacher is very appreciative of all the parental support and readily acknowledges how valuable it is. The Friends of the School Association is very active and raises large sums of money each year which supplements the learning resources enjoyed by pupils. An impressive, 4 page, full colour report from the PTA shows parents how much they achieve each year and this maintains a good impetus for the following year.
45. The school is careful to canvas parental opinion on a variety of issues, through detailed questionnaires and informal discussions. Responses to these feed into the school's development plan and additional grants for the next academic year will fund the Family Learning Initiative and a Home School Partnership scheme.
46. There are regular invitations to parents to attend school assemblies. These reflect different curriculum areas and help to extend parents' understanding of what their children learn. Parents support the Home School Agreement and ensure their children attend school regularly and complete any homework set. Many take their children to the library to help them research specific projects and they attend parents' meetings where targets for the term are set. Parents of children with special educational needs are invited to all their reviews and are closely involved in their learning programmes.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. This school is led and managed very well. The headteacher has made a considerable impact in the two years she has been at the school. The priorities for improvement are accurate and the time scales for developments are appropriate. Although there are still areas identified for development, almost all the earlier weaknesses have been remedied and many additional aspects have received strong and very successful attention.
48. In particular, the headteacher has significantly improved the standards and attitudes to learning, particularly of the older children. The results of the Year 6 tests, over the past four years, show that since 2000 the standards have risen from average to well above average. The children have made very good progress during this time. The headteacher has led these improvements by example. She has taught alongside other colleagues demonstrating the success of her new initiatives in planning and organising the curriculum and setting high targets for the children. She clearly recognises the need to stay with the identified priorities even when other improvements are not as fast as expected. The standards in Key Stage 1 have not risen as rapidly as hoped. The ways of supporting the developments, through monitoring and evaluating the classroom work and providing advice and support, are entirely appropriate but they are taking time to become effective. Standards have already risen in science, history and geography as a result of this work. The urgent need to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics is now being tackled through the additional methods of shared teaching and planning. In this way the headteacher is, once again, leading by example, in targeting higher standards. The concerns linked to teaching and standards in the Foundation Stage are a priority for development and detailed analysis of the reception children's standards and progress have already begun.

49. All the teachers have responsibilities for developing subjects or aspects of provision. The headteacher has extended this role in ways that are new to the staff and all are working very hard to put the school systems for improvement into place. These initiatives have extremely clear guidance to steer developments and, as a result, successes have been guaranteed, in improving planning, for example. The headteacher is developing further work to improve assessment strategies across the school. The headteacher, who co-ordinates mathematics, and the English co-ordinator monitor teaching and standards regularly, and evaluate the impact on children's learning. In English and mathematics, the headteacher has effectively monitored the standards and test results across the school and knows what needs to be done. Other subject leaders are still developing these skills and though they are effective they still have some aspects to develop further. The headteacher keeps a close watch on the developments in each area.
50. The headteacher and governors identified an urgent need to strengthen the links with parents and the village community. This has been managed very well and the school is now highly regarded. The staff also needed reassurance after a period of confusion when there was no permanent headteacher in the school. The headteacher has shown a high level of skill in establishing confidence and trust in the staff and parents who now support her initiatives and share in the successes of the school.
51. The governors' involvement in supporting the school is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. They keep up-to-date with developments and provide strong backing for the headteacher and staff. There is, for example, a link governor for the key subjects and aspects such as literacy, numeracy, health and safety and special educational needs. The governors are very involved and knowledgeable about the provision made by the school and represent the school in the community. The chair of governors visits often to show support and find out about the work of the school. Governors search for reasons for the average, rather than above average standards and hold the school accountable by questioning some reports and documents presented to them. This has resulted in occasional rewrites for the staff as governors draw attention to gaps or ambiguities. The headteacher keeps governors informed and she often sends electronic mail to ensure they know about current developments.
52. Management and control of the school's budget are very good. The governors' finance committee monitors spending closely. The school seeks extra budgets whenever possible, such as a local initiative to improve the outside area for the reception children and resurface the playground. All the money is used very well. The school is absorbing almost all of its saving this year to maintain smaller teaching groups for literacy and numeracy through keeping the current numbers of staff. The learning resources are appropriate to teach all subjects and there is a good range of books to support the literacy strategy.
53. The office manager gives good support in the day-to-day running of the school. Modern technology is used effectively to review the budget and provide correspondence. Assessment analysis is rapidly provided in a very clear format so that the school can check on progress. The school's resources are managed very well. The school applies the principles of best value well in seeking the opinion of parents and pupils and in ensuring money is spent carefully and successfully. The school compares its performance with others and works very hard to perform better each year.

54. The premises are very clean and tidy throughout and are very well maintained by the caretaker, site supervisor and cleaning staff. There has been considerable refurbishment over the past two years and the caretaker has provided help and support in painting and decorating. The accommodation is cramped and there is no hall. In the late autumn, a new classroom and administration block is to be built. This will free the largest classroom as a hall that can be used, in particular, for physical education and assemblies and ensure satisfactory accommodation.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to maintain and improve the good standards achieved by the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- Improve the standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of reception and Year 2, and ensure that the children make satisfactory progress by:
 - a. ensuring teachers provide the children with tasks and activities that require more advanced skills and that enable the children to move forward more quickly in their learning;
(paragraphs 2, 4, 18, 22, 56, 60, 61, 62, 68, 71, 72, 74)
 - b. using assessments more carefully to monitor and evaluate the children's standards and progress and guide future teaching.
(paragraphs 20, 39, 57)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	20
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	6	4	8	0	0	0
Percentage	10	30	20	40	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents 5 percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	77
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	8	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (89)	94 (78)	94 (89)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (9)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	14	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (89)	88 (89)	100 (89)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

In the national tests in 2002, the number of Year 6 children who took the test was below ten and no results are published.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
75	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

Any other ethnic group	
No ethnic group recorded	

0
0

0	0
0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.25
Average class size	25.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	189810
Total expenditure	192988
Expenditure per pupil	2880
Balance brought forward from previous year	25680
Balance carried forward to next year	22502

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	77
Number of questionnaires returned	37

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	46	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	57	5	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	43	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	65	3	3	5
The teaching is good.	43	54	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	57	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	32	0	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	59	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	76	24	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	35	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	73	24	3	0	0

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

56. The school has a combined reception and Year 1 class. The teacher is supported by a nursery nurse and a qualified teaching assistant, who work either morning or afternoon. The children usually start part-time and build up their attendance until the term when they are about four and a half when they start full-time. Over the past few years the entry assessments have shown that most of the children have above average standards in reading and mathematics when they start in the class. Many of their end of reception assessments, and their work by the end of the year, show average standards in mathematics, reading and writing. This is unsatisfactory progress. The children make satisfactory progress in speaking, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal development and most aspects of creative development where their standards are above average.
57. The assessments made when the children start in the reception class are appropriately detailed. On-going assessments play a regular part in recording the children's standards and setting targets for their next levels of work. Assessments are not used to monitor and record progress clearly enough and many targets are too general and do not set precise, challenging standards for the children to reach. As a result, the children work through some aspects of the curriculum at a steady pace when they could accelerate.
58. There are few children in the reception class with special educational needs. They are given good support to develop, particularly their personal skills, so they can settle down to productive learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Most children enter school confidently, they know how to make friendly approaches and they are interested in each other. There are good opportunities for them to socialise informally with one another or with adults in small groups. The teaching is good and there is a wide range of occasions for children to work and play together. They meet with pupils from Years 5 and 6 each morning to listen to stories or play word games with these older children. This very good provision gives the reception children great pleasure and strongly helps to develop such social skills as listening politely and taking turns. Most children play happily alongside one another and they concentrate well on activities for a reasonable length of time without support. The behaviour of the children is good. The friendly and supportive approach of the adults creates a positive response from the children who try very hard to please. Their independence and social skills are developed well through a range of thoughtful activities. However, if the children are left to sit too long or they lose interest in their work, they become restless and some become noisy.

Communication, language and literacy

60. The children reach the standards expected for their age in reading and writing. They achieve at an unsatisfactory rate and could reach higher standards. They make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening and maintain their above average standards. The teaching in this area is variable with aspects that are unsatisfactory. The staff provide an appropriate range of play opportunities where the children can talk together and chat in a relaxed situation. They engage the children in conversation

and provide opportunities for talk with adults during focused activities. Staff teach new vocabulary linked to the tasks they are introducing well. During the inspection the children were learning about musical instruments and their understanding of such terms as strike, pluck and blow were checked. The children are able to pose questions and engage each other in conversations during their play activities. They listen well and take note of instructions in order to complete tasks without further support.

61. The children are introduced to books through story times and reading sessions, and they have good opportunities to explore books for themselves, sometimes with an adult alongside. These are useful and effective occasions. The children turn the pages and use the pictures to try and make sense of the story. They are interested in the text and most recognise a few letters and some know very simple words. They talk about their books individually with their teacher but, as few use books with text, this opportunity is not used to learn how pictures are linked to words or to follow writing as their teacher points. These early opportunities are missing and slow down children's progress. Early writing skills are taught through an appropriate range of play and direct teaching activities. The children have made satisfactory progress with writing their names. They can form letters and most can write their name legibly. When the children work at their reading and writing tasks they are not yet using the sounds that letters make or spelling out words to use in sentences. When they write there are no words to prompt them or alphabet strips to help them spell out simple words for themselves. Overall, the teaching of reading and writing is unsatisfactory.

Mathematical development

62. The children make unsatisfactory progress in mathematics. Many start from an above average level and by the end of the Foundation Stage their standards are average overall. Teaching of mathematics for the reception children is unsatisfactory. They sit for too long with the Year 1 pupils, covering work that is generally too hard for them. When they work at their own tasks they can finish their work quickly because they already understand the ideas and are not stretched. This mismatch is linked to insufficient on-going assessment to check what they already know and provide work that moves them forward quickly. There is a range of practical and more formal opportunities to develop children's skills and understanding. Some of these activities are structured and the staff work with the children, helping them count. During the inspection individual children counted forwards, identified the numbers and gave the right number of claps. All the children were already able to identify numbers below ten and put them in the correct order. Almost all could count objects to ten. Their tasks were to put small toys into bowls according to the quantity, up to ten, on a label. They could already do this. All the children were able to explain what they had done and why. Some of them could grasp more advanced ideas. For example, two children could work out what came after the highest number in their bowl or identify what came before certain other numbers.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. Children make satisfactory progress in this area and are exceeding the expected standard. Teaching is good. There is an appropriate range of interesting activities to help extend children's learning and staff work hard to provide an interesting and practical range of experiences. The children explore natural materials such as sand and water. They are working from the later stages of the reception curriculum and their lessons are also linked to subjects such as religious education, science, history and geography that relate to the National Curriculum for the Year 1 children. In

science, the children learn practically about physical processes such as light when they play with torches and lenses in their 'dark room.' They are familiar with the computer and can use the mouse confidently to complete their programs. The children talk confidently about their class work and experiences out of school. They know, for example, the processes linked to baking and can talk about using the telephone.

Physical development

64. When children start in school, their attainment in this area is average in the management of large movements, such as co-ordinating their movements when carrying large objects. It is above average in finer movements, for example, when they manipulate small objects such as scissors and pencils. Through good provision and teaching, they achieve appropriately and maintain their standards in all areas of their physical development. Some children show a high level of precision, for example when drawing. They refine their skills through work and play in the classroom and through physical education lessons in the hall. The staff provide plenty of opportunities for the children to practise their manipulative skills through using a good range of tools, equipment and materials. They cut out in art lessons and manipulate small toys. They show good pencil control and this builds up their confidence and skill.
65. The children in both classes use the outside areas for regular sessions to climb and run about. This provision has been much improved through providing large building resources and further developments are in hand to extend the opportunities for climbing and jumping. During games and gymnastics lessons, the staff use good strategies to teach the children how to move their body to create specific effects such as moving the class mascot around the top of a parachute. These enjoyable activities help the children concentrate and work hard, using a considerable amount of energy.

Creative development

66. Children's achievement in music, in imagining situations and making up events are satisfactory and they maintain their above average standards. There are fewer opportunities for art and design and these standards are average. The teachers provide role play situations and creative play and exploration areas, such as the dark room. The children are confident about pretending to be someone else. They play with the resources such as the sand and make cakes, first checking which flavour would be preferred. One said 'I like chocolate cake best, would you like that?' The children organise themselves well as they create imaginary situations. There are appropriate opportunities for the children to draw but little occasion to paint and this needs to be improved. The children have many opportunities to sing and reach above average standards. They play instruments with enthusiasm and most play rhythmically and at the right time.

ENGLISH

67. Some of the children in Year 3 and almost all in Years 4, 5 and 6 reach very high standards. Since the last inspection the standards have improved significantly. This is because of the very good and sometimes excellent teaching and the very well organised curriculum. The school has changed the teaching arrangements. The children are taught in two, mixed age groups. Both groups are taught by the literacy co-ordinator. Regular assessments ensure that children are placed in the correct ability set within their group and consequently their progress is rapid. Planning is very thorough. The national literacy strategy has been adapted very effectively by the

school to fit in with new planning. Tasks are interesting and relevant and there is a high level of challenge for every child. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are given good support and the work is adapted to suit their needs. The highest attaining children are given particular opportunities to extend their learning as they sometimes work with older pupils and their work is more advanced than the rest of their age group.

68. The children who are seven-years-old reach average standards. This is the same as the last inspection. This term the children have experienced several different teachers and consequently their learning has been less smooth but over the past few years their progress has not been fast enough. The newly appointed co-ordinator leads the subject very well. She has identified the need to raise standards by the end of Year 2. Her action plan focuses on speeding the progress of the younger children to match that in Key Stage 2. She is knowledgeable and has now begun planning the work for Years 2 to 6. When this is in place the children's progress should be faster and lead to higher standards. The school has very recently brought the Year 2 and Year 3 class into the system used with the older pupils. This will provide opportunities for the co-ordinator to teach the group alongside their regular teacher as a means of raising standards.
69. Across the school, the children have termly targets for all aspects of English. All the teachers are enthusiastic and this enthusiasm transmits itself to the children. The marking of children's writing is good and often very good for the older children. The children are guided well and told what they need to do in order to improve. An excellent system is in place for older children to formally evaluate their own work and confirm this with the teacher. The children then decide what they need to do next. These assessments are written down and placed in the child's book for future reference. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. They achieve well in relation to their abilities because of the individual learning plans and the support they receive in class. Higher attaining children also achieve well because they are identified early and full account of their individual needs is taken when teachers plan their lessons. One child, for whom English is an additional language, is making good progress, but his skills in English, particularly writing, are still below average. The school has made good provision to ensure his needs are met.
70. All the children are very good speakers and listeners, and the school creates many good opportunities for them to develop further. In Year 1, the children offered their ideas about how to find a teddy bear that is lost in a rubbish dump. They were mature when thinking through solutions. In Year 2, the children explained why there might be problems when taking a dog to the zoo and came up with solutions like 'put a muzzle on', 'keep it on a short lead.' The children listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. Older children enjoy preparing for presentations on aspects of history and geography. In their recent work on Aztecs, each child decided which aspect of life in those times would be of interest to their classmates. They are confident when presenting this information. This type of task provided the teacher with an appropriate time to make assessments of their developing skills. All the children show a high level of respect when listening to each other. During an assembly, two children acted out a scene showing an argument about a pen. You could have 'heard a pin drop' during the performance and when the short scene ended, hands shot up all around the room with advice on how children should behave in a less confrontational way. When reading aloud, as part of their literacy lessons, the teachers demonstrate reading well, so that the children are developing an expressive tone in their own reading.

71. The children are enthusiastic readers and many of them visit a library regularly. There is a good range of attractive books in each classroom. The library, although small, is attractive and well sited. Parents support their children's reading development by encouraging them to read at home. By Year 2, they have a satisfactory understanding of letter sounds that helps them when tackling new words. Some of the younger children, however, are reading books that are too easy for them. This does not ensure sufficient challenge for them to develop their reading skills and slows down progress. Reading skills are taught through daily literacy lessons and through guided reading sessions. These guided reading sessions are well organised and present the children with a range of interesting activities. For example, older children have a regular opportunity to work alongside children in reception and Year 1. This provides the younger pupils with many opportunities to read and talk about their books and allows the older pupils to present good role models as readers to these young children. As the pupils move through the school their fluency improves considerably and the children in Year 6 achieve very high standards. Older and higher attaining pupils use the contents, index and glossary information in non-fiction books effectively. They can search for information quickly. A love of reading is being developed well.
72. In Years 1 and 2, the children cover an appropriate range of writing and confidently record their thoughts and ideas. The teachers provide interesting work, for example, the younger children write out recipes and instructions on how to make gingerbread men. Some of the Year 2 work has not been marked and there are spaces in books where there is unfinished work. In many books the work is untidy and the children have not been taught to show a proper pride in their work or try as hard as they can. Consequently their standards are not high enough and their rate of achievement, by the end of Year 2, is unsatisfactory. Older children make rapid progress in developing their writing skills because the teacher is more rigorous. She provides good opportunities for the children to write for a variety of purposes. Throughout the school, pupils regularly send electronic mail requesting information, for example, to a national supermarket chain about attitudes to recycling. Children in Years 3 and 4 learn to evaluate different methods of story planning and can explain why one works more effectively for them than others. In Years 5 and 6, the children concentrate on how authors develop various characters. Through careful analysis of the work of others they learn how to write lively and interesting new characters into the existing storyline. These children enjoy their writing and confidently talk to each other about their work. They behave as critical friends and are mature and sensitive when making evaluations of each other's writing. These are very good learning opportunities.

MATHEMATICS

73. Since the last inspection, results have greatly improved for the older children and the detailed assessments completed by the school indicate that this improvement is likely to continue. The standards already reached by the current Year 6 indicate that about 75 per cent are above average and few fall below average. In Year 2, the majority of the children are working at an average level although many show slightly higher standards when calculating answers in numeracy.

74. The school has managed the improvements to the standards and progress of the older pupils extremely well. The national numeracy strategy has been implemented and adapted very successfully. The headteacher, who teaches both groups of older children, is very effective and knowledgeable. Very specific lesson planning focuses on aspects, identified through assessments, which the children need to learn next. The targets for the lessons are always discussed with them and the lessons move at a fast pace. In the infant classes the children move forward quickly in Year 1 because the tasks are matched well to what the children need. In Year 2, the pace slows and the children's progress is unsatisfactory. While the tasks reflect the children's next stage, too many small steps are covered and many pupils could make faster leaps in their understanding and skills. The coordination of the subject is very good and these concerns have been clearly identified. The subject leader (the headteacher) has worked very well to improve the standards. For example, she has monitored the teaching to see where improvements could be made and has supported staff as they changed their practice. Further initiatives to work alongside the Year 2 children and help plan their lessons are already beginning. A very good assessment system identifies what the children need to learn next and see that they work to specific targets. Results of tests are carefully analysed to see where pupils could achieve better.
75. Pupils with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in developing their number skills in relation to their abilities. This is because the teachers plan work at the right level for them and they receive good support from the classroom assistants. For example, in a lesson in the Year 5 and 6 class, when the lower attaining group were working at numeracy tasks multiplying by ten, the classroom assistant supported the group well with questions, such as 'where do we begin?' and 'what happens to this number?' to reinforce skills the children had learned earlier. This enabled them to take part fully in the lesson and their self-esteem was raised by the praise and encouragement they received.
76. Pupils' very good achievement in Years 4, 5 and 6 is directly linked to the very good teaching. The teacher knows the children well and has formed excellent relationships with them. This encourages the pupils to work hard in order to please their teacher and feel successful. There are challenging tasks for all the children, including the more able ones. In Years 5 and 6, the teacher's confidence in the children ensured that there was very good new learning and application of previous learning about angles. She said, 'Look at all the information you have and think about all the things you already know. Everything you need is here. You know how to do this. Help each other. You've got five minutes.' The children's behaviour and attitudes are very good and they are willing and confident learners who responded well to this expectation. In the very good lessons, the higher attaining pupils worked at a much more difficult level than the rest of their group and younger children are included with them if they can keep up.
77. Pupils are taught a wide range of calculation strategies and are encouraged to explain how they worked out answers. In a good lesson in Year 1, for example, the teacher was heard to say, 'Why have you arranged them like that? Tell me how you worked it out!' A particular strength is the mental arithmetic part at the beginning of the lesson. Teachers use resources such as number fans very well to help the children understand. Children are keen to tell their answers to the rest of the class and are inventive when posed with difficulties. In Year 2, the answer needed was 11 but the number fan only reached 10. After a slight hesitation the children either worked with a partner using the 1 digit from both fans or used their own fan and held up one finger

beside the number 1. The teacher handled this very well and praised the children for their cleverness.

78. Opportunities are given for the pupils to extend their mathematical knowledge in a range in different situations. ICT is being used appropriately to support the learning in some lessons. Pupils use carefully selected programs to help them develop their mathematical skills. Mathematics is used to support the learning in other areas of the curriculum through arranging information and ordering quantities, for example, in science. Resources for the subject are good.

SCIENCE

79. Currently, standards in Year 2 are above average. They are well above average in Year 6. This is an improvement across the school since the time of the last inspection. The school is in line to achieve similar, well above average standards, as in last year's national tests. Teachers' assessments show that standards in Year 2 have risen since 2001 where they were well below the national average to be very high in comparison with other schools in 2002. The quality of planning has improved since the previous inspection enabling teachers to provide appropriate work for pupils of all abilities that involves them in practical work and scientific investigations. The subject is led well and the coordinator ensures that the standards remain high.
80. Pupils in the Year 2 and 3 class confidently work in small groups easily taking on the role of scientists. For example, they were asked to test samples of everyday materials to discover how they respond to a light beam from a torch. They predicted whether the light would be blocked off or whether it would pass through the materials. One pupil held the object against a white background whilst another shone the torch. The children use scientific vocabulary accurately to record their findings, for example, 'The plastic sheet is transparent, the light passes through it and shines on the white background. The wooden object blocks the light and a shadow is formed.' The children responded with excitement and delight when a coloured plastic ruler was tested. The light beam shone through but took on the colour of the ruler. Excellent teacher intervention ensured that during the discussion the word 'translucent' was introduced. Pupils quickly searched for other materials that had this quality. By the end of the lesson, they had sorted and classified the range of materials into three categories. They achieved very good results in relation to their prior learning. The teachers' very good scientific knowledge and clear introductory explanations about light, how it travels and what happens when it reaches surfaces both expanded pupils' knowledge and provoked them to raise queries. Carefully chosen questions helped children to think things through and deepened their understanding.
81. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 make very good progress, for example, in using accurate scientific vocabulary in their report writing. There is a very good balance between the assimilation of knowledge and the development of investigative skills. The children's science journals almost always include diagrams, compiling of results and the use of mathematics to draw conclusions from the collected data. Pupils incorporate ICT into their work using sensing devices to measure the changes in temperature and levels of light. Older pupils are challenged to develop their own ideas. For example, a Year 6 pupil who was examining the question 'Can light change direction?' used mirrors to set up an experiment. He arrived at an answer to the question, 'Light bounces off shiny surfaces; it is reflected.' The teacher intervened as an interested observer, interviewing the scientists to find out about their latest discoveries. This was an extremely successful way of checking that the children had understood the scientific principles and could explain them. Pupils enjoy these activities and set about their

tasks enthusiastically. There are very good levels of conversation and co-operation as pupils discuss their work and their choices.

82. Recent changes in the way the subject is planned and taught have ensured that teachers build on the skills and knowledge learned during previous scientific topics. The use of national guidelines have clarified the teachers' ideas, increased their knowledge and confidence and enabled them to link the assimilation of knowledge with the development of practical investigations. In some instances the teaching is satisfactory rather than good because of the over reliance on worksheets. This prevents pupils' natural curiosity from being activated. They complete the tasks accordingly but their ability to think scientifically and identify their own original ideas is not fully developed.
83. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress. They are given good support to work alongside other pupils who are fully involved in the investigations.

ART AND DESIGN

84. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. This is the same as the last inspection for the younger children but an improvement for the older pupils. Basic skills such as colour selection and drawing are taught well and pupils successfully expand the range of their work as they move through the school. Achievement is satisfactory for the infant children and good in the junior classes.
85. Since the previous inspection, the teachers are using the nationally recommended scheme of work. This provides a secure basis for planning the lessons. Pupils are developing a sound knowledge and appreciation of art and design as they progress through the school. For example, Year 2 pupils are developing a simple but effective understanding of using space appropriately when organising their drawings, while Year 6 pupils show, in their tile making, a clear management of this aspect. The teacher provided the pupils with a good range of resources to make different textures on their tiles. The thoughtfulness and skill shown by the pupils indicated how well they used earlier learning to arrange their miniature patterns and shapes.
86. The subject is led satisfactorily. There are no plans to review art and design in the near future but, by supporting and encouraging the teachers as they use the scheme of work, the curriculum requirements are met effectively. Resources are satisfactory overall and provide pupils with opportunities to work with clay and fabrics as well as painting and drawing.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87. All pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs, get off to a sound start, so that by the age of seven years they are reaching standards similar to those experienced nationally. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make good progress and, by the age of eleven years, standards are similar to national expectations. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. Those children with English as an additional language make good progress. The work is explained carefully and practical demonstrations help children understand and work well.

88. There is sound teaching in Years 1 and 2. Pupils have opportunities to work with construction kits to assemble models of buildings and moving vehicles. They designed their favourite pizza and sketched its appearance. Shopping lists were completed and costed. Good links with science were established when they cooked the pizza and experienced an irreversible change. When making some designs the children used sticky tape and various glues to join recyclable materials and construct models of houses, villages and toys.
89. Older junior pupils clearly enjoy their work in design and technology. They can confidently talk about a recent project to design and make model chairs. They recalled the good range of materials used to construct these models, including wood, plastic card and recyclable materials. They were able to identify that the hardest aspect of this project was the designing where they needed to consider scale. This work indicates some good aspects to the quality of teaching. Pupils are involved in designing and making, and the development of relevant skills in the safe use of more advanced tools and equipment. Pupils effectively appraised the success of their finished chairs to judge how strong they were and suggest ways to improve their designs to make them more stable.
90. The subject is led satisfactorily. It is not an area of priority for the school but the good quality planning, supported by national guidelines is an improvement since the previous inspection. It effectively directs the subject ensuring that requirements are met. There is no skills' list to identify when tools and materials are introduced and this would raise the standards further. There are good links with subjects such as science and history where pupils have completed focused tasks to construct Aztec temples.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

91. The standards reached by the children throughout the school are above average in both history and geography. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were average. There is now a very good scheme of work, based on the national recommendations, that strongly supports the teachers' work in these subjects. The children are taught in mixed age classes but, because the scheme of work is based on skills development, the children's learning is continuous. They make good progress across all areas of the history and geography curriculum. The children with special educational needs also make good progress because the work is directed accurately at their level. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has been instrumental in the development of the schemes of work. Children regularly visit sites of historical and geographical interest such as 'Bosworth Field' and 'Seedy Mill Water Treatment Works'. This helps to bring the subjects alive for them and they are very enthusiastic about their work.
92. The teachers have linked these subjects for the younger children by introducing tasks about their own lives. This enables the children to recognise that time passes and they have shown this through constructing simple time lines mapping their expected development from babyhood to adulthood. They recognise that objects link with different generations, for example a rattle for a baby and walking stick to grandparents; and they construct their own family tree. They show a good understanding of time passing. In geography, this work involved constructing simple plans of their route to school or a caravan park as part of their project on 'By the Sea'. Through their study of places, they have learned about what you would take with you if you holiday in a hot climate. In Years 2 and 3, the children's knowledge about life in the past is good. For example, in their work about Anglo Saxon times they found answers to questions like, 'where did these people come from?' and 'what did they

wear?’ The children found out that place names ending for example, in ‘ton’, ‘ford’ and ‘ham’ were Anglo Saxon settlements. They were intrigued to find their own village ends in ‘ford.’

93. Older children are developing research skills well, for example in finding out about the lives of the Aztecs. They know that the Aztecs lived in Mexico and a good link was made with geography. The children used maps to find out information about modern Mexico. They posed their own questions and undertook personal research to find the answers. They used a range of research methods such as books, the Internet, CD-Roms or television programmes such as Time Team. They are aware of the differences between opinions about the past or different places and the reality found in actual evidence. This was evident in their talk about archaeological digs, historical artefacts and reconstructions that they have seen. They talk confidently about changes in technology and sanitation through the ages. They further develop their geographical skills through comparing different settlements such as their own village and a more urban one. In the lesson seen in Years 4, 5 and 6, the teacher challenged the children to find the quickest route by road between Elford and another local school, then to calculate the distance using a scale of 1cm to 5km. The children quickly decided on two alternative routes and plotted these on the map, helped themselves to a piece of string the correct length, then calculated the distance. This was a good link with the mathematics curriculum. The more able children went on to work out the position of their school on a local ordinance survey map, recording the position as a six-figure co-ordinate. All the children wrote and sent personal emails to pupils at Bridgtown School giving information about Elford.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

94. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils’ skills are in line with what is expected. Pupils’ attainment at the age of eleven years is average overall, but above average in word processing and the use of the Internet to identify, send and receive information.
95. Year 1 pupils use the mouse to satisfactorily operate software that increases their general knowledge. They practise and refine their spelling skills, for example, by using the mouse to select letters and place them in the missing space in a word. Other children practise these skills in mathematics lessons by using software to select the correct digit from an array of numbers to complete number bond horizontal sums to the value of ‘ten.’ Pupils have made good progress filling in databases to record how they travel to school. Learning support assistants are deployed well to supervise these learning activities. They carefully support the pupils to ensure they are challenged to complete the task and gain confidence and independence. Pupils often work in pairs, where they show a good ability to take turns to operate the mouse and complete the task.
96. Pupils in the junior classes make very good progress to develop their computer skills. The oldest children use word processing skills to capture the emotional and aesthetic language inspired through their observations of photographs of the natural world. The resulting poetry is well presented, with very good use of spacing, line length and punctuation, to portray the mood created by the scene. Spelling is accurate with very good and appropriate choice of font style and text size. These older pupils demonstrate very good keyboard skills. A successful ‘buddy’ system is in operation. This enables skilled pupils to instruct less advanced children in the use and application of ICT skills.
97. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is very good because the teacher is skilled in the use of the computer and plans activities at three levels to meet the needs of the

pupils in her class. The skills the children were to learn were related to their work in English and geography. For example, the highest attaining pupils were learning to use a 'favourites list' to help them make quicker and more appropriate web page selections. Less advanced pupils were highlighting the key statements in their text before they used the toolbar application to present the information in bold type. Other pupils were completing branching spreadsheets to order their scientific knowledge on insects. Whilst the teacher focused on the 'favourites list' activity, working with the pupils around the computers, she regularly checked the remainder of the class to ensure the pace of their work was acceptable. A student completing his teacher training made a good contribution to the lesson by effectively supporting individuals or groups of pupils. Pupils enjoy information and communication technology. They listen to instructions attentively, wait patiently for their turn and collaborate well in pairs to complete the task and record their researches. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language makes good progress in the development of writing skills, typing sentences directly on to the screen then using the 'delete' and 'arrow' keys to correct the spelling mistakes that are highlighted.

98. Whilst there are an acceptable number of computers in each classroom and one in the library, there are, as yet, no resources to ensure pupils make good progress in lessons where large groups are being taught. The school is developing plans to purchase a large screen that will link with a computer as a means of overcoming this difficulty.
99. The subject is led well. A comprehensive scheme of work, long term plan and skills list have been drawn up and the organisation of 'ability group' teaching programs ensures that all the pupils in Key Stage 2 are working at the correct levels and have very good opportunities to extend their skills. However, this practise is not fully developed in the infant classes so that the staff are not as aware of what is the next skill objective for the pupils in their classes.

MUSIC

100. The standards in singing are well above average across the school and the children make good progress. The children in Year 1 reach standards in all aspects of music above those expected for their age. They can sing a range of songs from memory, add actions, and can vary the speed. They respond well to the conductor and start and finish together and show a high level of enjoyment. They improve their singing as they practise and can confidently repeat short patterns. In their recorder club, children in Year 1 and Year 2 learn the correct fingering as they play tunes like 'Rain, Rain, Go Away.' They are learning to read simple music. The teacher is knowledgeable and supports the children well. It is a very worthwhile experience for them and they reach above average standards. Their rendition of 'He's Got the Whole World in His Hands' was a most pleasurable experience. They sing tunefully and are enthusiastic as they add actions to their song.
101. The provision made by the school for music is good. Children talk knowledgeably about their lessons. They enjoy composing and know how to combine instruments and voice as part of their work. They use a range of stimuli to support composition, for example, a photograph, a mood or a piece of artwork. They look forward to taking part in school productions like Harvest and the May Festival, which involve performing in the local community. Although they regularly listen to recorded music they were unable to name any composers. They regularly listen to live musical performances given by the local authority's ensembles. Some children are learning to play the violin and many of the children play a range of instruments such as flute and keyboard at

home. The teaching of music is supported well by a good scheme of work, which gives strong attention to the development of skills across all the aspects of the music curriculum. The co-ordinator for music is effective and has ensured the children receive a broad and interesting curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

102. Standards cannot be judged as no lessons were seen during the inspection, but evidence indicates that the leadership of the subject is good and there have been improvements in the way the curriculum is planned and structured. National guidelines have been adapted to meet the needs of the school. Teachers plan their lessons particularly well, to ensure that children build on their existing skills from year-to-year. The school has no permanent hall space as all rooms are used for teaching groups. Despite this, one classroom is cleared regularly to provide all the children with opportunities for gymnastics or dance lessons. The outside area is used well for games and the children learn to swim while in Years 3 to 6. The three oldest year groups attend a residential outdoor adventure centre each year. They experience a good range of activities. Overall, these arrangements ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are met appropriately. This has improved since the last inspection. The children reach above average standards in swimming by the time they leave the school.
103. A good range of sporting activities is offered to all pupils outside the school day. These currently include football and netball, with other seasonal sports available at different times of the year. Good links are made with the community as parents take a lead in coaching pupils, having acquired the necessary qualifications on their own initiative as a means of supporting the school. Boys and girls are equally invited to participate.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

104. Pupils aged seven and eleven years reach the expected standards set out in the local guidelines. They make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. The progress in Key Stage 2 is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
105. By the end of Year 2, satisfactory teaching has ensured the children have a good range of information. They know that The Bible is a special book and are aware that parables, such as 'The Good Samaritan', were stories that were told by Jesus and carry messages. They understand the implications of joining a group such as the Brownies, where they are expected to keep the rules and to set a good example. They begin to relate this to joining a church. Younger children identify those people who love and care for them when they complete a Family and Friends register. The older pupils compile a calendar of personal and public celebrations, being taught to understand that these are special occasions and include birthdays, village celebrations and religious festivals. The pupils developed the theme of 'Belonging' to consider rules for living.
106. In Key Stage 2, the older pupils study other faiths such as Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism as well as Christianity. They build on previous knowledge to gain a deeper understanding of the associated responsibilities involved in being a member of a club or a faith community. They study the Ten Commandments and compile their rules to regulate their own lives. Pupils reflect well on the messages contained in the Parable of the Sower and study the account of the conversion of Zacchaeus to discover the

changes it made to his life. They research into the lives of such celebrities as Mother Theresa and Martin Luther King. This gives them good insights into the life sacrifices these people made to help improve the lives of others. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Sacred artefacts are used well to gain pupils' interest. The teacher and the pupils handled an Islamic prayer mat respectfully prior to discussing the Islamic word 'Wudhu' and analysing the symbolism of water in the religions of Christianity and Islam. Good planning and organisation of groups ensure that pupils are able to discuss this subject at their own level of knowledge and understanding. Discussion sessions enable the pupils to share their knowledge with the whole class and to gain insights into non-Christian world religions.

107. The religious education curriculum fully meets legal requirements and the effective co-ordinator has continued to develop the teaching and learning programme by ensuring the planning for religious themes includes effective progression as pupils move through the school.