

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **St PAUL'S C.E. FIRST SCHOOL**

Coven, Wolverhampton

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124245

Headteacher: Mrs B. Scott

Reporting inspector: Ms J Ikin  
Rgl's OIN: 3349

Dates of inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> June 2003

Inspection number: 248573

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: St Paul's C.E. First School

School category: Voluntary Controlled

Age range of pupils: 3- 9

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Lane  
Coven  
Wolverhampton

Postcode: WV9 5AD

Telephone number: 01902 790253

Fax number: 01902 791994

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Lorna Jones

Date of previous inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3349	Ms J Ikin	Registered inspector	Art music religious education The Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19436	Mr M O'Malley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
28071	Mr A Williams	Team inspector	English information and communication technology physical education special educational needs	
21100	Mr A Morgan	Team inspector	Mathematics science design and technology educational inclusion English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32396	Mrs S O'Hannan	Team Inspector	Geography history	

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London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Paul's Church of England First School is a similar size to other primary schools nationally, having 226 pupils, 131 boys and 119 girls, on roll including 48 children in the nursery who attend on a part time basis. The majority of pupils are from the local community or surrounding area where the school is held in high regard. Pupils are mainly of White United Kingdom heritage although mixed race, Indian, Chinese heritages and the traveller community are also represented. There are five pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. Attainment on entry to the nursery is about the level expected for children of similar age. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and with a statement of special educational needs is below average. These special needs include emotional and behavioural difficulties, moderate and severe learning difficulties, physical and speech and communication difficulties. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed since the previous inspection.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a sound school which is effective in teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy because of some good teaching and clear curriculum guidance in these subjects. The headteacher took over the school in difficult circumstances relatively recently and has successfully won the confidence of the staff and maintained a satisfactory standard of education and good standard of care for its pupils. The school has not yet addressed many of the weaknesses found in the previous inspection and, because of this, the pace of improvement at the school has been too slow. However, the governors have recently strengthened the leadership and management team by the appointment of an experienced deputy headteacher, and because of this, and the commitment of an able and hardworking staff team, the capacity of the school to move forward is good. Overall, it gives satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The children in the nursery and the reception classes have a very good start to their schooling as a result of high quality teaching.
- Standards are above average in reading and mathematics as a result of clear guidance based on the national numeracy and literacy strategies and good teaching in these subjects.
- The good standard of pastoral care that the school provides for its pupils, together with the very good relationships in the school, result in pupils being confident and keen to learn.
- There is good provision for the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils. As a result behaviour is good, pupils get on well together and have caring attitudes towards each other.
- Parents give very good support to the school and to their children's learning as a result of the good links that the school has with them. This makes a significant contribution to the standards that pupils achieve.

### What could be improved

- The pace of improvement at the school is too slow because the school has inadequate systems for finding out about its strengths and weaknesses, planning for future developments and delegating the jobs that need to be done.
- Standards in design and technology are below average because insufficient attention is given to the processes of design, planning and evaluation.
- The use of assessment and planning for subjects other than English and mathematics is unsatisfactory. It results in pupils in Years 1 to 4 doing similar work and then older and higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as much as they should.

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

### HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. Since then it has successfully maintained the strengths that were identified and improved standards in mathematics and physical education. Teaching is also better than it was. The school has set itself appropriately challenging targets for English and mathematics and is on course to meet them. However, the school has made unsatisfactory progress in addressing the important weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school that were identified during the previous inspection and there is still insufficient use of assessment to inform planning. Overall, therefore, the school's improvement since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory. However, its capacity for future improvement is now good.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
reading	A	A	A	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
writing	A	B	A	B	
mathematics	D	C	A	B	

The table shows that the school's results in the 2002 Year 2 National Curriculum tests were well above the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, the results were above the average. The results of teacher assessments for science are not shown on the table, but in 2002 they were in the highest five per cent when compared to schools nationally, because all pupils achieved the level expected for their age.

The findings of the inspection are that all pupils in the nursery and reception classes, including those with English as an additional language, make very good progress and nearly



all achieve or exceed the goals set for them by the end of the reception year. Pupils in other year groups make good progress in reading and mathematics, to achieve above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 4. The school is on course to meet the targets that it has set itself. In writing and science and all other subjects except design and technology, most pupils make satisfactory progress and standards are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils from traveller families, those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs achieve well. Higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as much as they should in subjects other than English and mathematics. In design and technology progress is unsatisfactory and standards are below average.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite and attentive in lessons and generally behave well around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils grow in confidence as a result of the very good relationships throughout the school.
Attendance	Attendance rates are satisfactory. Pupils arrive at school punctually and lessons start on time.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is very good. Teachers have very high expectations of the children and a very good understanding of the curriculum and of children's developing needs. In Years 1 to 4, teaching is satisfactory overall although in English and mathematics it is often good. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well and this is a significant factor in the standards that are achieved in the subjects. Pupils are well managed and there are good standards of discipline. Teaching assistants give good support, particularly to those pupils who have special educational needs. Where weaknesses occur it is in planning for the different needs of pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics and the use of marking to help pupils know what they have to do in order to improve their work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Curriculum provision in the nursery and reception classes is very good. It is satisfactory in the rest of the school but there are weaknesses in planning for subjects other than English and mathematics. There is insufficient emphasis on planning and evaluation in design and technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Individual education plans are in place and this ensures that pupils receive the help that they need and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school ensures that pupils who speak English as an additional language have access to the curriculum and make progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal, social and moral and spiritual development is good. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall although more needs to be done to extend pupils' awareness of cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school monitors the well-being of its pupils carefully and provides good standards of pastoral care. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall. Although there are some good procedures for English and mathematics, insufficient use is made of the results to inform planning, and assessment procedures in other subjects are weak.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has successfully maintained the school through a difficult period and developed good relationships amongst staff, parents and governors. The deputy headteacher has made a significant contribution through the high quality of her own teaching and in her subject leader roles. The overall leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory because the weaknesses identified in the last inspection have not yet been addressed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors support the school well and satisfactorily fulfil their statutory responsibilities
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The procedures that the school has for checking the effectiveness of its work do not give the headteacher, staff and governors an accurate picture of its strengths and weakness.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school satisfactorily applies the principles of best value.

The accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall but the book stocks in the library are barely adequate.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching is good and children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The staff are easy to talk to</li> </ul>	<p>Some parents would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more extra curricular opportunities;</li> <li>• a better match of work for pupils differing ages in the mixed age class;</li> <li>• the way that their concerns about behaviour are followed up.</li> </ul>

The inspection team supports most of the positive views, although the school is still developing leadership and management procedures. With regard to their concerns about extra curricular activities, inspectors judge that there is an appropriate number of activities although those held after school are mainly linked to physical education. There is usually an appropriate match of work to pupils' differing needs in English and mathematics in the mixed age class. However, work in other subjects is too similar but this is also an issue in other classes in Years 1 to 4. Inspectors found that there are effective procedures to deal with poor behaviour on the rare occasions that it occurs and that parents concerns are always taken seriously.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. When children enter the nursery they are generally achieving the levels typical for their age. By the time they leave the reception classes most meet, and a significant minority exceed, the goals that are set for them. They make very good progress because of the very good teaching that they receive and are very well prepared for their work on the National Curriculum in Year 1.
2. The school's results in the 2002 Year 2 National Curriculum tests were well above the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, the results were above the average. The results for mathematics show an improving trend. The school has successfully sustained its above average results for reading and writing over the last three years. The results of 2002 teacher assessments for science show that all the pupils attained the level expected for their age, putting the school in the highest five per cent nationally. However, the proportion of pupils attaining at the higher level in science was average. The results of the 2002 tests that the school used for pupils in Year 4, show that, in the main these standards are maintained. The evidence of the inspection suggests that the results of the 2003 tests will be of a similarly high level in reading and mathematics, but fewer pupils will attain the higher levels in writing than in previous years.
3. The evidence of the inspection show that current pupils make good progress in reading and achieve above average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Most pupils are confident readers and have a good range of skills with which to make sense of new or more difficult words. They empathise with characters in stories and recount the events accurately. Average and higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to find deeper meaning in the text. Where pupils achieve at the lower levels, there are weaknesses in their comprehension skills. Pupils know how information books work but their library skills vary between classes, and are not always as good as they should be, particularly in Year 4.
4. Standards in writing are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 4, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress and most can write for a range of different purposes using appropriate styles. Average and higher attaining pupils make increasingly accurate use of punctuation and grammar as they move through the school, and develop an increasing awareness of how to use language for effect and make their writing interesting to the reader. Where pupils attain at the lower levels it is often because they find it difficult to remember, and use simultaneously, all the elements that are required for a good piece of writing. Standards of writing and presentation in subjects other than English are not as high as they should be.
5. Standards in speaking and listening have improved since the previous inspection and are now average throughout the school. This improvement is a result of clearer guidance that has been provided for teachers and more opportunities for speaking and listening in the course of lessons. Most pupils make sound progress. They listen attentively to what their teachers and other pupils say in lessons and can answer questions and express their ideas clearly and confidently. Where pupils achieve at the lower levels it is because they find it difficult to answer questions in full, grammatically correct sentences.

6. Pupils make good progress in mathematics and standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and is a result of the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, clear curriculum guidance and good teaching. Pupils acquire a good knowledge of the basic skills of numeracy and can apply them well to increasing complex problem solving situations as they move through the school. Their skills in shape, space and measure and data handling also develop well.
7. The school successfully ensures that all pupils achieve the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 in science. However, few pupils achieve at levels above this because work is not sufficiently challenging. Potentially higher attaining pupils do not then make the progress that they should because of limited opportunities for them to ask their own scientific questions, follow their own lines of enquiry and record their observations and findings in greater detail.
8. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average by the end of Years 2 and 4. This represents satisfactory progress in relation to pupils' starting points on entry to Year 1 and is similar to the previous inspection. As pupils progress through the school, they demonstrate an increasing confidence with the functions of the computer, save and print their own work and apply their knowledge in other subjects when given the opportunity.
9. Pupils make satisfactory progress in art and design and achieve average standards by the end of Years 2 and 4. The last inspection found that the needs of older higher attainers were not being met sufficiently. This issue has now been addressed by having an artist in residence in Year 4 and some good quality work has resulted. Pupils use a variety of materials to communicate their ideas and make images and artefacts for different purposes. They have a sound knowledge of the work of different artists. Where there are weaknesses in pupils' achievement, it is in their skills in using different media and in the use of sketchbooks to explore ideas and to collect visual information for their work.
10. Standards in design and technology are below average by the end of Years 2 and 4, and pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. Standards have fallen since the previous inspection because weaknesses found then have not been addressed. Although pupils' making skills are satisfactory, there is insufficient attention given to the design, planning and evaluation aspects of the subject.
11. Standards in geography, history, music and religious education are average by the end of Years 2 and 4, and pupils make satisfactory progress in these subjects. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 often work on similar tasks, as they do in Years 3 and 4. As a result, higher attaining pupils do not always make the progress that they should.
12. Standards in physical education have improved since the previous inspection and are average overall. Standards in gymnastics are good. Pupils make better progress than they did because the school has improved its provision and ensured that all teachers have received training.
13. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set out in their individual education plans. They benefit from good support in both literacy and numeracy. Pupils learning English as a language additional to the language spoken at home, also make good progress in lessons and over time. Traveller children receive good support and achieve well. The school has a list of pupils who are described as more able, but has not yet tracked the progress of talented and gifted pupils. The evidence of

the inspection is that they achieve well in English and mathematics but that they do not achieve as much as they should in other subjects. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

14. Pupils enjoy learning and have good attitudes to school. They behave well in lessons and their behaviour around school is good; their personal development is good and there are very good relationships between pupils and staff. The standards noted at the previous inspection have been maintained and this contributes well to pupils' learning.
15. Pupils are keen to come to school. They are willing to learn and respond well to good teaching. Pupils are interested and involved in their lessons. For example in a Year 1 science class, the pupils were designing a habitat for wood lice. They were excited by what they were doing and "bursting" to explain the reasons for their choice of habitat and food. Pupils are keen to ask and answer questions. They listen attentively and get on with the tasks set. Even the youngest pupils concentrate well and take a pride in what they do. For example, in the nursery the pupils were making picture frames. One little boy carefully chose the pins for assembly, and he painstakingly hammered them into the four corners. Nothing would distract him from his "mission". He confidently explained to the class what he had done, and took great pride in the result.
16. There is a calm learning atmosphere in lessons. Pupils behave well in the dining room and playground because they know the standard of behaviour that is expected and are keen to respond to it. There is little bullying and racism is rare. Both are effectively addressed. Pupils are friendly and polite. They take good care of equipment, handle books with care, and tidy away neatly and quickly at the end of lessons.
17. The quality of relationships is a strength of the school and a major factor in pupils' learning and progress. Pupils respect one another's views, co-operate and share ideas. For example even the youngest pupils work well together, listening to each other's observations, sharing resources, and taking turns as they play in the outdoor area. Pupils are well mannered and considerate. They respect the teachers and are keen to please.
18. Pupils for whom English is an additional language look forward to coming to school. They have very good relations with everyone in the school and enjoy their time there. They are well behaved and confident participants in class and around the school. Traveller children soon settle on their return to school, as they familiarise themselves with daily routines and re-establish their friendships. They display confidence with adults when talking about themselves and their families.
19. Pupils' personal development is good. They grow in confidence and are proud of their achievements. For example, children in the nursery are confident when speaking to visitors and keen to show what they are doing. One little girl took great pains to explain what she was drawing. "This is a machine, that makes the wire, that makes the television work, and I put my name on it by myself." Pupils settle to work quickly, are sensitive to the needs of others and work well together. They respect each other and readily accept differences within their school community. Their understanding of the diversity of values and traditions represented in wider society is more limited. Children in the nursery and reception classes take responsibility for their own learning by planning what they are going to do and talking about it afterwards. Older pupils take some responsibility for their own learning through group work, homework and research, but are sometimes over dependent on adults when they find work difficult. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 4 to use their initiative, develop their own ideas and evaluate their own

work. When given the opportunity, they take responsibility for jobs around the school well. However, pupils are insufficiently consulted about their views of the school and have limited involvement in its development. For example, through the introduction of a school council, which the school is planning to do.

20. Attendance is satisfactory. Attendance this year is 94.6% which is in line with the national median (94.5%). There is no unauthorised absence. Punctuality is good. Registration and lessons start promptly. However, absence due to holidays during term time is high.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

21. The quality of teaching for children in the nursery and reception classes is very good and this ensures that they get a very good start to their schooling and are well prepared for their work in Year 1. In Years 1 to 4 the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and results in pupils making satisfactory progress in their learning. The teaching of physical education, which was a weakness in the previous inspection, has improved and is now satisfactory as a result of training and the provision of better equipment. Teaching in reading and mathematics has improved and is now good, and this is a significant factor in the progress that pupils make and the standards that are achieved in these subjects. These improvements have taken place as a result of training in these subjects and the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There are some particular strengths in teaching in Years 1 and 3 and there is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school. All teachers are highly committed, extremely hard working and keen to do their best for the pupils in their care. The teaching of science, ICT and geography are satisfactory and some good music teaching was seen in Years 3 and 4. It is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in art and design, design and technology, history, religious education and music in Years 1 and 2, because too few lessons were seen in these subjects.
22. There is very good joint planning and teamwork in the reception classes and good links with the nursery where planning is also very good. Teachers have a very good understanding of the curriculum and of how young children learn best and, as a result, a rich environment for learning has been created. The teachers have high expectations of the children and plan very effective teacher directed opportunities for the development of children's basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They also plan a range of practical and enjoyable experiences, which increase children's knowledge of the world about them and promote their personal and social, physical and creative skills. In addition, a broad range of very worthwhile and well-planned opportunities for children to learn through play and through taking part in activities that they have chosen themselves, is provided in the 'plan, do and review' sessions. This extends their learning and develops their confidence effectively because the children are required to work independently, make decisions for themselves and apply their knowledge and skills to new situations. All teachers interact extremely well with the children, participating in play, extending children's imaginative ideas and promoting learning. The teaching assistants provide invaluable support to the children who need it, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, and this enables them to take a full part in lessons and to make very good progress.
23. Teachers in Years 1 to 4 have a good level of subject knowledge in the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They are supported well in this by good curriculum guidance in the form of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and helpful subject co-ordinators who monitor planning and offer practical and constructive advice when it is needed.

24. In the best literacy sessions, the teachers integrate opportunities for developing the skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing. For example in a very good Year 1 lesson, the children had read the story of 'Big, Bad, Bill', prior to planning their own imaginative stories in pictorial form. The teacher then referred back to the original story, drawing pupils' attention to some of the strategies that the author had used to create effect, for example, by using alliteration. She also drew attention to the punctuation and grammar that had been used for the same purpose. The children were asked to make up their own alliterative sentences orally and there was also an opportunity for them to discuss their story introductions together before reporting to the whole class. As a result of these activities, the pupils were very well prepared when they came to write their own stories and they engaged in the task with enthusiasm and interest.
25. The best teaching in mathematics is characterised by skilled questioning which is pitched at levels that are appropriate for the different needs of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to apply their knowledge of numbers to solving problems. As a result they work at the top of their capabilities and learning is moved on. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, questions are more general and directed at the whole class, then higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
26. All teachers identify clear learning objectives for lessons in their planning. However, it is only in a minority of lessons that they are shared with the pupils and then followed up at the end of sessions to evaluate what has been learned. Too often pupils embark on their work without really understanding why they are doing it, and they have little understanding of what they were supposed to know, understand or be able to do, as a result of the lesson. Whilst work is always regularly marked, it is only in a few cases that there are written comments to help pupils know what they have to do to improve.
27. Teachers make good use of assessment to inform planning in English and mathematics and this ensures that the different needs of pupils are met. Planning and the use of assessment in other subjects are unsatisfactory because they result in pupils in different year groups and those with different needs in the same class doing similar work. This particularly affects higher attaining pupils who do not always have access to the challenging work that they need in science, design and technology, geography, history, and religious education. The over-use of worksheets also limits the progress of higher attaining pupils.
28. Teachers make good use of all the time that is available in lessons and there is good preparation and use of resources to support pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support the pupils who most need help and this makes a significant contribution to the progress that they make. There is good communication between the teachers and their assistants and this flow of information ensures that pupils' work and progress in lessons is monitored carefully. Homework is used appropriately to support work in school.
29. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good support from teaching assistants. Teachers and teaching assistants alike have very good relationships with pupils, and they make sure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities. Teachers plan work which is well matched to pupils' individual needs in both literacy and numeracy lessons, and additional support is given in particular circumstances whenever appropriate. There is appropriate support for pupils who speak English as an additional language and for pupils from traveller families.



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

30. The curriculum that the school offers is satisfactory overall, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
31. Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is very good. It ensures that children learn through a wide range of interesting and practical experiences, which involve play and talk. There is an appropriate emphasis on the early skills of literacy and numeracy and a very good balance between teacher directed activities and those which the children have initiated themselves. This ensures that they grow in confidence and are well prepared for their work on the National Curriculum in Year 1.
32. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 4 covers the requirements of the National Curriculum and there is a satisfactory balance between subjects. The teaching of religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, and is currently being updated to ensure better progression in knowledge, skills and understanding. There is good provision for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy through well balanced programmes of work which ensure that pupils make progress as they move through the school in English and mathematics. Additional supporting strategies are used to help pupils who need it when required. Opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills across the curriculum are under-developed. There is an appropriately structured programme to develop pupils' ICT skills, but more needs to be done to help pupils develop these skills across the curriculum.
33. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, the school's planning system results in pupils in Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 and 4, doing similar work in history, geography and religious education and this slows down the progress that they make. There is insufficient planning for the higher attaining pupils in these subjects and also in science. There are particular weaknesses in design and technology, where there is insufficient emphasis on design, planning and evaluation, and so pupils do not reach the standards that they should in this subject. The school has not picked up the weaknesses in its provision because systems for checking teaching, learning and standards are not in place and the subject leaders' role has not been developed to a sufficient extent. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Drugs education is taught as part of the science curriculum. There is no formal programme for sex and relationships education but the school answers pupils' questions as they arise.
34. Traveller children receive good support in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy to help them in their learning in all subjects. Pupils for whom English is an additional language participate fully in all subjects and activities of the school's curriculum. In the nursery, provision for children who are at a very early stage of learning English as an additional language is very good and they are fully engaged in all the experiences it offers.
35. The curriculum is extended satisfactorily through visits to places of interest and by a range of visitors invited to contribute to pupils' learning. For example, during the week of the inspection Year 3 pupils visited Lunt Fort as part of their study of the legacy of the Roman occupation. Pupils' experience of live music is enriched by the Staffordshire Music Service and other visiting musicians. There is a satisfactory range of out-of-school activities available to pupils. This includes practices for the school's musical productions. There are sports clubs and a French class which are attended by small enthusiastic groups of pupils. Because specialist coaches are engaged for this programme fees are charged, and, therefore, payment is a prerequisite for attendance.

36. The school's good links with the community make a significant impact on pupils' learning and, for this reason, time is set aside each year to sustain this engagement. There are strong links with St Paul's church and pupils attend each year for services of Harvest, Mothers' Day and Christmas. This includes the school's Carol Service. In addition, pupils are invited to sing at the Coven Lights Ceremony and to local senior citizens' groups. Through such occasions pupils are able to perform with others and in public, and, as a result, they are encouraged to develop a good sense of audience and occasion. This makes a positive contribution to their personal and social development.
37. The school maintains strong links with local schools, especially the middle school to which the majority of pupils transfer. A strong feature is the collaboration between the teachers of both schools in structuring the curriculum to secure continuity in pupils' learning. Consequently, good transfer arrangements exist between the schools which include a preparatory visit for pupils during the summer term.
38. Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school promotes pupils' spiritual development well through the Christian ethos of the school. Pupils are able to think about what makes them and others special and also to be sensitive to the feelings of other people. Teachers help children to develop a caring approach to all living things and during a lesson observing animals, pupils discussed the need to return animals to their natural habitat. Religious education and personal and social education lessons are used well to support this activity. An example of this was in reception when pupils brought their special things to school. This was then used to develop their understanding of special Christian things such as a bible and a crucifix. In Year 3 pupils' visited St Chad's Brewood open door day where they thought of why St Chad's was a special place and one child said that it gave them a warm feeling inside. Assemblies do not offer enough opportunities for the pupils to reflect on issues that have been discussed.
39. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school is an orderly environment where pupils show respect for each other and for resources around school. Pupils are clear about what is right and what is wrong and how they will be rewarded for good behaviour and how poor behaviour will be dealt with. Classes have their own class rules which have been drawn up by each class. In most lessons praise is used effectively by teachers to refocus lessons when pupils become restless. A good example of this was in a reception literacy lesson when the teacher praised one pupil's efforts to pay attention. This had a positive effect on the rest of the class.
40. Provision for social development is good. There is a caring, supportive climate where all pupils are aware of the needs of others. A good example of this was during a lesson when a group of pupils consoled a distressed child and brought the teacher to help him. During playtimes, pupils in Years 3 and 4 help to support the younger pupils. The school encourages pupils to contribute to a wide range of charities and to consider their social responsibility in a wider sense. As a result, they have a good understanding of the needs of the wider community and become aware that their actions can make a difference to the lives of others. Pupils co-operate with each other and work well in groups or pairs.
41. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall. The school has successfully built links with the West Midlands Consortium Education Service for Traveller Children who provide resources for all classes to use. Charitable events, such as 'Water Aid', and 'Farm Africa', extend pupils' understanding of the lives of people in other countries. The school has begun to build resources to support multi cultural education and in religious education there are a range of artefacts to help children learn

about different religious traditions. However, there are insufficient books in the library to support cultural development and few authentic opportunities for children to develop their understanding of cultural diversity in society through visits and visitors.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

42. The school cares well for its pupils. The staff know the pupils very well and provide a caring atmosphere that contributes greatly towards pupils' learning. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. However, because the procedures for monitoring and supporting their academic progress are unsatisfactory, the provision for support and guidance is not good enough. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics, but in other subjects, procedures are unsatisfactory and insufficient use is made of the information to plan the next steps in learning. The school has not made enough progress in addressing this weakness since the previous inspection and this restricts pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.
43. Induction procedures for new pupils and those for re-admitting traveller children are good. As a result they quickly settle into school. There is good additional support from outside agencies. There are satisfactory arrangements for child protection but there has been no recent staff training. Procedures for health and safety are satisfactory and staff make sure that pupils learn safely. There is satisfactory first aid coverage and staff know the pupils who have medical conditions. The school regularly checks the premises for hazards, and makes improvements where necessary.
44. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. All unexplained absence is followed up and good attendance is rewarded with certificates. The education welfare officer checks the registers each term. Procedures could be improved further by analysing attendance data more regularly, and following up unsatisfactory attendance more systematically. Term time holidays should be discouraged more rigorously.
45. There are effective measures to monitor and promote good behaviour. The behaviour policy emphasises a positive approach. There is good supervision at break and lunch-time and there are effective systems for monitoring unsatisfactory behaviour. Parents are kept well informed and support the behaviour policy.
46. Assessment procedures in the nursery and reception classes are good and used well to inform teachers' planning. Nationally required records have been completed and are being analysed to inform future planning. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in Years 1-4 in mathematics and in English and satisfactory procedures in science. In English and mathematics, satisfactory use is made of assessment to set work at an appropriate level in lessons and to identify targets for individuals and groups of pupils. Insufficient use is made of assessments to inform planning for pupils' differing needs in science. Although targets are set for pupils in English and mathematics, the pupils are not sufficiently involved in this or in assessing their own work. The assessment co-ordinator and some of the senior staff analyse the results of Year 2 and 4 tests systematically, but the optional tests for Year 3 are not a regular feature of the school. The school does not analyse separately the performance of different groups of pupils. Consequently, the school does not have a clear overview of the strengths and weaknesses of its provision for different groups throughout the school. The results of assessments and analyses are not shared to a sufficient extent with all staff and insufficient use is made of the information to inform school improvement planning.

47. Assessment procedures in the other subjects are unsatisfactory. They are based on an insecure planning system and do not give a sufficiently clear picture of pupils' progress and achievement as they move through the school. They are not sufficiently used to inform teachers' planning for the next steps in learning. The assessment procedure for design and technology is unhelpful because it only assesses one aspect of the programmes of study.
48. The school is the base school for a number of traveller children and exchanges information with the other schools they join during the year. As a result, the school has a broader view of their attendance over the year. The school maintains strong links with the West Midlands Consortium Education Service for Traveller Children. They provide advice and support for the school and the staff. The school raises attendance issues with this group as they feel the Consortium staff are effective in supporting pupils' continuing attendance.
49. The school monitors and promotes pupils' personal development well. Staff know the pupils very well and pupils and parents are confident to approach them with their concerns. This helps staff note developments and identify problems. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are promoted through very good relationships in every aspect of school life.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

50. Parents are very pleased with the school. In particular, they are confident that their children like school. They are pleased with the teaching and their children's progress. They note that their children are expected to work hard and that they are becoming mature and responsible. Some parents think there are insufficient activities outside lessons. The inspection confirms parents' positive views. The provision for activities outside lessons is satisfactory.
51. The school has a good partnership with parents and their involvement with the school has a very good impact on their children's education. Parents are kept well informed about what is going on in school with regular newsletters. Together, the prospectus and the annual governors' report, provide a good summary of the school's aims, provision, and achievements. There are good arrangements for keeping parents informed on progress. Reports are satisfactory and parents can discuss them with the teachers if they wish. Parents can look through their children's work with them on Friday afternoons. The pupils take home rewards, certificates and stickers for good work and behaviour. The teachers are readily accessible and the school is quick to involve parents if there are problems.
52. Parents' contribution to their children's learning is very good, and the school works closely with them. There are good arrangements for introducing parents and their children to the school. The vast majority of parents sign the home school agreement. A number of families need additional support and the school works closely with them and other agencies on their behalf. Parents are kept well informed on what is taught and how they can help. Homework is set regularly and is supported well. The majority of parents sign the reading diaries and some note comments in the homework books. Parents' evenings are well attended and a good number of parents attend school functions, help in class, and support initiatives such as the fruit scheme, and the walking bus. The school association is very active in organising social activities and raising funds. There are information evenings on such things as computers and mathematics. The school responds well to parents' suggestions and concerns, but there are no formal procedures for systematically collecting parents' views. The school plans to address this.

53. The school works hard to develop close relationships with the families of all its pupils. It maintains good links with the families of traveller children. As a result these families willingly come to school to talk over any concerns and keep the school fully informed about their travelling arrangements. This helps the school to support their children's learning. Good links are made with parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language and as a result they are fully involved in the school's work. Parents of special educational needs pupils are always involved in their annual reviews, and consulted at the earliest possible stage if problems occur.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

54. The leadership and management of the school are unsatisfactory overall. This is because the weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation and school improvement planning, which were identified at the time of the previous inspection, have not yet been addressed. As a result of this the school has lacked direction and the pace of improvement has been too slow. However, the school's capacity to move forward is now good. The management team has been strengthened and there is an able and committed staff team.

55. The headteacher took over the school when it was at a low ebb. She has successfully won the support of the staff, parents and governors and, with their help, moved the school out of a deficit budget situation and maintained good standards of literacy, numeracy and pastoral care through a period of considerable disruption. She has improved the climate for learning in the school. An open and honest atmosphere has been developed in which teachers can share and discuss issues and concerns. Parents feel confident in approaching the school because they know they will be listened to. The deputy headteacher, although new to the school, is experienced in the role. She is already having a significant influence on the school's work, and is held in high regard, not least because of the very high quality of her own teaching, but also because of the way she has developed the subjects for which she has responsibility. Other senior managers carry out their roles diligently. However, the delegation of roles and responsibilities is unsatisfactory and requires urgent review. Some staff carry a heavy burden of responsibilities, whilst others are lightly loaded, and there are no clear systems for co-ordinating their work.

56. The governing body gives sound support to the school. The chair of governors meets regularly with the headteacher, and an appropriate range of committees is in place. The chairs of committees carry out their responsibilities efficiently and meetings are always well attended. Governors receive comprehensive information about the work of the school in the regular reports from the headteacher. The headteacher has worked closely with them to involve them more closely in the life of the school. As a result, they have improved their knowledge about how the school works and visit it regularly. For example, they each take responsibility for a subject, meet with subject leaders and spend time in classes. They also visit the school on the annual 'Governors Day'. The governor for special educational needs is kept appropriately informed and has formal and informal discussions with the headteacher. Governors are very supportive of the school's inclusive policies, for example, in ensuring that the pupils with English as an additional language and those from traveller families, receive the support that they need.

57. The school's monitoring and evaluation systems are unsatisfactory and do not give the headteacher, senior managers, subject leaders and governors the precise information that they need to inform their improvement efforts. Staff have started to gather information by looking at books, planning and resources. The subject leaders for English and mathematics have also observed parts of lessons. However, there is a lack of a co-

ordinated approach and the information is not always used at whole school level to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in standards, teaching and learning. A good example of this is the work that has been done by assessment co-ordinator. She has collated the results of national and optional tests with great efficiency. However, the school's systems do not ensure that the results are shared with all staff and there is insufficient analysis of the figures to find out how different groups of pupils have done in each area of their work. As a result, the areas that need to be addressed in order to improve standards are not accurately pinpointed. This lack of precision results in the school development plan being too generalised. Although it has been modified by the new headteacher and is now more understandable than it was to the governors, it lacks clear priorities, success criteria and measurable objectives in terms of how standards, teaching and learning will be improved. There is also insufficient mention of the cost implications of the training and resources that will be needed to support initiatives.

58. The school has satisfactory administration systems to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school. Newsletters are well presented to ensure that all those within the school community are kept informed. All visitors to the school are made to feel welcome and day-to-day matters are dealt with calmly and efficiently. This makes an important contribution to the orderly atmosphere that is prevalent throughout the school. Finances are satisfactorily managed with the support of the local education authority and governors are provided with termly reports about spending. The large carry forward that appears in the budget is money that was been appropriately set aside for improvements to the school building. Governors appropriately apply the principles of best value and debate expenditure rigorously. Strategic financial planning ensures that there are sufficient funds to sustain developments in the longer term and overall the school gives satisfactory value for money.
59. The headteacher is the school co-ordinator for special educational needs. She has improved the administrative systems for special educational needs, developed individual education plans and ensured that individual pupils receive the help they need. The school has updated its policy for equal opportunities and racism, although it does not say how the progress of different groups should be monitored. The school has identified its gifted and talented pupils, but it has not collated specific information about them or developed a policy to guide its provision. Training for staff for the education of traveller children is planned as part of the coming year's training programme. The school is acquiring a range of appropriate resources for the education of traveller children; these have been identified on the recommendations of the West Midlands Consortium. The staff are currently being consulted on the school's Diversity policy; it is in draft and it is too early to judge its effectiveness..
60. There are sufficient teachers, who collectively have the experience and expertise to cover the subjects of the curriculum and the age and ability range of the pupils. There are satisfactory procedures for staff development and induction. Performance management procedures are in place and the results are used appropriately to identify training needs.
61. The accommodation is satisfactory. There is good use of display throughout the school to support, inform and celebrate learning. The school's resources are satisfactory for most subjects. The outdoor area is being developed well to support learning in geography and science. The school has plans to address the paucity of resources for outdoor play in the nursery and reception classes and to improve the school's book stocks, which are barely adequate.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

62. In order to improve the leadership and the management of the school and the standards that are achieved, the headteacher, staff and governors should attend to the following issues.

(1) Ensure that the school moves forward at a faster pace in a clear education direction by:

- Developing a clear management structure based on the main leadership and management jobs that need to be done and then delegating roles and responsibilities equitably;
- Ensuring a systematic reporting and communication system between all those who work in the school;
- Writing a clear prioritised plan for the improvement of the school which focuses on improving standards, is informed by the results of monitoring and evaluation, includes measurable criteria against which success can be judged and which is clearly linked to the budget.

(see paragraphs 33, 46, 55, 57)

(2) Ensure that the headteacher, senior staff and governing body have a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school with which to inform its improvement efforts by:

- Identifying a clear programme which identifies how standards, teaching and learning at the school will be checked, by whom and when;
- Ensuring that the results are drawn together, analysed, shared with others and acted upon;
- Ensuring appropriate training and support where it is needed.

(see paragraphs 33, 46, 55, 57)

(3) Improve standards in design and technology by:

- Reviewing the scheme of work to ensure that all aspects of design technology are developed and that there is a clear progression of skills between year groups;
- Ensuring the pupils' skills in planning and evaluating are developed alongside their making skills.

(see paragraphs 10, 33, 109, 110, 112)

(4) Improve medium term planning for all subjects except English and mathematics by:

- ensuring that there is a clear progression of skills, knowledge and understanding between year groups;
- there is sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils by targeting some work at the higher levels.

(see paragraphs 7, 11, 13, 27, 33)

(5) Improve the use of assessment to inform planning for the different needs of pupils:

- ensuring that all teachers have access to the results of national test and tracking information;
- including opportunities for assessment in medium term and short term planning;
- reviewing and rationalising assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science;
- developing greater consistency in the use of marking to help pupils know what they have to do to improve their work;
- developing strategies to involve pupils in the evaluation of their work.

(see paragraphs 13, 26, 27, 46, 55, 57)

63. In addition the headteacher and governors should attend to the following less immediate issues:

- improve pupils' presentation skills and develop opportunities for pupils to make use of their writing skills across the curriculum; (see paragraphs 4, 32, 91)
- improve pupils' use of ICT across the curriculum;(see paragraphs 8,32, 121)
- improve the provision that the school makes to prepare pupils for life in a diverse society.(see paragraphs 41,137)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### **Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection**

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection**

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	16	16	16	0	0	0
Percentage	0	33	33	33	0	0	0

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

### **Information about the school's pupils**

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	202
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		3

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	13

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

**Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

**Attendance****Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.1
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)**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	23	24	47

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 or above	Boys	21	19	21
	Girls	24	24	24
	Total	45	43	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (93)	91 (90)	96 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	23	23
	Girls	24	24	24
	Total	44	47	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (90)	100 (100)	100 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	200	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.25:1
Average class size	25

**Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	77

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24:1
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12:1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	2002/03
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	£
Total income	514880
Total expenditure	493270
Expenditure per pupil	2182
Balance brought forward from previous year	25430
Balance carried forward to next year	43150

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

498

Number of questionnaires returned

248

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	35	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	64	35	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	38	1	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	49	7	4	3
The teaching is good.	67	29	4	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	44	8	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	30	4	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	39	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	48	43	6	5	1
The school is well led and managed.	57	36	5	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	40	2	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	41	8	6	7

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

64. Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is very good and is a strength of the school. A rich environment for learning has been created and children get a very good start to their schooling
65. Children are admitted to the nursery in the September or January of the school year in which they become four. They then enter the reception classes the following September. The good arrangements to introduce children and their parents to the nursery and the reception classes ensure a positive introduction to school life. The children feel safe and secure from an early stage and settle quickly to their learning.
66. The nursery and reception classrooms are of adequate size and benefit from their own enclosed outdoor areas, which are used for a range of well-organised practical activities. There is a paucity of resources, however, but the school recognises this and well developed plans are in place to improve outdoor provision further.
67. The majority of children are achieving levels typical for their age when they enter the nursery. As a result of very good teaching most meet and a significant minority exceed the goals set for them by the end of the reception year. The Foundation Stage is co-ordinated well. Activities are thoroughly planned and skilfully structured to meet children's wide range of interests and needs. The more formal elements of the curriculum, such as the early skills of reading, writing, and number work, are taught in interesting and practical ways and so children are well prepared for their work in Year 1. The teaching assistants give very good support to the children they work with, particularly those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. This ensures that all children are fully involved in lessons and make very good progress.
68. There are good procedures for keeping track of children's progress and assessing what children know, understand and can do as a result of taking part in activities. This information is used effectively to inform planning for future work.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

69. The supportive and caring atmosphere that is provided in the nursery and the reception classes, together with the consistent responses they receive from all the adults who work with them, ensure that children make very good progress in their personal, emotional and social development.
70. Children gain a sense of their own identity, and learn to respect themselves and others as a result of the atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding that is evident in the nursery and reception classes, and the very good relationships that all the adults have with the children. A wide range of activities is provided to help the children learn how to work and play together and so, by the end of the reception year, most successfully take part in activities which require them to share equipment and materials, and they understand the importance of listening to each other, turn-taking and sharing. Every child has a chance to be 'special' for a day and this provides very good opportunities for children to learn to appreciate each others' unique qualities as well as their own. Small

soft toy characters, which show different emotional expressions, are used well to help the children develop the language that they need to express their feelings.

71. Children learn to do things, such as getting themselves dressed and undressed, and making choices for themselves, when they first start in the nursery. They develop positive attitudes to their learning and gain confidence in their own ability to do things for themselves because of the very good range of experiences which make learning enjoyable and which they can control, particularly in the 'plan do review' sessions. The high expectations of behaviour that the teachers have of the children are consistently reinforced and, as a result, good habits of behaving are established from an early stage. For example, the children in the reception class delight in telling the naughty puppet 'Morag' that she has done something wrong, and then they enjoy explaining how she should behave. By the end of the reception year, most children are keen to do their best, respond well to their teachers' instructions and enjoy taking part in all the activities provided for them.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

72. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes gives very good emphasis to the development of children's communication, language and literacy skills as a result they make very good progress. Children have a wide range of opportunities to speak and listen to adults and other children and represent their ideas through drama, and making pictures and models. Although some children are initially quite reticent when talking in whole class situations, they gradually develop the confidence to answer questions and pass comments because of the very good support they receive from the teaching assistants and the encouragement given by the teachers. By the end of the reception year, most children use the correct words to name objects and can retell their experiences confidently, with clear diction and expression, when asked to do so. They answer questions well, often justifying their answers by explaining cause and effect.

73. Teaching assistants are effective in helping the children to develop their skills in using language for thinking. With their support, the children commentate on their own actions, and use language to describe what they see, to create roles, develop stories and interact imaginatively. Together with the well-organised activities provided, this helps the children to develop these skills in all areas of the curriculum.

74. Most children have had some experience of books before they start in the nursery. These experiences are extended by regular opportunities for children to look at books and to share them with other children and with adults. By the end of the reception year, children enjoy looking at books, are aware of how they work and are able to tell their versions of the stories using their emerging knowledge of words and clues from the illustrations. Some read simple stories independently. Most children listen with enjoyment to stories and show a good understanding of the sequence of a story. They sustain attentive listening during whole-class literacy sessions when they respond with relevant comments to their teachers' questions. Every opportunity is taken to draw children's attention to the written word and the letters that are within words. They learn the initial sounds of words and to associate them with letters of the alphabet and blend sounds together to build simple three letter words which they can then read and write for themselves.

75. The children are actively encouraged to make their own attempts at writing from an early stage. All their early attempts at making marks are valued and as a result children develop the confidence they need to begin to write. Opportunities to help children to see a real purpose for writing are created whenever possible. For example, they wrote their own orders for pizzas as part of their role play in the outdoor 'drive by pizza service'. As a

result of activities such as this, children gain an early understanding that print carries meaning, that writing is a useful form of communication and that it can be used to record their own personal ideas. They quite confidently attempt to write their own words and simple sentences, most of which are phonetically plausible. Children are formally taught how to form their letters correctly and there is a very good range of opportunities for children to use their writing skills independently in the course of play activities

### **Mathematical development**

76. Very good teaching ensures that children in the nursery and reception classes make very good progress. They have the range of experiences that they need to establish a firm foundation of mathematical understanding to support later learning.
77. Children gain an early understanding of mathematical ideas as a result of a very wide range of activities within a carefully-planned environment. For example, in the nursery they help the puppets Hamish and Dionne to find socks that have blown off the line and then count them into pairs by looking at their different sizes, their colours and the number of stripes they have. In the reception classes the children learn the language and properties of shapes by helping their teachers divide up pizzas fairly so that all the adults can have a fair share. As a result of this they also develop an early understanding of fractions. They looked carefully at two-dimensional shapes in the course of their follow up work and also explored some of the properties of three-dimensional shapes. Opportunities to make models from used cartons and construction equipment contribute to children's understanding of three-dimensional shapes. Play activities that involve the use of sand and water are used very well to help develop children's learning about shape, space and measure. Opportunities to work with programmable toys and to play with tricycles in the outdoor area develop children's awareness of speed and direction effectively
78. Children extend their learning of number through both practical and more formal activities. Opportunities for children to count real objects in a range of different ways help most children to develop an understanding that the last one in the count is the same as the number in the set. Activities such as singing and counting rhymes also help the children to develop their counting skills. As a result, most can count accurately from zero to twenty by the end of the reception year and many can count well beyond that. They begin to gain an early understanding of addition and subtraction when they work out how many objects they have when one more is added to a set or one is taken away. Children are taught how to write numbers correctly and are developing the skills that they need to record their own early calculations.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

79. Very good teaching ensures that children make very good progress. They have a wide range of opportunities to develop the confidence that they need to explore their surroundings and to develop their understanding of the world around them.
80. Children are confident and enthusiastic investigators. The very good opportunities for children to explore the natural world have helped them to notice the way living things grow and change. Older children are encouraged to observe the world about them, for example, by lying on a mat and staring upwards into a tree, and then describing what they see by playing 'I spy'. Children's knowledge of the material and physical world is developed well. In the nursery, they explore the tactile qualities of different materials, both natural and manmade. For example, they have been taken outdoors in the winter to feel the snow on their faces and then been able to explore the feeling of snow by bringing



some back indoors. They make models using malleable materials such as icing sugar and playdough and comment on the different textures involved. In the reception classes, children are encouraged to observe movement and forces when different shaped objects are pushed across the floor or down ramps. They respond well to this and are keen to ask their own 'I wonder if..?' questions as they proceed to release objects from different heights and with different degrees of force, and then carefully observe the different results.

81. Children are beginning to become familiar with computers and they confidently control images on screen. Children have ample opportunities to investigate how a range of construction materials work and learn how they can be fitted together to make objects of their own choosing. Teaching also ensures that children develop the skills that they need to use simple tools, such as scissors and glue sticks, properly and to learn techniques such as folding and joining materials.
82. Children in the nursery and reception classes have a very good range of opportunities to think about where they live and the people who help them. There is a need, however, to develop more opportunities to help children to develop an understanding of the wider cultural differences in the society in which we live, for example, by providing a wider range of culturally diverse clothes and artefacts in the role-play area.

### **Physical development**

83. The very good teaching that children receive, both in the nursery and reception classes, ensures the regular and frequent opportunities that young children need for their physical development, both indoors and outside. As a result, they make good progress in improving their co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement.
84. There are opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills when using construction toys and when drawing and cutting, for example. They are also taught how to hold pencils and scissors correctly and this supports their work in other areas of learning. Children are given ample opportunities to explore and refine their large scale movements and actions as they play outdoors, for example by riding trikes and crawling through tunnels. Children also improve skills such as throwing, jumping, skipping and running as they play alongside their classmates. They develop their skills further by taking part in more formal lessons in the hall. They change into appropriate clothing and are taught how to dress and undress themselves independently. Whilst working in the hall, children learn to move safely and develop a good awareness of their own space and that of others. Children in the reception class demonstrate good control, balance and awareness of their own and others' space when working on gymnastic apparatus.

### **Creative development**

85. All adults who work with the children in the nursery and reception classes, skilfully help them to make up their own imaginative stories when using the role-play and other areas. This, combined with the well-planned provision of resources, helps the children to make very good progress in developing their own creative and imaginative ideas. For example, an area in the nursery has been developed as a 'fabric shop', and in the reception there is a 'camp site cafe'. The provision of small toys representing the real world enhances the development of children's ability to visualise and think through their imaginative ideas and to practise their use of language in different situations.
86. Children enjoy painting and drawing and respond well to the many opportunities that they have to paint what they see, feel and imagine. They explore colours and the textures of

different kinds of paper for example, when making a collage of a pizza, and when painting sea pictures to represent the moods of different kinds of music.

87. The children readily join in with songs and enjoy opportunities to play instruments and to explore the sounds that they make. Teacher directed dance lessons in the hall are used well to help the children to express their imaginative ideas and to move in response to the sounds that they hear.

## **ENGLISH**

88. The standards of attainment of Year 2 pupils are well above average in reading and average in writing and in speaking and listening. These standards of attainment are replicated for pupils in Year 4. This is a satisfactory improvement from the time of the previous inspection when standards in speaking and listening were judged to be below average. The improvements are a result of the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and better teaching. Pupils make very good progress in reading and sound progress in writing and in speaking and listening. Pupils with special educational needs, traveller children and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the good support they receive.
89. Where individual teachers incorporate opportunities for speaking as an integral part of literacy sessions then pupils achieve well. When given the opportunity, pupils in Years 1 and 2 use speech in imaginative ways and express their ideas clearly during discussions. By the time they reach Year 4, most pupils have a sound vocabulary and are interested in finding out about new words. Higher attaining pupils are quite articulate. Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, show a keen interest in what is being said, and answer questions clearly. However, they often use single words to reply and use colloquial speech rather than Standard English. Lower attaining pupils often lack confidence when talking in whole class sessions but are able to make their ideas known when working in smaller groups or with a support assistant.
90. Most pupils in Year 2 read confidently, recognise when errors are made and correct them. They have a good sight knowledge of common words and, when reading unfamiliar words they use strategies that include sounding out letters and using pictures, to arrive at the correct word. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 can explain the plot of a story, talk about the characters and describe how the story might end. In Years 3 and 4, average and higher attaining pupils read text accurately and confidently express opinions about events in their story. They sensitively identify with the different characters in books that they read. When pupils achieve at the lower levels in Years 3 and 4 it is often because of weaknesses in their comprehension skills. Most Year 2 pupils understand the structure of non-fiction books such as the content and index. Pupils' library skills vary between classes. Many pupils in Year 4 do not know how to go about finding a book in the library, although this is not the case in Year 3. Pupils are very keen and enthusiastic about reading, most pupils take their books home to read, and they are well supported in this by their parents.
91. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can write simple stories with a clearly defined opening, main events and a plausible ending. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to show awareness of the reader by choosing words for effect and including interesting detail. They are able to write captions and labels and simple accounts of events. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 begin to write longer pieces with more detail and, with encouragement, make changes and improve their writing by using different words. Pupils are developing a sound understanding of different styles of writing and how they can be used for different purposes. For example, Year 4 pupils have written effective persuasive arguments for

and against a dam being built. Pupils acquire a good foundation of basic skills. The higher attaining pupils in Year 2 use basic punctuation successfully, spell most common words and some complex words accurately, and achieve overall coherence in their pieces of writing. By Year 4, the higher attaining pupils use a wider range of punctuation, sometimes remember to use speech marks and to write in paragraphs, and, when reminded, use connecting words when they need to sequence events. However, average and lower attaining pupils find it difficult to combine, simultaneously, the many skills required to produce accurately punctuated and coherent pieces of extended writing. For example, they do not always incorporate what they know about vocabulary, spelling, grammar and punctuation into their work. This then prevents them from achieving at the higher levels. Standards of writing in subjects other than English are not as high as they should be.

92. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good teaching of reading evident throughout the school. Good teaching was also seen in Year 3 and very good teaching was evident in the Year 1 class where the teacher has high expectations of pupils. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Time is now used well in lessons and there is a satisfactory balance between teacher directed sessions and opportunities for pupils to think for themselves and develop their own ideas. Sound guidance is now in place to help teachers plan for speaking and listening. However, opportunities are often missed within lessons. For example, single word answers are often accepted and teachers do not always intervene in pupils' speech to help them develop grammatically correct sentences or use words with greater precision. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented and the basic skills of reading and writing are taught well. In the best lessons, the skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing are combined to support learning. This often involves using a shared text as an exemplar of how authors use language for effect and opportunities for pupils to share their ideas with each other prior to reporting back to the teacher. This helps pupils to formulate accurate responses and to develop their ideas before writing them down. Teachers make very good use of group work to teach pupils strategies to improve their reading. For example, a group of Year 3 pupils receiving additional support, improved their understanding of letter sounds and their knowledge of how sentences are put together as they read a book together. All teachers maintain good records of pupils' reading ability to ensure that each pupil is placed on the correct book to match their attainment level. Planning for lessons is generally satisfactory. When weaknesses occur it is because the learning objectives are not always shared with pupils or followed up at the end of lessons or there is insufficient use of written comments in marking to help pupils know what they have to do to improve their work. There is an overuse of worksheets in some sessions, which constrains learning for higher attaining pupils in writing.
93. Leadership of the subject is good. The newly appointed deputy headteacher is the subject leader. She is a leading literacy teacher and has a particular expertise in the subject. She has already carried out an audit of the school's strengths and weaknesses which included talking to pupils and teachers, monitoring teachers' planning and observing aspects of classroom teaching. She has correctly identified the school's priorities for improving speaking and listening and writing and has drawn up good plans for this. She has helped to improve teachers' understanding of the National Literacy Strategy by providing training and has received good support from the local authority. Library books have been audited and unsuitable ones disposed of. The new purchases of quality books leave the library with insufficient stock but it is intended to increase the number using the proceeds of a sponsored walk. There is an under representation of books describing other cultures and religions and this impedes pupils' cultural development. The school sensibly supplements its book stock with loans from the library service. Assessment in

the subject is good and it is appropriately used to inform planning. However, the results of analyses need to be more widely shared with teachers and the results drawn together to inform the school's plans for improvement.

## **MATHEMATICS**

94. When pupils enter Year 1 many have already exceeded the levels expected for their age. They make good progress so that they achieve above average standards by the end of Years 2 and 4. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were found to be average. This improvement is a result of the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and improved teaching in the subject. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and traveller children achieve well. Those with special educational needs make good progress because they are supported effectively by well-informed teaching assistants. Higher attaining pupils also achieve well because work is well matched to their needs in lessons.
95. By the end of Year 2, pupils display good mental skills with more able pupils adding and subtracting numbers up to 20 accurately when working with larger numbers. They undertake a range of calculations successfully including doubling and halving and have a good understanding that number operations can be expressed in different ways. This helps them to understand and solve problems involving number and units of measure. For example, they use simple flight timetables to record accurately the times at which aeroplanes take off and land, and calculate the duration of their journeys. Pupils know the names and observable properties of two and three dimensional shapes and describe them using the correct terms. They recognise turning as a movement and use their knowledge of fractions to identify a half and a quarter turn. They test their estimations of length and mass carefully using metres, centimetres, kilograms and grams. They compile and interpret simple block graphs of birthdays and dice scores.
96. Throughout Years 3 and 4 pupils build effectively upon their learning and achieve well. Their competence in mental calculations develops effectively. They use their knowledge of the basic number facts of multiplication and division to solve increasingly complex number problems, using all four number operations with three and four digit numbers. More able pupils work confidently with decimals, identify pairs of numbers with two decimal places that total to one, and add and subtract larger decimal numbers correctly. They recognise negative numbers through their studies of temperature. Pupils use simple co-ordinates to locate points on a grid. They compare angles, identify different kinds of triangle and calculate the perimeters and areas of regular and irregular shapes accurately. They measure successfully to the nearest millimetre and identify the capacity of containers in litres and millilitres. They use bar charts they have constructed to explain to the class the findings of their surveys. Pupils readily talk about their work and can explain clearly how they have arrived at their answers. They use computer programs appropriately to practise their mathematical skills and tabulate findings from their surveys.
97. Teaching is good overall and is a significant factor in the good progress that pupils make. Very good teaching was seen in Years 1 and 3 during the inspection. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers make good use of their secure subject knowledge to develop pupils' mental skills and to reinforce their basic knowledge of number facts and calculation methods. Their planning is good and based effectively on the Numeracy Strategy. Teachers insist that pupils use appropriate mathematical vocabulary and give clear explanations of their working. This challenges pupils' thinking and demands precision in their responses. Where teaching is best there is skilful use of questions, which helps pupils who are working at different levels develop their ideas. Teachers give clear explanations and check understanding before moving on to new

work. They place a strong emphasis on identifying number patterns and the relationships between number pairs or groups of numbers. When teaching is satisfactory rather than good it does not fully exploit the learning opportunities that occur in the course of lessons and there is insufficient use of the end of lesson session fully to reinforce learning or generate useful information for assessment. Across the school there are inconsistencies in teachers' marking. There are very good examples of marking offering useful guidance to pupils to help them improve their work. Elsewhere the emphasis is on teachers monitoring pupils' completion of their work with a tick and occasional word of praise. In these instances, pupils are not being helped to raise their standards.

98. The subject leader leads the subject well. She offers useful assistance and guidance to colleagues and has ensured the effective implementation of the Numeracy Strategy. She leads by example through the high quality of her teaching and her rigorous analysis of testing. She manages satisfactorily the monitoring of teachers' planning and classroom practice, and pupils' work. However, there are no formal procedures for the collation of monitoring outcomes, and the monitoring of teaching is not yet set in an annual cycle for all staff. Assessment procedures are good and used well to inform planning. The curriculum is good and ensures a clear progression in pupils' learning.

## **SCIENCE**

99. Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards by the end of Years 2 and 4. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, and traveller pupils also make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. However, higher attaining do not make the progress that they should because there is insufficient planning for their particular needs and an overuse of worksheets in some lessons.
100. By the end of Year 2, pupils have satisfactory knowledge of physical processes and materials and their properties. For example, they can set up a simple electrical circuit using a battery and identify the materials from which objects around them are made and where these materials have come from. The knowledge of life processes and living things is sound. For example, they know something about animal habitats and the conditions and food they need to survive. Their skills of scientific enquiry develop well. They use them appropriately when carrying out investigations and consider whether their tests are fair or not.
101. Throughout Years 3 and 4 all pupils build appropriately upon their previous learning. They identify materials that have magnetic properties and those which do not. They know the main organs of the human body, where they are located and the main functions they fulfil. They sort animals into different groups and list the characteristics of these groups. Drawing on their findings they devise simple keys to help them sort other animals appropriately. With assistance, they carry out experiments to test the hardness of rocks, and to filter dirty water. Their study of drugs helps their understanding of those which are beneficial and that others are very dangerous.
102. Throughout the school pupils are eager to answer questions and participate in discussions. With encouragement they use the correct scientific terms, for example, they speak about wood lice being invertebrates and cats vertebrates, and talk of sorting rocks into those which are permeable and those which are impermeable. They delight in trying to explain the meaning of these words and are clearly pleased when they do so correctly. They make good use of their mathematical knowledge in tabulating the results from their exercise survey, in drawing graphs and in measuring parts of their body. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills.

103. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although some good teaching was seen in Year 1. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. In the best lessons, teachers use questioning well to help them recall their previous learning. This stimulates interest because it sets pupils at the centre of the lesson by encouraging their explanations and suggestions. The importance of precise observations and recording is emphasised. Responsibility is placed on pupils to select appropriate resources and the session at the end of the lesson is used effectively to consolidate and assess learning, and to explore scientific enquiry. When weaknesses occur it is because lesson objectives are not shared with the pupils or followed up at the end of the sessions. There is insufficient planning for the different needs of pupils, particularly those who are higher attaining. There is also an over reliance on worksheets in some lessons and insufficient attention given to the presentation of work. There is insufficient use of written comments in the marking of written work to help pupils know what they have to do to improve.
104. The subject leader works hard and offers useful assistance and guidance to colleagues. A start has been made on checking teaching and learning by looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work. However, the leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory overall because there are no systems to support the development of the role. The school lacks a systematic programme for monitoring and evaluation and the collation of information from testing to inform planning for improvement. Assessment procedures are satisfactory although more use needs to be made of them to inform planning for pupils' differing needs.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

105. Only two lessons in Year 3 and 4 were observed in art and design, but from these and work on display it can be said that pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection. The issue of more challenging work for higher attaining pupils in Year 4 has been addressed by the presence of an artist in residence. He leads high quality workshops which often result in above average work.
106. Pupils throughout the school respond confidently to the range and variety of material with which they work. These include three dimensional modelling, paint, crayon, pastel, textiles and information and communication technology paint programmes. Year 2 pupils have used printing blocks to make pictures of houses, creating different effects to represent different textures. They had looked carefully at patterns in nature, and produced their own black and white collages of camouflaged animals. In Year 3, pupils have studied the work of Paul Klee and developed their own imaginative collages to depict a journey around the school, based on his work. Pupils in Year 4 have created three dimensional pictures and forms on clay tiles. Some good quality still life pictures were seen in Year 4 where pupils have also explored shape and experimented with mixing colours in the course of painting imaginary pictures to depict a dream.
107. It is not possible to make a judgement about the teaching of art and design in Years 1 and 2 because no lessons were seen. However, teaching in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory overall. Lessons are well planned and pupils were well organised and managed. Where weaknesses occur it is because there is insufficient use of sketch books for pupils to explore their ideas and to make ongoing observations to inform their work. There is also insufficient attention given to the progressive development of pupils' skills in using different media.

108. The subject leader takes her responsibility for the subject seriously. However she does not have a clear overview of the subject to inform her plans for improvement because systems to enable her to monitor teaching, learning and standards are not sufficiently developed. Her role in leading and managing the subject is, therefore, unsatisfactory. Assessment procedures and their use to inform curriculum planning are unsatisfactory because they do not take sufficient account of skills' development and are not used to plan work for pupils differing needs.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

109. Standards in design and technology in Years 2 and 4 are below average. Although their making skills are good and this results in some attractive finished products, pupils do not make sufficient use of the processes of designing, planning and evaluating. Therefore, the achievement of all pupils, including traveller children, pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. This is a fall in standards since the previous inspection. Only one design and technology lesson was seen during the inspection, and in that lesson teaching was satisfactory. It is not possible to form an overall judgement about the overall standard of teaching.

110. Across Years 1 to 4, pupils' skills in designing and evaluating are not well developed. A good example of this is in Year 1, where pupils had drawn pictures of their finished models of playground equipment and produced good representations of their pictures. However, important considerations had been ignored, for example, the need for a seesaw to be able to move. Pupils did not test their models to see if they did the job they were supposed to do and make judgements about how they might be improved. Older pupils have made models of lorries based on their knowledge of pneumatics, however, they are all too similar and there is little evidence to show how pupils have developed their own ideas.

111. There are some good examples of attractive finished models throughout the school, which demonstrate pupils' dexterity and skill when working with a wide variety of materials. For example, Year 1 pupils have used paper, card, glue and pipe cleaners in their models of playground equipment. They visited a local park and collected illustrations of suitable equipment as part of this work. Linking with art and bible stories, pupils in Year 2 design and make Joseph's coat of many colours. In Year 2, they make sandwiches with ingredients which represent a healthy diet, which relates to their health programme in science. In Year 3, pupils make a variety of items to support their historical study of 'Invaders'. This includes life-size, Roman shields, spears and daggers, and detailed Viking long ships complete with open sails. Using their knowledge of circuits, they make a challenging series of quiz boards to test the knowledge of participants who are rewarded for a correct answer, which closes the circuit, with a light or buzzer sound. Year 4 pupils make animal-illustrated embroidered samplers using running stitches, while others take this work on to make functional shoulder bags.

112. The need to improve pupils' skills in designing and evaluation was identified at the time of the previous inspection and it has not been addressed sufficiently. Assessment is unsatisfactory because it does not include all the elements of the subject and insufficient use is made of it to inform planning for pupils' differing needs. The role of the subject leader in monitoring and evaluating the subject is unsatisfactory because whole school systems to support this work are not in place. All of these factors have contributed to the subject's decline.

## GEOGRAPHY

113. Pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and traveller children make satisfactory progress. However, higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as much as they should because work is not matched to their specific needs.
114. All pupils start Year 1 having attained the standard that is expected of them. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of various places and some of the differences between them. They are able to discuss the benefits of living in Coven and make comparisons between that and Wolverhampton. They can identify the places that they like in the village and those they want to improve. When drawing plans, they can recognise key features and devise their own key for the plan. Year 1 and 2 pupils are encouraged to develop their understanding of their local environment through the good use of a homework project on Coven to carry out during school holidays. By the end of Year 4, pupils have extended their understanding of different places and are able to write about places with similar and different characteristics. They can explain why places such as deserts are like they are.
115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good teaching in Year 1 and Year 3. In a good lesson in Year 3, the teacher shared learning objectives with pupils at the start of the lessons. They were then asked to think about what they had learnt at the end of the lesson by the use of prompts and questions. Questioning was also used skilfully to help children to develop their thinking about countries different environments. This was then extended to consider the impact that this would have on those living there. During a good lesson in Year 1, the pupils used aerial photographs of the school to find places that they liked or disliked. The pupils made accurate plans of the garden area and there were good opportunities for pupils to use their knowledge of mathematical terms, such as perimeter, when discussing their plans with the teacher. As a result of skilful questioning by the teacher the pupils were then able to orientate the aerial photo. Where teaching was satisfactory rather than good similar tasks were given to the whole class and, consequently there was insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. Planning in these lessons was not detailed enough and lacked clear learning objectives. Weaknesses occur in marking when there is insufficient use of written comments to help pupils improve their work. Insufficient attention is given to the quality of pupils' writing and to their presentation.
116. The subject leader is hard working and enthusiastic. However, her role in leading and managing the subject is unsatisfactory because the tasks that she is expected to do have not been well defined and there are no whole school systems to support regular monitoring and evaluation. Medium term plans for geography are unsatisfactory as they do not allow for the progression of skills from one year to another and adjacent year groups work on the same topic. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and they are not used sufficiently to inform planning for pupils' differing needs.



## HISTORY

117. During the inspection it was only possible to inspect one lesson and from this and other inspection evidence it is clear that most pupils, including those with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and traveller pupils make satisfactory progress and reach average standards. However, by the end of Year 2 high attaining pupils do not always make the progress that they should because the work they are given is similar to that of other pupils. By the end of Year 4 high attaining pupils make satisfactory progress as the work they are given allows them to analyse issues in more depth.
118. All pupils start Year 1 having attained the standard that is expected of them. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of life in the past and are able to retell stories about famous people in the past such as Mary Seacole and distinguish differences between a farmer's life in the past and today. They are able to place events on a basic time line and write about famous events in the past such as the great fire of London. Year 4 pupils have extended their understanding of life in Roman times and are able to explain in more depth how life then differed from our lives. Through writing about life as a Roman they are able to explain why they would or would not like to live in those times. One pupil said that he would like to be a Roman as he would have a slave to do all the work for him. However, this work did not enable pupils to consider the life of a range of people living in Roman times. Year 3 and 4 pupils are encouraged to develop their understanding of the past through the good use of a homework project to carry out during school holidays. Pupils decide what they want to do. Some make Viking helmets and carts and others produce booklets. One pupil chose to give a presentation of what she had learnt to the class. The school develops real life historical experiences for the pupils through the good use of visits. During the inspection, Year 3 and 4 pupils visited Lunt Fort to extend their knowledge and understanding of the life of a Roman soldier. Good links to other areas of the curriculum were developed during this visit. For example, the use of digital cameras to record evidence enabled pupils' to develop information and communication technology skills.
119. Teaching in the one lesson inspected was satisfactory. The teacher used questioning skilfully and the practical involvement of pupils engaged their interest and helped them to make progress. For example, one pupil was asked to go into the role of a person on the Titanic while the rest of the class constructed thoughtful questions to ask. This enabled the pupils to empathise with the characters in the real life incident and to understand their feelings and how they were affected as the ship went down. The lesson was satisfactory rather than good because the lesson objectives were not shared with pupils or followed up at the end of the session to evaluate what had been learned.
120. The subject leader is hard working and enthusiastic. However, her role in leading and managing the subject has not been well defined by the school and is unsatisfactory overall because she does not have the opportunities to monitor and evaluate standards, teaching and learning. Medium term plans for history are unsatisfactory, as they do not allow for the progression of skills from one year to another and so Years 1 and 2, and 3 and 4 work at a similar level on the same topic. Assessment and its use to inform planning are unsatisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

121. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are average and pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and traveller children make satisfactory progress overall. This is similar to those of the previous inspection. The progress of pupils in Year 3 has accelerated recently due to the use of new laptop computers and a projector linked to a computer to aid teaching. Pupils' progress is satisfactory rather than good because although teachers use ICT as learning tool within other subjects it is not planned for systematically. The school recognises that resources are only just adequate and plans are being developed for a computer suite.
122. Pupils in Year 1 learn how to use a dictionary programme and link it with science lessons when they learn about minibeasts. Most can use a mouse but they have slow keyboard skills and do not know how to delete text properly such as when they wrote their story based on "Peace at Last" by Jill Murphy. They can use ICT to display their work on data handling to make block graphs and pie charts and draw a sequence of pictures to simulate the growth of their bean plants. Year 2 pupils have written e-mails to and received a reply from their favourite author after reading his books in class and have searched the internet for information about Italy. Year 3 pupils, using the new laptop computers work well and make good progress in their skills' development when they use a range of tools to replicate the work of the artist Paul Klee and his picture, "Fugue in Red." These pupils together with pupils in Year 4 use their ICT skills satisfactorily when they write and display word processed work in religious education, book reviews and class rules.
123. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Where teaching is best teachers are keen, enthusiastic, plan their work well and make good use of the resources. However, not all teachers make use of the new laptop computers and although computers in classrooms are usually switched on they are under- used. The skills of ICT are taught satisfactorily, however, they are not then followed up systematically to give pupils the opportunities to use these skills in the course of other subjects.
124. The leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a broad understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has done her best to improve the level of resources. She monitors teachers' medium term plans but there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning. There has been a recent review of the policy and scheme of work from which teachers plan their lessons. However, the scheme of work does not give teachers the guidance that they need to plan work for different ability groups and the assessment procedures are unsatisfactory because they do not allow teachers to identify the next steps in pupils' learning

## **MUSIC**

125. No music lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 and so it is not possible to make a judgement about teaching, learning and standards for these year groups. Two class lessons and two instrumental tuition lessons were seen in Years 3 and 4 and from these, and from listening to singing in acts of collective worship, it can be said that pupils make satisfactory progress in music and achieve standards that are average by the end of Year 4. They enjoy their music making activities and, especially, singing. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also make sound progress. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. However, the school's planning procedures result in pupils in Years 3 and 4 working on similar tasks and then higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as much as they should.

126. During the course of the inspection, good quality singing was heard in Year 3 and 4 lessons, and during praise and worship sessions. Pupils have good diction and pitch control and this enables them to communicate the feelings and moods of the music to the listener. In Years 3 and 4 pupils' skills in working together to practise, rehearse and perform with others are also good. They develop a satisfactory knowledge of the musical elements of pitch, tempo, and dynamics and they know how sounds can be made in different ways, for example, by shaking, and tapping percussion instruments to create high and low sounds. They can follow simple picture notation in the course of playing their own compositions. Pupils who learn to play the violin and keyboard do so with increasing control and learn to read simple formal notation accurately.
127. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen in Years 3 and 4 was good. The subject leader for music took both class lessons and her good subject knowledge and understanding of how to teach singing had a significant impact on the standards that were achieved. Class lessons are well planned and structured so that pupils increase their understanding through a variety of musical activities that combine performing, composing and appraising. There are good opportunities for pupils to work in various sized groups and in whole class situations. Instrumental teaching is good and these lessons make a positive contribution to the music curriculum.
128. The subject leader has been in post for a relatively short period of time and her leadership and management role is satisfactory overall. She already has a view of how the subject needs to be improved. For example, she is trialling a new scheme of work to see if it gives greater support to teachers and helps to improve progression in the subject. Although she is able to monitor standards in Years 3 and 4, because she teaches in both year groups, she does not have sufficient opportunity to develop her monitoring and evaluation role in other areas of the school. Consequently, she does not have a full picture of teaching and learning to inform her plans for improvement. This is an area for development. Assessment is unsatisfactory because it does not give teachers the information that they need to plan for pupils' differing needs and to keep a record of progress. Curriculum planning is unsatisfactory because it does not differentiate sufficiently between year groups. The school has a satisfactory range of musical instruments which are well organised and cared for. They are used well to support learning in class lessons.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

129. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good progress. Year 2 pupils' standards of attainment are now average and they make satisfactory progress. Year 4 pupils' levels of attainment are also average. This is an improvement from the time of the previous inspection when standards were below average. Standards of attainment in gymnastics for both groups of pupils is above average, This is because the school recently purchased new gymnastics equipment and teachers teach the subject well because of the training they have received. Pupils benefit from extra sports activities outside lessons and these contribute soundly to the development of games' skills. Analysis of swimming records shows standards to be above average.
130. Pupils in Year 1 move confidently into spaces when they warm up and know that their heart beats faster after exercise. They are able to put out apparatus for gymnastics' lessons and work well together when they develop a sequence of movements over, on and under the apparatus, as some of the movements they rehearsed in their warm up sessions are well repeated in their sequences. In a Year1/2 class pupils respond well to music and most pupils learn satisfactorily to dance and move in rhythm to a promenade. In another gymnastics lesson, pupils in Year 3 make a more advanced sequence of

movements, which they do with good co-ordination and control. They learn well from each other and help each other improve their performance. Pupils in Year 4, working with a teacher from Leisure Services department soundly learn and practise rugby ball passing skills and tactics for invasion games.

131. Teaching overall is satisfactory. All teachers and pupils are appropriately dressed and teachers are very diligent over health and safety matters, for instance when they check apparatus that pupils have put out. Pupils are taught well how to care for the equipment and this makes a valuable contribution to their moral development and they work well with and help each other so aiding their social development. Lessons get off to a brisk start and all lessons have satisfactory warm up and cool down sessions built into them. There is good coaching of skills. Support staff are used well to support pupils with special educational needs and this ensures these pupils make the same progress as their classmates.
132. The subject leader provides satisfactory leadership. She has monitored teachers' plans and provided training for teachers, for instance, in the use of the new gymnastics equipment. The scheme of work links soundly with other areas of the curriculum, for instance dance links with history when pupils learn medieval dances. She has arranged a wide range of extra curricular activities including tennis cricket and football and these make a valuable contribution to provision. The school has good facilities for physical education including a large field, adequate hard surfaces and an indoor hall, and uses the local pool for swimming. There are good links with the local middle school when Year 4 pupils spend a morning there on sporting activities, which aids well the transfer of pupils to their next school. Assessment of the subject is currently unsatisfactory because it does not help teachers to plan for the progression of skills.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

133. Pupils' work and teachers' planning shows that pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and achieve standards that are broadly in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
134. By Year 4 pupils have a sound knowledge and awareness that religious traditions in the United Kingdom are mainly Christian and know about some of the other principal religions which are represented in society, for example, Islam and Sikhism. They know some of the traditions of the Christian faith as celebrated in the United Kingdom. They are also aware of some of the stories and festivals of other faiths. They have a sound knowledge of some of the stories from the Bible and of how they teach Christians to live their lives. For example, they know that the story of the 'Good Samaritan' teaches them that every one is their neighbour and deserves their respect and kindness.
135. Pupils have a sound understanding of the distinctive features of religious traditions and how they relate to people's lives. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have thought about how and why people change in the context of how the Bhudda changed his way of life. They compare the different ways that important stages in people's lives are celebrated by Christians and Muslims. They have learned why Easter is a special time of year for Christians and recognise the significance of symbols such as the cross and candles in traditional Christian services. Pupils have a sound grasp of basic religious concepts and symbolism through visits to the local churches. Pupils' ability to form thoughtful views on religious issues is good. For example, younger pupils discuss the wonder of the world about them, recognise the importance of saying 'thank you' to God and appreciate the

need to look after their surroundings. Older pupils develop their thinking to a higher level, for example, by asking difficult questions such as, 'I wonder how God got born?'

136. Only one religious education lesson was seen and so it is not possible to form an overall judgement about teaching in the subject. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen was satisfactory and good use had been made of an 'Open Door', day at the local church, to develop pupils' ideas and knowledge of Christianity. Evidence from planning shows that individual lessons in other parts of the school are appropriately planned. However, there is often little attention given to how the different needs of pupils are to be met. Whilst pupils work is regularly marked there is insufficient use of constructive written comments to help pupils know what they have to do to improve. Too often, lessons planned for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 and 4 include activities that are too similar and then older, higher attaining pupils do not make the progress that they should.

137. The deputy headteacher is the subject leader and she is relatively new to the post. She leads the subject satisfactorily. She has responded very well to staff concerns about the subject and, with the help of the diocesan adviser, rewritten the scheme of work so that it gives more accurate guidance on progression. The scheme is due to be implemented at the start of the new school year, and in order to further ensure progression through the school, the subject leader plans to do all the medium term planning. The clear guidance and support that she is giving is a good model for the development of other subjects. She rightly recognises that her role in monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and attainment will be an important part of the implementation of the new scheme, but it has not yet been established how this will be done. There is an appropriate range of resources to support the teaching of religious education, including a range of artefacts to support the teaching of different faith traditions. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to hear authentic accounts of faiths other than Christian. Well-planned acts of collective worship make a significant contribution to pupils' religious education by consolidating what they learn in lessons.