

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SYDENHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Leamington Spa

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 130868

Headteacher: Mrs J Blows

Reporting inspector: Mrs Heather Evans  
21374

Dates of inspection: 19 – 22 May 2003

Inspection number: 248806

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Calder Walk Sydenham Leamington Spa
Postcode:	CV31 1SA
Telephone number:	01926 339138
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Louise Wood
Date of previous inspection:	26 January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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21374	Heather Evans	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Geography History English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? Schools results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9843	Sarah Drake	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?
30559	Jenny Taylor	Team inspector	English Art and design Music Educational inclusion Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27301	Cynthia Messom	Team inspector	Foundation Stage	
27292	Jeff Calvert	Team inspector	Physical education Religious education	
32326	John Boyle	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Sydenham is an average sized primary school in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. This school is now very different from how it was at the time of the last inspection because most of the teachers, including the deputy headteacher, are different and a new intake of pupils from overseas has changed the school population considerably. There are 209 pupils on roll and, of these, 52 claim their entitlement to free school meals. There are 60 pupils with identified special educational needs, mostly because of difficulties with language, communication and reading, a proportion that, at 30 per cent, is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have statements of special need, over three per cent at the time of the inspection, is also above average. Almost half of the pupils are learning English as an additional language. About a third of the pupils speak Punjabi at home and another large group speaks Portuguese. This group is growing in size each term. There are a few other children with different home languages. There is no Nursery but, before entry to the Reception class, many children have attended the separate pre-school facility that is based in the grounds. The group of children assessed in September 2002 were shown to have attainment on entry that was well below that of most children of the same age nationally.

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

This is a very good school that employs good primary practice and has a number of excellent features. Although pupils of all attainment levels make good gains and achieve well, the overall standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Years 2 and 6 remain below the national expectations. This is caused by the high percentage of pupils who have special educational needs or who are newly arrived from overseas and speak little or no English. The test scores of these pupils pull down the average scores of the classes overall. By the end of the Reception class, although most children make good progress, many do not attain at the expected level in all of the areas of learning. Throughout the school, all of the teaching is at least satisfactory and the quality of most teaching is very good or excellent. The management of the pupils, finance and resources is very good. The leadership by the headteacher and her deputy, with the active support of the senior management team and the governing body, is very good. Pupils' attitudes to work and learning are never less than good and are mostly very good. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. Pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. For these reasons the school is judged to provide good value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching and pupils' learning are predominantly very good.
- Lesson planning is very good, and the assessment and evaluation of work is good.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good and relationships across the school are excellent.
- The purposeful way that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are included in activities is excellent.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and the key staff are very good.
- The very good use of information and communication technology is helping to raise achievement in many subjects.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- The provision of play facilities and large-wheeled and climbing equipment for children in the Reception class.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory and has a detrimental effect on standards for some pupils.

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

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

Since the last inspection in 1998 the headteacher, staff and governors have addressed all of the identified areas of weakness, with considerable success. With the exception of overall standards at the end of Years 2 and 6, where improvement is erratic and standards are no better than those during the

last inspection, other improvements have been very good, especially in terms of the quality of teaching and learning. The use of assessment and target setting in the organisation of curriculum provision is now good. Lesson planning has improved dramatically, and the evaluation of the effectiveness of teachers' work by the headteacher and the subject co-ordinators is very effective. This work is supported by regular structured monitoring of planning and the moderation of pupils' completed work. The provision and support for pupils with special educational needs and of those learning English as an additional language is very good and enables work to be very well matched to the needs of groups and individuals. The governing body has a clear understanding of its role and responsibilities. It fulfils statutory obligations well in setting and overseeing targets and priorities, and in managing financial affairs.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	E	D	C
Science	C	E	E	D

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average   E

In 2002, the standards attained in English and science for pupils at the end of Year 6 were well below the average scores for pupils of the same age nationally, and were below average in mathematics. When compared with results in similar schools, they were well below average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. When adjusted to compensate for the effect of pupils from overseas joining the school during the test year the results in both of these subjects improved greatly. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment level in reading in 2002 was in the bottom 5 per cent of schools nationally, well below average in writing and below average in mathematics. Results remained well below those of pupils in similar schools in reading and writing, but were about average in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows improvements in all of these subjects for many pupils but standards remain below expectations overall. Across the school, where all subjects are linked and work is founded on practical experiences, attainment levels exceed those found in most schools nationally in history and geography, art and design, music and information and communication technology for pupils of all ages and abilities. Attainment in design and technology and physical education is in line with national expectations. For pupils of all ages, attainment in religious education exceeds the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Most of the children at the end of their Reception year do not attain all of the nationally recommended early learning goals, sometimes because of irregular attendance and also because their English vocabulary is very limited. The level of attainment for pupils at the end of Year 6 has been below the national average for the past five years but improvements overall have been broadly in line with those of most schools nationally. The analysis of the results shows that for those pupils who do not have special educational needs, are not recent arrivals and who attend regularly, most attain and a significant number exceed the expected levels. The school has agreed challenging but realistic targets for the present year and even more challenging targets for 2004 that it expects to meet. Almost all pupils reach their individual targets each term and are achieving well. The impressive use of information and communication technology to support work across the curriculum is helping to raise standards in all subjects.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They like school and treat the building and the learning resources with care and respect.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Pupils are managed very well and they demonstrate a clear understanding of the established behaviour policy.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. Relationships are excellent; pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of the beliefs and values of others. Pupils across the school readily accept responsibility for managing their own work.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory and is below the national average. The level of unauthorised absence is above that in most schools nationally.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching is very good overall. Half of the lessons seen were judged to be very good with seven lessons judged to be excellent. Four lessons were judged satisfactory, and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. There are no significant weaknesses in teaching. As a result, pupils' attitudes to work are very good, and they learn at a good rate. Literacy and numeracy together with lessons in basic skills are taught very well and this enables pupils to make good progress in all classes. Teaching is equally successful in other subjects. The work in pupils' books and the well-presented displays around the school demonstrate that teachers have very high expectations for the amount and quality of pupils' work. Teachers are very successful in meeting the learning needs of all groups of pupils. Most pupils do as well as might be expected.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum meets all statutory requirements. The extra provision through clubs, visits and visitors to the school is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are identified early and very good support is given.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The policy and procedures are very good for supporting the many pupils whose first language is not English.
Provision for pupils'	Provision for pupils' personal development is well organised, and pupils'

personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	personal skills are very well developed. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
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How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for all of its pupils. The provision for child protection is good. Pupils' attainment and progress are tracked carefully and information gathered is used sensibly to promote learning.
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The school has positive links with parents. Curriculum policies and plans of intended work are reviewed regularly and there are strong links between work from different subjects. Visits to places of interest and visitors to the school greatly enrich the opportunities for learning offered to pupils.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management by the headteacher, working collaboratively with the deputy headteacher and the subject co-ordinators, are very good. They have been successful in creating a very effective school. The entire staff supports the management team very well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body, led by a knowledgeable chairman, fulfils its responsibilities well. Their understanding of financial matters and their support for the curriculum is based on good experience, knowledge and understanding.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has clear, effective and practical procedures for evaluating its performance, sometimes using a structured computer program. Governors have a good understanding of where strengths are found, a realistic view of areas still needing development, and how to address them.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of personnel and practical resources is imaginative and effective. Resources for teaching and learning are adequate, and are used well throughout the school.

### 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>Parents are very supportive of all aspects of the school. In the questionnaires and at the meeting for parents, they expressed very positive views about the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No significant issues were raised by parents in the questionnaires.</li> <li>One or two parents spoke of personal issues about unacceptable behaviour by a few pupils that had been dealt with by the headteacher and the staff.</li> </ul>

The inspection team fully supports the very positive views expressed by the majority of parents. In the past, the school has successfully addressed specific issues of unacceptable behaviour and will continue to be vigilant.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

##### **Strengths:**

- *the progress made and children's overall good achievement between entry to the Reception class and moving into Year 1;*
- *attainment levels in information and communication technology that are used to support work in other subjects very well;*
- *pupils' levels of attainment in art and design, music, and the humanities across the school;*
- *the overall good achievement as shown by the learning and progress made by pupils including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language.*

##### **Areas for development:**

- *the overall standards in the national statutory tests and assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6.*
1. The assessment of children undertaken on entry to the Reception class, using a nationally acknowledged system, indicates that children enter with overall attainment that is low when compared with that of children of the same age nationally. By the end of the Reception class year, whilst a few attain very well, most children achieve the nationally expected early learning goals only in creative development, physical development, and personal and social development. In spite of the very good progress that they make, most children will not reach these goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world because of their well below average attainment on entry. Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the high quality of skilled support provided. Children in the Reception class achieve well and, without this secure start, the work of the main school would be even more difficult.
  2. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the age of seven in 2002 show attainment is very low in reading, well below average in writing and below average in mathematics. The levels of attainment in 2002 were similar to those attained in 1998. When compared with results from similar schools, standards were well below average in reading, below average in writing and about average in mathematics. The proportions of pupils learning English as an additional language, or with special educational needs have an adverse effect on the overall standards. Teacher assessments in science indicate that pupils' attainments were well below average compared with both the national average for all schools and for similar schools. In all of these subjects, those children who had no special learning difficulties reached or exceeded the nationally expected levels and some achieved very well. The school analysed the results of statutory and voluntary tests. It embarked on a revised programme for teaching mathematics and science, giving much greater emphasis to investigative and practical activities. This strategy is beginning to show positive results. From the low start level, linked to the erratic attendance of some pupils, the school realises that the staff will need to be very focused and vigilant to hold onto the

gains made. The achievements of pupils who work in very well matched attainment groups are very good.

3. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 showed standards were well below the national average in English and science, and below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, the school's results were well below average in English but about average in mathematics and below average in science. When compared with published standards at the time of the last inspection, standards show little improvement but the nature and composition of the school has changed. The recent influx from overseas in the past year of new pupils with very little English, and the well-above average number of pupils with multiple and complex special educational needs, has had an adverse effect on test results. These pupils have joined the school because of its good reputation in the locality for offering very effective support to pupils with very diverse needs. They have settled well into the school, contribute well to its sense of family and have added greatly to the school's ethos and climate for learning and cultural diversity. When the test results are recalculated, as part of the assessment process, omitting the low scores attained by designated groups of pupils, attainment levels overall show an improvement to those found at the time of the last inspection in English. In addition, because of the impact of increased mental work in mathematics and increased amounts of experimental and investigational work in science standards in both of these subjects have improved.
4. There has been a detailed analysis of results and the change in the school population in an attempt to meet the needs of the different groups including the well above average number of pupils with special educational needs, and the many pupils from overseas, who speak only or mostly Portuguese. As a result, the school has made a bold decision to work to raise pupils' achievements through a positive intervention programme designed to improve basic skills. This programme of work has been very successful. Additionally, teachers have embarked on a simple but very effective set of strategies aimed at helping pupils to learn by doing. To this end there have been changes in the way the curriculum is planned and many additional activities to promote first hand learning are offered to pupils of all ages. These strategies are beginning to be very effective but, with six pupils in Year 6 having statements of educational need and many others with multiple and complex special educational needs, the results of this imaginative work are unlikely to be seen in the statutory test results this year.
5. Inspection evidence indicates that the additional help provided for pupils in Years 2 and 6 and the specifically designed work, structured to help individual pupils to meet their targets, means that the majority of average and above average ability pupils are now set to attain the expected levels. Some higher attaining pupils achieve very well and are on target to reach higher levels. In the present academic year the attainment level overall is likely to remain below the national expectations in English, mathematics and science because there is an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. Across the school, standards of work in classes and sets for younger pupils are positively influenced by the imaginative and carefully structured approach to teaching and learning across subjects and classes. In all groups, the support provided for pupils with special educational needs and for the very many who are learning English as an additional language is helping all pupils to make good progress.
6. In Years 1 and 2, pupils of all levels of prior attainment learn purposefully. The overall standards of work seen by many of the pupils in Year 2 remain below the levels

expected for the National Curriculum in English, mathematics and science because pupils enter Year 1 at a level that is below the national average. Overall learning and progress is generally good or very good and attainment is improving systematically. Pupils with special educational needs progress at the same rate as the majority of their friends. In literacy, by the end of Year 2, reading by average and above average ability pupils is good. However, the large number of pupils who are in the below average groups makes the standard of reading overall a cause for concern that teachers are addressing in a very structured way. The pattern continues in Years 3 to 6, but the limited vocabulary of many pupils and their underdeveloped skills in speaking clearly and purposefully means that teachers have to constantly encourage, prompt and support their efforts. The quality of pupils' written work reflects the programme in place for English and is successfully carried into other subjects, such as history or geography, and is improving. In lessons, much work in these subjects is carried out orally to encourage speaking aloud and extending specific vocabulary, but the written work is always expected to be well-presented and to use skills learned in English. The quality of handwriting is developing well and pupils receive lots of encouragement and support. Those pupils capable of higher attainment have begun to develop an attractive handwriting style, and teachers place great emphasis on the good presentation of work.

7. By the age of seven, almost all pupils can add and subtract accurately up to 20 and some to 100 in mental mathematics, often using apparatus to check their results and when recording work in their books. In discussion, pupils use correct mathematical vocabulary and they select the correct symbols with growing understanding. In science, because of the increased amount of practical and investigational work undertaken, standards in all of the areas of the science curriculum, whilst still below expectations, are improving. In some lessons, because of the skilled use by the teachers of investigational work and good prompts in the pupils' community language, attainment in lessons is as good for all pupils as for the most capable. The retention of knowledge is slowed for those pupils whose attainment in English and previous experience in learning mathematics is low. Where pupils are fully engaged in developing their own ideas and planning their own investigations, as seen in lessons in classes for pupils in Years 3 and 4 and in Year 5, the rate of progress is very pleasing. In Years 3 to 6, most pupils understand the place value of numbers up to 1000. Most add, subtract, multiply and divide using decimals and fractions with a satisfactory level of accuracy, when supported by the teacher or the classroom assistant. They do not replicate this standard of work in test situations when support is not available. Some of the difficulties are pupils' lack of confidence in their abilities and in reading questions rapidly and accurately. Most of the pupils now select suitable methods for solving mathematical problems from a range of known options, especially when they have help using their community language.
8. Information and communication technology in the school is a subject to celebrate. Across the school, pupils in all classes display good skills. Standards overall exceed the expected levels and are much better than those usually found in schools nationally. Pupils' skills in control technology are good. This is because, as well as the well-appointed computer suite, there are net-worked computers around the school that pupils use instinctively to extend learning in other subjects and to look for links between what they are learning and where this work fits into what they call the 'Big Idea'. In religious education, pupils' knowledge and understanding of topics extends beyond the required elements of the locally agreed syllabus, and is wider than that found in many schools. In other subjects, pupils' knowledge and understanding enables their attainment to exceed the expected levels, except in design and technology and physical education, where standards match the expected levels.

These pleasing attainment levels are achieved because so much of the curriculum is supported effectively by a highly committed staff, practical experiences, visitors to the school and visits to places of interest that extend pupils' knowledge. This is an improvement on the judgements made at the time of the last inspection. Across the school, pupils special talents in art and design and music are fostered and celebrated.

9. Taking into account pupils' well below average attainment on entry to the school, their attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 shows that most learn at a very good rate. Pupils know what they have learned and recall experiences with pleasure and confidence. The targets set in English and mathematics for pupils in Year 6 for 2003 are realistic and challenging and reflect the below average standards seen during the inspection. Those set for 2004 are even more challenging but the school is confident that pupils will achieve them. Work seen during the inspection indicates that the school is making effective progress towards achieving the targets set. The overall level of attainment for pupils at the age of 11 has been below the national average for the past five years, and improvement in standards has been inconsistent. Overall improvement, however, has been maintained at a level that is in line with that of most schools nationally. During the inspection and when scrutinising written work, no significant differences were evident in the work of boys and girls, although there are more boys who have identified special educational needs. This is because the school modifies very carefully the work set for individuals following its assessment and analysis of previous test results.
10. The pupils learning English as an additional language represent almost half of the school. The majority of these do well but, for some, visits to their country of origin for extended visits and poor patterns of regular attendance mean that these pupils do not attain the expected standard. The impact of these pupils' results in tests on the overall results of the school means that the successes of those pupils who attend regularly and on time are sometimes lost in the statistics. Discussion with parents, and their responses in the written questionnaires, indicate that they are very satisfied with the standards, learning and progress that their children achieve.
11. Those pupils identified as having special educational needs make very good progress. Most pupils achieve well in accordance with their ability and previous learning. Progress is measured against the targets set in their individual education plans and in achieving national curriculum targets. Targets are reviewed each term. Lower attaining pupils make very good progress because they are fully included in all areas of the curriculum and the quality of teaching and additional support is very good.

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

#### **Strengths:**

- *outstandingly good relationships which underpin all the school's work;*
- *exceptionally mature awareness of and respect for others' needs and beliefs;*
- *very good behaviour and self-discipline throughout the day;*
- *interest in learning and enthusiasm for getting involved.*

#### **Area for further development:**

- *levels of attendance; too many pupils have significant amounts of absence from school.*

12. Pupils really enjoy being at Sydenham. They arrive with a smile in the morning, settle well at the beginning of sessions, try very hard with their work and understand that each one of them has a part to play in sustaining the happy sense of community that

pervades the school. They behave very well in both formal and informal situations, and build exceptionally good relationships with each other and staff members, which create a very good climate for learning. A feeling of genuine partnership runs throughout the school, with children and adults treating each other with respect and enjoying each other's company.

13. Teachers plan interesting activities for pupils to learn from and have a flair for catching pupils' enthusiasm, which means that they approach lessons with anticipation, listen well to what teachers say and try hard to follow their directions. There are usually many volunteers to offer ideas or read aloud, and classrooms frequently buzz with activity when pupils are undertaking independent work. Lessons move forward with good pace and so there is very little time wasted or boredom. Pupils often show surprise that it is the end of the lesson and, during wet break times, many choose to, for instance, use the computers for research or companionably work on a jigsaw puzzle because they like keeping their minds active. A high percentage of pupils have music tuition. They are very responsible about remembering their lessons, leaving and returning to the classroom with no disruption.
14. The school has an unusually large number of pupils who have experienced upheavals in their home lives, which means that they sometimes find it difficult to be self-disciplined. In the calm, predictable atmosphere, all pupils flourish and respond very well to staff members' consistent expectations, so that behaviour throughout the school is very good. There have been no exclusions during this academic year and those last year, each of which was for just one day, all related to one incident of insidious bullying. The action taken was very effective, and pupils volunteer that one of the things that they like most about the school is that, "everyone is friendly and there is no bullying."
15. The quality of relationships is excellent, with pupils working and playing together unusually well, in pairs, small and large groups of mixed gender and assorted ethnicity. The regular newcomers to the school, many of who speak very little English when they arrive, are welcomed warmly and are fully included in activities, as are those pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils are interested in others' experiences and respect their knowledge about, for instance, different beliefs and ways of life. They are hugely supportive of each other and would not dream of laughing if, for instance, someone is having difficulty with getting the note on a clarinet, or a younger pupil gets carried away with the story in assembly and joins in while everyone else is quietly listening. Pupils are extremely helpful to each other and polite about, for instance, sharing equipment or waiting their turn. They can empathise with others' feelings and are generous in both charitable fund-raising activities and in bursting into spontaneous applause for others' skills or success.
16. Pupils of all ages relish taking on responsibility and they carry out their tasks well. The peer mediators work hard to help sort out playground 'spats', and other pupils recognise that talking with fellow pupils does help to iron out difficulties. Pupils of all ages contribute ideas to the school council. Even children from the Reception class come up with sensible suggestions, such as making the play wall in their playground brighter by painting it, or asking for old spectacles for their dressing up box. All pupils are very good about tidying up at the end of lessons, and they treat resources and the building with respect. They readily volunteer to go '*wombling*' (collecting litter) in the playground or to help clear the food trays at lunchtime.
17. Despite the fact that pupils enjoy being at school and their punctuality is good, their levels of attendance are unsatisfactory. At the time of the previous inspection

attendance was broadly in line with the national average, but now it is well below that figure. Only slightly over half of pupils have attendance in line with the national average, whilst one third have had the equivalent of half a day's absence or more each week throughout the year. Some of the absence is due to families taking extended holidays to visit family abroad and some is caused by pupils moving from the area without informing the school. Whatever the reason, too many parents keep their children away from school for inappropriate reasons without, apparently, considering the impact that this has on the progress that their children can make in their learning.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

### Strengths in teaching and learning:

- *the quality of teaching is very good, planning is collaborative, clear and effective;*
- *day-to-day assessment is used very well to evaluate progress and extend learning;*
- *pupils are very well organised and learning opportunities match individual needs.*

### Weaknesses:

- *introductions are sometimes a bit long and this prevents activities being completed.*

18. Teaching across the school is very good overall and is significantly better than at the time of the previous inspection. In the Reception class there is a very good understanding of how children under five learn and work. Across the school in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, teaching is almost always at least good and is most frequently very good. Teaching was observed in 49 lessons or parts of lessons during the inspection. In all lessons seen, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory, nine out of every ten lessons were judged to be at least good and, of these, five in ten were very good. Seven lessons were graded excellent. The growing understanding of their leadership role by the subject co-ordinators, with the development of planning and teaching skills of the teaching and support staff, have had a positive impact on the overall quality of teaching.
19. The school has implemented and developed the strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy successfully. This has had a positive effect on the overall quality of teaching because the organisation of lessons is consistent in all classes. The training in planning and evaluating work, undertaken in the preparation for new initiatives, has had a positive effect on planning in other subjects. There are very few weaknesses in teaching. These tend to be sometimes extending the introduction of lessons for too long, which then leaves insufficient time for some pupils to complete the planned activities. Teachers make sure that pupils know very well what they are doing and why. Pupils of all ages are keen to explain the purpose of their work, showing good knowledge about what they are doing.
20. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and this forms the firm foundation for assisting pupils' learning. Lessons are well structured in accordance with the recommendations of the relevant national strategies. Following the introductory session, pupils work collaboratively or independently within matched attainment groups. Teachers select methods well fitted to the purpose for teaching the whole class. Activity groups complete relevant work carefully matched to their particular needs. Written tasks are tailored to the pupils' needs. This is seen to be particularly effective in those classes that contain pupils from more than one age group.
21. Basic skills in speaking, writing, reading and mathematics are taught systematically and well. There has been particular emphasis on this work and the school has been

awarded a nationally recognised award to celebrate its success. Teachers engage pupils in discussion with carefully structured questioning designed to extend pupils' thinking and to promote their learning. Pupils are learning to use resources systematically and to examine results carefully. They readily search out relevant information and record their findings carefully. This was seen to good effect in science lessons in classes for pupils in Year 5. Pupils enjoy being science sleuths and the increased amount of investigation being undertaken by pupils, using experimentation, is proving to be helpful in raising standards. To support this work, pupils readily use the Internet through a secure search engine, and learn to sift the most relevant information from the quantity presented to them by the initial sweep.

22. Across the school, teachers' personal enthusiasm and high expectations challenge pupils and encourage them to learn well and to develop their skills across a range of subjects. The drive for higher levels of achievement and attainment is an important part of every lesson, whilst learning remains fun. Teachers are sure of the purpose of all planned activities and explain them carefully to pupils. The teachers' knowledge, planning, control, organisation and management of pupils are very good. It is because of the consistently interesting and effective teaching that those pupils who have been in the school for some years, and who have no identified special needs, are now on course to attain at the expected levels. At the end of all lessons, teachers check whether the objectives discussed at the start have been accomplished. This focuses the pupils' thinking and attention on the intended objectives that they call the 'Big Idea'. Pupils of all ages and attainment levels benefit from reflecting on the purpose of the lesson.
23. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good because their needs and personal targets are well known to teachers. Teachers use individual education plans well and targets for individual pupils are addressed in lesson planning. Teachers make sure that pupils understand the tasks presented to them very well and so they achieve success. Those pupils with statements of special educational need receive the provision detailed on their statements. Pupils with learning difficulties are fully included in all curriculum activities. Liaison between teaching and support staff is strong. Additional tuition by specialist teachers and learning support assistants ensures that pupils have equal access to the curriculum. There are high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. The staff use a wide range of strategies to enable pupils to achieve well and to experience success. Progress is monitored carefully when the targets set for individual education plans are reviewed. Targets are prioritised; they are clear and measurable. Reviews take place each term and most parents are keen to participate.
24. Pupils learning English as an additional language learn well and are very well supported by skilled teachers. The loss of a staff member just before the inspection for financial reasons has meant that everyone has to work harder but pupils continue to be provided with work that matches their needs and prior experiences. Those pupils whose community language is Portuguese are fortunate in having an experienced linguist to help them settle into their new learning environment, as they are mostly newcomers to England. One father wrote that the school was the only good thing in his children's life as they had moved from their home and family. Pupils who speak Punjabi at home do well. They quickly settle into the life of the school and benefit greatly from the teacher's prompts and encouragement in their community language when faced with tasks where their existing vocabulary needs to be supplemented. By the end of their time in school, most of these pupils have learned very well and perform as well as pupils whose first and only language is English.

25. Teachers regularly work together in preparation of work. Planning is impressive in English, mathematics and science but is also very good in other subjects, where it is very well structured. Since the previous inspection, teachers have developed and structured procedures for reviewing the curriculum and assessing the progress that pupils make, both on a day-to-day basis and at the end of programmes of study. This process works particularly well in those subjects that are not a focus for formal testing. The information gathered is used after lessons each day to help to organise and develop the next stage of the learning programme.
26. Written work is marked clearly and regularly, to an agreed standard, and the pattern of marking is proving to be a useful way of monitoring work and assessing pupils' progress. Written comments shared by teachers and pupils enable the pupils to develop good personal review strategies. With the younger pupils, teachers talk to them as they mark work beside them, pointing out good features and how they might do better next time. Pupils derive great value from this individual interaction with their teacher.

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

### **Strengths in curricular provision:**

- *the quality and range of learning opportunities;*
  - *the breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum and ensuring that all pupils are included in every activity;*
  - *practical and effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy;*
  - *the support for all other subjects of information and communication technology;*
  - *the range of interesting extra-curricular activities.*
27. The school provides a good quality, stimulating and interesting curriculum. It is broad, balanced and very relevant to the needs of the pupils, and meets the statutory requirements for the National Curriculum. The curriculum is enriched by a stimulating range of extra-curricular activities and makes a very good contribution to the personal and social education of all pupils. All subjects are included, together with religious education and personal, health and social education. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, as is the support provided for the many pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Pupils of all levels of attainment are fully included in the activities of the school.
28. Children in the Reception class work towards the nationally recommended early learning goals. The learning opportunities provided for these children are stimulating, interesting and of very good quality, so that the children are very well motivated, learn by doing and make very good progress.
29. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been successfully implemented. Similarly, advice from the local education authority and national guidance has enabled the staff to develop curriculum plans for all subjects. Some are now in the process of further review to ensure that there is continuity in learning and that good progress is maintained. The national guidelines have been adapted to match more closely the needs of the pupils and the school. Very careful planning identifies what pupils of different abilities are expected to learn, understand and do in individual lessons over a period of time. The targets stated on the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are taken into account in lesson planning, so that tasks are well chosen to meet the particular needs of individuals. Information and communication technology is included in plans and is used very well

to enhance learning. Teachers ensure that pupils have good opportunities to use skills learned in one subject to support learning in another. There are many examples of strong links between subject areas when there is a particular focus. For example, the study of mountains was linked successfully with work about Mount Olympus as pupils studied Greek mythology.

30. The school is the first in the authority to be awarded the quality mark for the teaching of basic skills. The very good teaching in the basic skills lessons underpins the learning in other areas of the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to take part in their child's education through activities such as the 'Share a Book' project. This project encourages parents, particularly fathers and grandfathers, to read with their children in school and at home.
31. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. All pupils are able to take part in some extra-curricular activities, although most of them are primarily for older pupils. A number of clubs and activities take place and are led by a dedicated team of teachers with support from parents. The clubs include football for both boys and girls, and netball. Pupils play against other local schools' teams. There are also clubs specifically for Portuguese and Punjabi speakers. There is an information and communication technology club that takes place at lunchtime, and an art club after school. There is a drama club for part of every year. Pupils take part in community arts projects, such as when they performed the musical drama 'Kapiti Plain' as part of the Leamington Spa arts festival. There are many opportunities for music instrumental tuition, and about three-quarters of all pupils are learning to play a musical instrument. They are involved in musical productions during the year, especially at Christmas. The pupils visit local productions, such as the pantomime at Christmas, and visitors include Norwich Puppet Theatre Group, and other specialist theatre workshop groups including puppet makers. There are visits from storytellers and writers, such as Tony Wilson and Dick Leith. Older pupils share in residential visits to the Isle of Wight to enable them to experience more adventurous activities that would not normally be available to them. This experience further develops their personal, social and health education. Pupils extend their learning through regular visits to places of local interest, for example Warwick Museum, Gaydon Technology Centre, and environmental days at Charlecote Park.
32. The school is closely involved with extra-curricular activities within the local community. It works with the Sydenham Community Project, to form a joint art workshop, and with Warwickshire College family learning club. The school is part of the regeneration project focussing on the south part of the town. There are links with the local community college, and older pupils have regular opportunities to visit for special study days for science, information and communication technology and other subjects. Staff from the college visit the school to observe lessons and to liaise with the primary staff. The school includes all pupils in the activities it offers. Girls and boys have equal access to the full curriculum, including extra – curricular activities.

### **Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

#### **Strengths in provision include:**

- *the importance that all staff place on promoting pupils' personal development;*
- *the many opportunities provided that encourage pupils to look beneath the surface of life;*
- *staff act as very good role models; they demonstrate the benefits of living according to a clear system of values;*
- *the strong sense of partnership and community apparent in all the school's work;*
- *exceptionally rich opportunities to learn about and appreciate different cultures.*

#### **Areas for development:**

- *the provision for pupils' personal development is excellent and there are no areas to improve.*
33. At the time of the previous inspection, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was judged 'sound'. It is now outstanding in all aspects and is one of the school's major strengths, which represents exceptional progress over five years. All staff see the promotion of pupils' personal development as fundamental to the school's success and, more importantly, to pupils' ability to cope with life's difficulties, to appreciate its wonders and to contribute to its improvement.
  34. The provision for spiritual development is excellent. Throughout the day, teachers and other staff invite pupils to reflect on what they are doing, to consider how others might be feeling, to look closely at natural features of the world and to develop tolerance and respect both for themselves and for others. Assemblies are very special periods of the day when the school comes together to think about themes such as 'friends', 'respect' or 'journeys'. Pupils enter to background music, which is thought about as carefully as the different topics, with a prize for the pupil who identifies the link between the different pieces played during each half term. A lighted candle creates a focal point and staff members remain with their classes, which adds to the community atmosphere and demonstrates the importance attached to this time. Teachers take turns to lead assemblies but all give the same clear moral and social messages. They take their inspiration from a broad range of experiences so that, for instance, during the inspection the topic about homes included Noah's Ark, life in South Africa and the story 'Mimi's House'. Pupils listen with rapt attention and respond willingly, for example stating, after quiet reflection, that a home differs from a house because 'it is where there are people who love you' or 'you do not feel lonely there.' In many lessons, pupils are also encouraged to explore their spiritual nature through, for instance, closing their eyes and enjoying the scent of a joss stick when learning about a Hindu puja tray. Some explore the interdependence of species in a habitat or consider the motives of different characters in a story. Despite some upset during lunchtime, Year 2 pupils began the following session most positively, after thirty seconds quiet thought with closed eyes to calm themselves down. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have been studying the work based on dreams, of Dali and Escher and creating their own music to depict different parts of paintings such as 'Swans reflecting Elephants'. For their work in art and design, relating to their topic on mountains, pupils in Year 6 experimented with a variety of media to represent snowy, rocky, green and volcanic landscapes. They produced some high quality abstract work in pastels, paint and tissue paper, trying to portray the essence of the different environments. During each day pupils are helped to understand that there is more to life than what might be seen on the surface.
  35. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is also excellent, starting from the messages given in assemblies and continued through staff members' good daily examples of how to live in harmony. The school's behaviour policy exemplifies its approach, based on four simple statements and surrounded by stars so that it gives a positive message about behaviour. Staff take time to talk with those pupils who find self-discipline difficult, and calmly help them to understand how their unthinking actions can cause others to feel sad, and themselves to feel bad too. Through their questioning of pupils and the way in which they organise activities, teachers ensure that everyone is included and demonstrate the importance of valuing and showing respect for all. They place much emphasis on opening pupils' eyes to, for instance, the impact of their actions on the environment, and encourage them to understand that, through the school council or in more individual ways, they can voice their opinions and affect the way that things are done. The school undertakes much

charitable fund-raising and encourages pupils to contribute to the community through, for instance, collecting litter or standing up to 'say no to racial harassment'. In the week after taking the standard assessment tests, Year 6 pupils were engaged in a fascinating, prolonged series of lessons based on the 'Making it Real Game'. This requires them, through a great variety of different practical activities, to deepen their sense of how communities are formed. They investigate the impact of housing and transport on the environment together with the concept of local and global economies, the similarities and differences between lives lived in different countries and, above all, the power of teamwork. Pupils of different ethnicity, experience and ability worked together in a highly effective manner, lapping up new information provided by their teachers or classmates, or discovered by themselves. In this way they make great strides in their personal development and understanding of how the world works best. Throughout each year, the school organises many opportunities for older and younger pupils to work together. This is sometimes when they work as reading partners but also through, for instance, joint educational visits, as when pupils in Years 2 and 5 went to Gaydon Technology Centre as part of their work for information and communication technology and science. Such deliberate planning to ensure that pupils of all ages mingle results in the excellent relationships that pervade the school. The quality of relationships is reflected, for instance, when an older pupil in assembly was observed quite naturally gently helping a younger one to fix his class reward sticker to a wall chart, without an adult pointing out the need for assistance.

36. The provision to deepen pupils' cultural development is also excellent. Through the content of lessons, assemblies and a very rich programme of visits and visitors, pupils are able to appreciate the tremendous diversity of cultures, beliefs and artistic expression that make up society, both close to their homes and wider afield. In religious education lessons, pupils consider, for instance, the similarities and differences of beliefs between Christians, Muslims, Sikhs and Jews. Pupils in Year 1 enjoyed the sensual experience of a Hindu life, making divas and food (with help from a parent) to the accompaniment of Indian music; while an older Thai pupil explained to his classmates about the meaning of 'yin' and 'yan'. Pupils study the work of Van Gogh, learn about life in Ancient Egypt and watch performances of A Midsummer Night's Dream. They visit a wide variety of art galleries and museums, and take part eagerly in, for instance, a samba workshop, African drumming or learning a Navrati stick dance. Pupils travel to some of their destinations by train and visit the seaside, experiences that are new to many of them. Displays of pupils' work throughout the building portray, for example, symmetrical patterns of Islam, the symbols of Buddhism and the origin of Chinese tangrams, as well as pupils' experiences as 'fire detectives' on their visit to Warwick or their understanding of the Easter story. The school community comprises pupils and adults from a large number of different ethnic groups, all of whom are welcomed, treated with respect and encouraged to share their experience and beliefs, with the result that pupils are prepared extremely well for life in a multicultural society.

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

### **Strengths:**

- *teachers' detailed knowledge of pupils as individuals, which guides the support that they offer them;*
- *very effective methods for promoting good behaviour and discouraging harassment;*
- *procedures for assessing, monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress.*

### **Area for improvement:**

- *consistent application of the arrangements to ensure health and safety.*

37. The school continues to provide the good quality care for pupils that was identified at the time of the previous inspection. Staff develop a very good knowledge of individual pupils' needs and family circumstances, which enables them to tailor well the support that they offer. Pupils' personal development is currently monitored informally throughout most of the school, but this year's pilot of more formal monitoring for Year 5 pupils has proved both workable and successful, and will be extended to all other year groups from September. All staff, including midday assistants, the receptionists and the site supervisor, show an interest in pupils and are observant of changes in mood or attitude. They have an ability to talk with pupils sensitively if they feel that this will help. There are good arrangements to ensure child protection, with any information kept suitably confidentially and liaison with outside agencies when necessary. One of the reasons for the school's below average attendance is its good practice of ensuring that pupils are not forgotten about, by keeping them on roll until it is confirmed that they have registered elsewhere.
38. Procedures relating to attendance are good. Teachers register pupils accurately, absences are monitored at least weekly and the headteacher swiftly gets in touch with parents or carers if there are any causes for concern. However, despite regular reminders in newsletters and the personal contact, some parents do not always respond positively to the school's encouragement for good attendance. In contrast, pupils respond very positively to the procedures for promoting good behaviour and self-discipline, with the result that the school operates as a very harmonious community. Teachers are skilful at praising the positive and using this as a method for averting poor behaviour of all types. They have consistently high expectations of behaviour and, because of the very good relationships between all members of the school, pupils want to live up to these expectations. The promotion of good behaviour is relaxed and is so effective that it is almost invisible, although teachers make good use of behaviour monitoring books and direct intervention whenever this is necessary.
39. Staff are constantly vigilant, which means that supervision in the playground is good, as is that in the dining hall and classrooms, where those who have sandwiches at lunchtime have to eat. There are good arrangements to cater for those who have medical needs, have accidents or feel unwell. The school complies with statutory requirements relating to health and safety but is not entirely consistent in its practice. Some concerns were raised during the inspection that the staff understands and will do their best to tackle in conjunction with governors.
40. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by their teachers and classroom assistants. Some benefit from working alongside their peer group but others are sometimes withdrawn from class to follow more specialist programmes of work. Teachers are very sensitive to the learning and emotional needs of their pupils. They take great care to ensure pupils understand what is required of them and make sure any necessary support is available.
41. Teachers assess and monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs within the successful procedures for all pupils, and more particularly through the review of pupils' individual education plans. Assessment and tracking procedures of those identified as having difficulties in learning are developing, to allow teachers to ascertain more accurately the rate and levels of achievements.
42. The school has improved its assessment procedures that were identified as an issue at the time of the previous inspection, and has developed very effective practical strategies for monitoring the pupils' academic performance. The national tests are completed in accordance with statutory requirements. Trends are analysed over years and good use is made of the information to help the setting of individual and

school targets linked to the national requirements. This process is used to identify areas for improvement. An additional process that is proving to be useful is a data-handling program on computer that enables various groups to be reviewed and set against other results, to determine exactly where the best progress is being made. This system also enables staff to track specific groups and to make realistic decisions about where available help needs to be targeted.

43. The school makes good use of past National Curriculum test papers and the results of voluntary tests to assess pupils' progress and to inform learning needs. Work is set for groups and individuals and, using this marked work, levels of attainment are agreed by staff. Teachers meet in groups to agree standards and moderated work is then used in other subjects to assess levels of attainment. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have a good understanding about what they need to achieve in order to attain the expected and the higher levels of attainment. In the Reception class, teachers use a recognised assessment system to help plan individual and group work so that all the children are helped to work towards the intended early learning goals.
44. The school's assessment policy contains clear and helpful guidance on the recording and monitoring of pupils' performance. Teachers use assessment after lessons each day in order to ensure a good match of work and to help in the revision of short-term lesson planning. Pupils are rewarded in a range of ways for outstanding effort, good work or progress. They delight in being awarded certificates and stickers and being mentioned in the celebration assemblies each week for their efforts in writing, mathematics and for behaving responsibly or meeting challenges with effort. The pupils' individual records of achievement show a clear picture of the progress of each pupil through the school.
45. Very effective systems are in place for the assessment of pupils with special educational needs. The planned work that is set for these pupils has a positive effect on each one's progress. These contain carefully listed targets, and are used well to plan work that is specially matched to pupils' needs. Teachers know their pupils very well and are aware of their specific needs. In the Foundation Stage, teachers are very alert to the needs, difficulties and talents of the individual pupils. Across the school, teachers build very effectively on the records and assessment procedures used to identify pupils with special educational needs. They use the information gathered to decide what support is needed. The teacher responsible for managing the work to support pupils with special educational needs keeps very good records, which are used to track the academic and personal progress of individuals. Whenever a need is identified there are well-organised, suitable support strategies in place that are supported by skilled classroom assistants.

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

### **Strengths:**

- *parents' increasingly positive views of the school;*
- *staff determination to help parents become more involved in their children's education;*
- *the quality of information provided for parents.*

### **Area for improvement:**

- *parents' support for their children's education, particularly through encouraging regular attendance.*

46. The great majority of parents and carers who expressed an opinion, either through the questionnaire, at the pre-inspection meeting or during the inspection week, hold positive views of the school. They, quite rightly, consider that the quality of teaching and pupils' behaviour is good and they particularly appreciate the fact that staff, 'have the desire and ability to draw the very best out of the children.' Some parents whose children have particular needs wrote most movingly of how the school has helped their children to grow in self confidence and, therefore, to make progress in their learning. A few parents do not consider that the school provides enough homework for pupils or a good range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors agree with all the positive comments. They judge that the provision of homework is satisfactory and the extra-curricular activities provided by the school are very good. On a higher percentage return than at the previous inspection, this time parents' overall responses to the questionnaire are much more positive.
47. It is clear from all its documentation that the school sees the development of a strong partnership with parents as fundamental to its success. It provides very good quality information for them, which is attractive, easy to read and full of interesting detail. The regular newsletters are a good mix of pupils' work and information about events, and the school gives parents good notice of important dates for their diaries. Members of staff speak a variety of community languages and are very willing to help with translations for those whose first language is not English. Pupils' progress reports are detailed and of good quality, giving a clear indication of whether the child is working below, above or at the average level for their age group. The headteacher makes herself available to parents at either end of the day, the school regularly holds workshops for parents about different curriculum areas as well as providing information at the beginning of each term about what pupils in the different year groups will be taught. Each class has a parent representative who acts as a source of information for others with children in the class and who, together, organise events such as the recent, highly successful, whole school disco.
48. Most parents are supportive about, for instance, hearing their children read at home or providing funds for them to go on educational visits or attend swimming lessons. Some provide regular help in school and others are prepared to share their expertise on specific occasions. Overall, parents make a good contribution to their children's learning although there are still a significant number of parents who only cross the threshold for special events such as performances and who do not ensure that their children attend school regularly.

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

### **Leadership strengths:**

- *the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the chair of governors have a strong partnership and a clear vision for the future development of the school;*
- *the subject co-ordinators provide good leadership for colleagues in all subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science, as well as for assessment, special educational needs and supporting pupils learning English as and additional language.*

### **Management strengths:**

- *the school has strong and positive strategies in place to evaluate strengths and areas for development;*

- *the plans for strategic management and shorter-term development are clear, dynamic and very well-structured;*
  - *the budget is managed very well and governors are very astute when evaluating best value in all of their decision making;*
  - *the teaching and support staff are well qualified. They have a wide range of experience and are instrumental in helping the school towards achieving its aims;*
  - *the management and use of assessment systems is good.*
49. Since the previous inspection in 1998 a range of useful strategies have been put in place. These have resulted in strong leadership and management across the school. The headteacher, together with the deputy headteacher, the subject co-ordinators and the chair of the governing body, have a clear, shared purpose and a very strong and dynamic vision for the future development of the school. Their strong and purposeful leadership has enabled the school to establish a long-term structured programme of work aimed at improving previously identified weaknesses, and rectifying those areas that they have identified for further improvement. They have a shared understanding of the strengths of the school and are providing effective guidance where action is still required. The achievements by pupils of all ages and prior attainment, and the attainment levels of those pupils who do not present any special educational needs, are evidence of the management's commitment to working towards excellence.
50. The governors' committee structure works very well and, together with the subject co-ordinators and the senior management team, provides a clear and positive educational direction for the school. The school development plan and the linked action plans for specific priorities, drawn up in consultation with staff and governors, are useful documents that list priorities, track improvements and identify areas for future development. Together they present a clearly defined programme for sustained development, which includes review dates that demonstrate success criteria and regular monitoring of progress. The governing body provides informed support and successfully meets its statutory requirements. The designated governors have attended appropriate training. They play active roles in supporting pupils with special educational needs and monitor provision for literacy and numeracy.
51. The school's arrangements for financial management and control are good. The administrative staff and the headteacher work well together to ensure that the budget is tightly controlled, so that the requirements of the governing body are met. The finance committee's considerable experience and expertise ensure that the school secures the very best value that it can in its use of learning resources, the accommodation and personnel. The members of the finance committee are particularly well informed and fully understand the financial implications of school management. They have a clear and detailed understanding of the principles of 'best value'. The governors have benefited from training in performance management. They have responded very well to their role of setting targets for the staff and the school, and in monitoring how well their plans and procedures are working.
52. The way in which the school interprets the requirements of the National Curriculum is well established. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the curriculum leaders have worked to establish a balanced programme of work that deliberately links work in allied subjects to very good effect. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and is very well led and managed by the skilled co-ordinators, as is the work planned for those pupils who speak a language other than English at home. Together, the co-ordinators monitor planning to ensure that the needs of pupils are met. Liaison between the co-ordinators, class teachers, support assistants and

external agencies is good. There is effective organisation and implementation of the identification, support and monitoring procedures. The governing body is kept very well informed. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs takes her role very seriously. The school and governing body ensure that all funds allocated for special educational needs are spent as specified, including additional funding from within the school budget. Classroom assistants provide good support for pupils, and for teachers because they feed back to teachers, both orally and in writing, on pupils' attainment in lessons. These skilled classroom assistants are an integral part of the teaching and learning support team.

53. The school uses assessment information very effectively to track progress by individuals and groups, and to set targets aimed at improving pupils' future performance. The targets agreed by the school for pupils' performance in the statutory tests in the present year and in 2004 are challenging but are considered achievable. The action plans for the coming academic years are relevant to the pupils' needs in all subjects and are reviewed regularly.
  
54. The commitment and clear sightedness of the headteacher, the senior management team and the chair of governors, who work very closely together, means that the school has made good progress in remedying the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. The above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and with the increasing number of pupils from overseas, who are beginning to learn English however, the challenge to reach nationally expected levels in English and mathematics continues to present problems. Very secure systems for moving forward have been established and the school is in a good position to improve further. There is strong evidence of good and very good teaching, pupils display very good attitudes to work and there are excellent relationships between all the people involved in the school. Pupils have very good behaviour and make good progress. These factors, with the slightly below average financial resources mean that the school provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to build on the existing good practice, improve the school and raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- (1) complete the strategies set out in the school development plan and the linked action plans, designed to raise standards in English, mathematics and science, that are beginning to bring about positive results across the school;  
*Paragraphs: 2, 3, 6, 7, 49, 50, 81, 95, 104.*
  - (2) work to extend the secure playing space for children in the Reception class and increase the range and scope of equipment designed to improve their physical and social skills;  
*Paragraph: 73.*
  - (3) maintain constant vigilance of the procedures to improve attendance to ensure that pupils attend regularly so that that their potential for learning is enhanced.  
*Paragraphs 2, 10, 17, 37.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

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

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	22	16	4	0	0	0
Percentage	14	45	33	8	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 2 percentage points.*

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

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	209
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	46

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	60

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	86

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### **Attendance**

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.4

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	12	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	16	21
	Girls	9	11	10
	Total	20	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	59 (74)	79 (83)	91 (87)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	21	16
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	25	31	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (74)	91 (87)	76 (74)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	20	22	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	17
	Girls	13	12	18
	Total	25	26	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (56)	62 (53)	83 (82)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	16
	Girls	12	10	15
	Total	23	24	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (50)	62 (53)	74 (62)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	88	4	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	18	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	1	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	41	1	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	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	42	0	0

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	26

### Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	150

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
	£
Total income	616,842
Total expenditure	615,493
Expenditure per pupil	3,109
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	1,349

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	201
Number of questionnaires returned	88

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	18	2	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	63	30	5	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	36	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	39	7	1	3
The teaching is good.	67	31	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	40	3	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	20	6	5	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	28	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	49	41	7	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	60	31	0	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	33	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	34	8	0	10

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

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

56. The provision for children in the Reception class is a strength of the school, and gives them a very secure foundation for future learning. Most children enter the school into the Reception class with much lower levels of knowledge, understanding and skills than would normally be expected for children of this age, particularly in communication language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, and mathematical development. All children make very good progress as a result of the very good atmosphere for learning in the Reception class. The very good teaching, the skilful intervention of staff and the wide range of purposeful activities that are offered enhance this. As a result, by the time they leave the Reception class, most children achieve the nationally expected early learning goals in creative development, physical development, and personal and social development. In spite of the very good progress that they make, and the fact that a few attain very well, most children do not reach these goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because of their very low attainment levels on entry.
57. Children with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language receive very good support and make very good progress in all areas of learning. Children learning English as an additional language are particularly well supported by multilingual teachers who, by their creative teaching and bilingual translation, enable the children to access the English language as quickly as possible.
58. Arrangements for admission to the school are good. Staff make excellent contact with parents and children, visiting them in their homes before children start school, and collecting photographs and pictures to display in the class when they start school to make them feel at home. Most parents share books with their children at home and some go on visits with the class to the local canal, park and shops. A few parents help in the classroom with reading and other activities. Their help is valued by the children and staff and enhances the learning opportunities available for the children. Links with the adjacent pre-school have recently been improved with the help of a local authority advisory teacher.
59. The quality of teaching is very good. The teacher and the support staff have a very good knowledge how young children learn. There are very good class management skills, especially in language and mathematics sessions where the grouping of children with others of similar ability fully develops children's basic skills and knowledge.
60. Very good relationships ensure that children settle down well, are happy, secure and grow in confidence. There is a good balance between teacher-directed learning and child-initiated activities. Many activities enable the children to learn purposefully through investigation and play. The quality of direct teaching is very good. These lessons have good pace, challenge and fun, but do not go on for too long. When she is available very good support is given by the classroom assistant.

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

61. Children have very positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy coming to school and form very good relationships with one another. They work hard and play happily together with a good degree of independence and increasing confidence. Routines are well established so that children know what is expected of them and feel secure. As a result of this, their behaviour is generally very good. Children concentrate well in groups and whole class sessions. They are beginning to listen to each other and most know how to take turns in speaking, as well as how to signal that they wish to contribute or answer questions.
62. Children learn to persevere and stay on task when working independently at a chosen activity. This is due to the careful matching of the activities to the capability of the children and the gentle encouragement by the staff to persist until the task is finished, and to challenge children to move forward to the next step in their learning. A few children still prefer solitary play activities, but the majority of children are beginning to co-operate and play together, for example, in role-play areas such as the pet shop and the home corner. This shows their increasing maturity.
63. A strong emphasis is placed on personal and social development in order to support learning in other areas, especially physical and creative work, for example, sharing the equipment when cutting and sticking, and taking turns with the outdoor toys. Most children say 'please' and 'thank you', because of the emphasis given by staff to politeness. Children practise these skills in the shop when thanking the shopkeeper for the goods they have 'bought'. All staff listen carefully to what children have to say and value their contributions, often repeating to a wider group or asking questions to include others in the discussion. Adults are sensitive to the needs of all children and work hard to increase confidence and self-esteem. Children are proud of their achievements and rehearse them to visitors. They say, "I can count to 20", "I can put my own coat on," "Would you like to see my picture?" Praise is used well to acknowledge these achievements. Children understand the class rules and know what behaviour is expected of them, such as learning to tidy up after activities, taking care of equipment, and putting their coats on when it is cold outside.
64. Teachers have high expectations that children will care for themselves independently, that after visits to the toilet they will wash their hands and accept some personal responsibility, such as when changing for physical education lessons. Children rise to these expectations, with many able to do this without any adult support or support limited to tying a shoelace or helping to turn items such as jumpers the right way round. Children are encouraged to have a go first and then ask an adult for help if needed, enabling them to develop independence. As a result, children develop a clear sense of right and wrong, share their toys with each other, and help each other with tasks. They comfort each other when they are upset, and some are confident enough to organise themselves and others in group play.

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

65. Children make very good progress overall in this area and achieve well. The school enables them to develop their skills in speaking and listening very well. Children are willing to speak in whole class discussions and are learning to listen and take turns in conversations. They learn a wide range of songs and action rhymes, such as 'Come to the Pet Shop' and they enjoy performing them. Children have regular opportunities to share their news and to talk about their experiences. They enjoy listening to stories and sit attentively for an appropriate length of time. Children develop their early reading skills well. Most recognise their name and read others names with

confidence. They know the outline for a story and recognise that print has meaning. They recognise rhyming words and repeating patterns, and join in the chorus of favourite rhymes and stories. More able children have started reading simple texts and instructions. They learn a number of frequently used words and attempt to make sense of unknown words using the initial sounds and picture clues. Less able children explain what is happening in stories read to them and use pictures to predict what might happen next. Children are aware of the words 'author' and 'illustrator' and understand the difference between them. They enjoy illustrations in books, have favourite books and handle them carefully. Most hold books the correct way up and turn the pages in order. They enjoy sharing books with pupils from Year 5 in paired reading sessions.

66. Writing skills are developed and most children make marks to represent writing, incorporating correct letter symbols and reading back their writing. Some copy the teacher's writing with good pencil control. The more able children attempt simple sentences using a capital letter to start and a full stop to end their work. Children enjoy practising correct letter formation, for example when using their fingers in sand, painting letter shapes or making collage letters.
67. Children are given time to express their thoughts and ideas and the more articulate children are encouraged to further develop their language skills. The basic skills of reading and writing are taught very well in sessions in which children learn quickly. For example, when reading a large book with the class, teachers point to words as they read and emphasise that words carry meaning. Letter sounds are taught well and reinforced in activities, such as matching children's names to their initial sounds, for example 'Dion dances in the dark'; 'Pedro plays in the pet shop'. The children are introduced to a wide range of books to stimulate their interest, such as books about pets, how to care for them, and what they like to eat. Adults read stories in such an enthralling way that children listen intently, hanging on every word, absorbing the pace and tempo of reading 'ordinary' stories. The children take books home to share with parents, which helps to develop their interest and skills.
68. Children are encouraged to use their early writing skills to write for a range of purposes, such as making home-made books about battery operated toys, using digital photographs as illustrations. They write their news and send letters. Good opportunities are always available for writing, especially during role-play, for example writing shopping lists for the pet shop and menus for the café. Displays of children's writing around the classroom reinforce the message that it is important and valued. Parents are encouraged to talk to their children about what they have done, for example 'I have missed you. Tell me about the nice things you have done today.'

### **Mathematical development**

69. Through well-planned practical activities, including play, children develop an understanding of number, pattern, shape and measurement, with an appropriate vocabulary such as 'big' and 'little', 'tall' and 'short' and 'full' and 'empty'. They also learn specific mathematical vocabulary such as 'difference between', 'less than', 'take away' and 'plus', 'add', and 'more than'. A wide range of activities to develop learning is provided. These are well chosen for interest and enjoyment, and are matched closely to the children's level of understanding. Teachers make use of every opportunity to encourage children to count, to recognise numerals and to do simple addition and subtraction as they play. For example, children singing together use their fingers to count up and down as well as to act out songs, such as 'One, two, three, four, five', and 'One, two, buckle my shoe', developing and consolidating their

understanding of 'one more' and 'one less'. They also learn simple addition and subtraction such as  $2 + 5 = 7$  and  $5 - 2 = 3$ , and the more able can add  $4 + 8 = 12$  and  $7 + 5 = 12$ . Good use is made of a range of computer programs to reinforce learning in all areas of mathematics.

70. Some children are able to order numbers correctly to 20 plus. They demonstrate this daily when counting how many children are in the class, how many are away, and how many are present during registration. All know that fingers help you count in tens and fives, and they use tally charts to record numbers to ten. Most recognise numbers 1-10 on a number line, throw the appropriate number of beanbags in a bucket, and 'show' the numbers on their frog puppets. They learn about two-dimensional shapes through a range of activities, such as making pictures and geometrical patterns out of coloured sticky shapes and play dough. They can arrange their play pets in order of weight, using balance scales, from the heaviest to the lightest. Children make good use of the sand and water trays to investigate capacity and volume, and learn vocabulary such as 'full', 'half full' and 'empty'.

### **Physical development**

71. Fine physical skills are developed well as all children learn how to hold tools such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes correctly. Children play imaginatively with what they call 'small world toys', such as toy animals, and jigsaws, and small and large construction equipment. These help children to develop their physical skills and manipulation. They enjoy making pots for the three bears out of clay, manipulating their fingers and enjoying the sensation of the clay.
72. Children control a range of small equipment for games with skill and confidence and an awareness of space. In the physical education lesson seen, children showed good co-ordination and control as they climbed the ropes, slithered and jumped along the benches and performed forward rolls. They listen well to instructions and learn the routines of lessons very well, paying good attention to safety, especially when moving rapidly around the room, taking care to avoid other people.
73. Outdoor play is very limited as the secure playing space is very small and children have no opportunities to balance on tricycles or other wheeled toys. They have no equipment for observing the rules of zebra crossings and other traffic symbols in their play, to help them learn how to be safe when out and about. There is insufficient space for children to run, jump and hop all over the outdoor area or climb and balance, as there is no climbing apparatus available in the outdoor area. They put outdoor toys away carefully and efficiently, but there is no storage. The lack of space for outdoor play and limited equipment hold back the children's development in this area of learning.

### **Creative development**

74. Most children achieve this early learning goal and a few will exceed it before they leave the Reception class. They experience a good range of activities, including drawing, model making, painting, imaginative play and music. Their creative attempts display increasing imagination and confidence. Children enjoy making music and singing songs, and are extending their repertoire of songs, nursery rhymes and jingles. They play instruments in time with the music to accompany a rhythmic poem 'Jingle, Jangle', do actions to the songs, and clap repeated patterns.

75. Children play imaginatively in the home corner and pet shop, dressing up in suitable clothes and shoes and mimicking adult talk and behaviour. One little girl held a lengthy imaginary conversation on the telephone with an imaginary vet about her sick dog. On receiving the vet's advice over the phone, she then proceeded to carry it out on her dog and told another customer what the vet had said. "I have to give him special food and lots of water". Another said, "Line up, one at a time please". A wide range of props extends their imagination well, including fish tanks, snake pits and hamster cages, which the children have made themselves.
76. Children react openly to stories expressing human kindness and sadness, and are beginning to relate these stories to incidents in their own lives, such as when Humpty Dumpty hurt himself. Cooking, eating and drinking are enjoyed in the Reception class. These and other opportunities to smell and feel give children good opportunities to respond to sensations and explore their senses. They also use their senses to find out what they like the most. "We liked the smell and taste of the porridge for the three bears".

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

77. Although they make very good progress in this area, most of the present Reception class are unlikely to meet the early learning goal by the end of their time in the class, due to their low starting point. Children's natural curiosity is nurtured very well and there are many opportunities for them to explore the natural and man-made environment. For example, children have been finding out about a range of pets such as hamsters, mice, fish, snakes, cats and dogs, how to keep and care for them, and what they like to eat. They write notices for the pet shop, 'Be kind to animals', and 'Please don't put your fingers in the cage, these animals might bite'. Children have visited an imaginary 'animal estate agent' to find suitable homes for their pets. They have also been to the local canal to look for water creatures and plants. They have drawn pictures and made models of houses and shops in Sydenham and placed them correctly on a simple map of the area. They have also drawn a map of how Goldilocks got to the house of the three bears.
78. Children confidently use a computer program 'My Teddy', to select clothes for teddy, and then print them out. They use a mouse proficiently, readily type simple commands and use the mouse to drag selected items around the screen. Children use a paint program successfully. They enjoy planning programs to control a remote controlled robotic vehicle to go forwards and turn on command.
79. Children use construction kits to build towers, helicopters, a house for the three little pigs, and have made a large pet shop that has tall strong walls so that the animals can't get out. They make models such as a fish in an aquarium, and a snake in a vivarium using commercial and found materials. They cut and stick paper, paint and make collages of the local area and canal. There is purpose in their work and they relate well to the challenges presented. They are beginning to develop a sense of time and happily recount what they did at school yesterday, as well as what they are planning to do at the weekend and in the holidays. They display a growing understanding of times past, when their grandparents and parents were children and the toys they played with then. They know that they should wear a sun hat, sunglasses, tee shirts and shorts in the hot weather, so that they are cool and so that their heads and eyes don't get sunburnt. They also know that they need a coat, hat and gloves in the cold weather to keep themselves warm.

80. Children learn about the parts of an owl such as 'feathers', 'wing,' 'beak,' 'claws', and that materials can be 'shiny', 'soft', 'smooth', or 'rough'. They know that if they want to grow plants they need seeds, the sun, some compost, a spade, a pot and a watering can. The children are pleased to describe the sequence of how a plant grows. They learn about their own culture and beliefs, and those of other people. They write, 'Jesus was a kind man. He played with children and had lots of friends.' They also draw pictures of the Buddhist story of Siddartha and the swan.

## ENGLISH

### Strengths:

- *the quality of teaching and learning;*
- *effective support for all pupils whatever their background and prior attainment;*
- *the excellent relationships between pupils and staff.*

### Areas to develop:

- *standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6.*
81. Standards attained in the statutory tests in 2002 at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 were well below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment in English at the end of both Years 2 and 6 remain below the national average although pupils capable of higher attainment do well. There has been slow and erratic improvement over the past few years. With the increased number of pupils who learn English as an additional language, and the marked rise of pupils with special educational needs, comparison with standards at the time of the last inspection is difficult. Standards are no better and appear in some cases to be less good than those achieved previously. There is high pupil mobility, and the school struggles in attempting to meet the nationally expected levels for pupils overall at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 despite the fact that a good number of pupils exceed national expectations. All pupils make good progress, achieve well and attain levels of competence that match their ability.
82. There is a particular focus on developing skills in speaking and listening throughout the school. This work is especially important in Years 1 and 2 but newcomers from overseas in all classes make it a priority, even in classes for older pupils. A substantial part of each lesson takes the form of a high standard of question and answer activity, so that pupils have good opportunities to express their ideas and understanding without the additional demands of writing. Pupils willingly contribute to discussions by describing their ideas for example, about the seaside and what attracts them to places such as Blackpool. They extend their listening and vocabulary skills through games like 'I went on holiday and I took...' pupils attainments in speaking and listening across the school are good.
83. The attainment in reading for those pupils who have been in school for some time is good but so many are new to English and reading that many still need extra support to read at the level expected for their age. Younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 are eager to read, sometimes in whole class sessions individually or in small groups. They enjoy sharing 'big books' and read with obvious pleasure. Many strategies are used to support their learning. Pupils know how sounds match letters or groups of letters, and they use this knowledge to sound out words that are unknown to them. They seek clues from the illustrations or from the meaning of the story to help them understand unfamiliar words. Their understanding of the story is sometimes reinforced by drama activities. Pupils in Year 2 use and understand technical terms confidently, such as 'split digraphs' and know how this is part of the spelling and reading of words like 'tube'. Pupils understand the difference between fiction and non-

fiction text. They have created an advertising leaflet about a place that their friends might like to visit. All pupils learn how to form letter shapes correctly so that, by the end of Year 2, most pupils write using a clear, legible print form of handwriting.

84. Overall, pupils enjoy reading and sharing books. The higher attaining pupils read fluently and accurately, with good expression. Many pupils describe the attributes of the main characters and retell favourite parts of stories. Most are able to locate reference books within the school library. Pupils write for a wide range of purposes, for example lists and reports, in addition to creative and imaginative writing. Writing tasks are usually closely linked to reading and other areas of the curriculum. For example pupils write interesting book reviews. On occasions, worksheets are used to help lower attaining pupils to plan their writing.
85. The quality of pupils' writing is good when encouraged and supported by the staff. By the end of Year 6, pupils know how to use basic skills for a range of purposes. They present arguments in writing supporting their viewpoints on topical issues such as 'fox hunting' and 'health and safety in the kitchen'. They write poems and interesting stories and make good use of their writing skills in other subjects. This was seen, for example, when writing a guide book description of Leamington Spa. In Years 3 and 4, pupils study the colours and forms associated with the work of Salvador Dali and write about the feelings they represent. Presentation is of a high standard and pupils write in a legible, joined handwriting style by the time they leave Year 6.
86. Pupils read independently and make good use of the local and school libraries. Some pupils take part in the reading activities planned by the library service for the summer holiday period. They can name their favourite authors, for example Michael Morpurgo, J.K.Rowling and Roald Dahl and give reasons for their choice. The more confident pupils appreciate the humour in their stories and readily discuss the features of the main characters and how they contribute to the story. They were unable to name a favourite poem or poet.
87. Pupils acquire the necessary skills to develop their reading, writing and understanding according to their prior attainment and ability. Pupils respond positively to teaching and work hard to produce work to standards that match their age and ability. They concentrate well and are interested in the tasks.
88. The quality of teaching is always at least good and is most frequently very good. Clear, comprehensive, detailed planning ensures that the needs of all pupils are addressed. The teachers communicate their knowledge and understanding confidently and imaginatively, and this stimulates pupils' interest and motivates them well. Teachers' have high expectations of pupil's work, including presentation, and their behaviour. Teachers present a very good model of the kind of behaviour that they expect from pupils and are rewarded by the high standard of respect and excellent relationships that exist between themselves and their pupils. Support staff and resources are well managed and make a valuable contribution to the high quality teaching. Time is used well. Every moment of lessons is well planned so that pupils are always purposefully engaged in learning activities. At the end of lessons there is time for pupils to reflect on their work and to discuss with others how it could be improved. This activity forms a useful part of the assessment process and allows pupils to understand how well they are achieving.
89. Information and communication technology is used well. It provides an additional tool to add depth to pupils' learning. Pupils are familiar with the equipment and programs and use them well to practise and develop their skills. They sometimes use word

processing skills to draft and improve writing or to engage in activities designed to extend their knowledge of letter sounds or for research purposes. Pupils show a high level of independence when transferring from working in their books to using computers.

90. The school library uses a simplified system to classify books. It has a range of non-fiction text. The library facilities are not used fully as a potential source of information and pupils often choose to use information from the Internet as a first choice. Books and other resources for teaching reading are recent, in good condition and appropriate. There is a wide range of structured reading books, as well as many storybooks, so that pupils can practise the reading skills they have acquired. They enjoy reading. Reading books are easily accessible. Pupils know how to use word banks and dictionaries. They independently consult a range of dictionaries that match their ability.
91. Work in books is marked regularly and the agreed marking policy is applied consistently throughout all classes. Constructive comments enable pupils' to review their work and offer guidance, and advice about how their work may be improved. Assessment records are detailed and are used to track pupils' progress, group pupils according to their attainment levels and to identify areas which may need additional support.
92. Homework is used principally to allow pupils to complete work begun at school. Most pupils take their reading books home regularly and enjoy reading to adults and to brothers and sisters. All pupils have reading diaries that form an important link between home and school. Where parents are unable to help there are classes after school when parents and their children work together helped by the teachers.
93. When learning English some pupils require additional support, particularly those with specific learning difficulties, problems associated with speech and communication and those whose first language is not English. This help is often through tasks being adapted to closely match pupils' needs and abilities, thus allowing them the opportunity to succeed and make progress. They often receive additional specialist teaching and guidance from the support assistants. The targets stated in individual education plans forms part of the planning and focus for additional support. For example, pupils may be given more time speaking and listening about a subject to make sure they understand the main idea before being required to write.
94. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of how the subject is taught, the standard of work achieved and how to develop the subject further. Very good use is made of assessment procedures, with close monitoring of standards and systematic analysis of pupils' performance. Information and communication technology is used to improve the efficiency of record keeping, to good effect. Resources are of good quality and in good condition. Library books are supplemented by loans from the local library service and this may be an area for future development. English makes a very good contribution to the social, moral, spiritual and cultural education.

## **MATHEMATICS**

95. The results of the 2002 tests for pupils aged seven were below the average for all schools, and for those schools with a similar proportion of pupils who take free school meals. The low level of attainment was due to fewer pupils reaching Level 3, the level above that expected for pupils of the same age nationally. In Year 6, overall standards

in 2002 were below those in schools nationally and were about average compared with those in schools having a similar proportion of free school meals. The low result nationally was due to the number of pupils with special educational needs who achieved well in relation to their prior attainment but who did not attain the nationally expected level. Some pupils with special educational needs and who were learning English as an additional language did, however, attain the expected Level 4. From those pupils capable of higher attainment the percentage attaining Level 5 was broadly in line with the national average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment remain at an overall level below the national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although pupils capable of higher attainment exceed the expected levels. Inspection evidence also indicates that all groups of pupils achieve very well throughout the school.

96. The reasons for standards remaining below average overall are because:
- *there is a high percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including six pupils in Year 6 who have statements of special educational need;*
  - *there is a well above average percentage of pupils learning English as an additional language;*
  - *pupils' attainment on entry to the school is very low when compared with that of most schools nationally.*
97. The school has identified strategies to ensure that all pupils are enabled to achieve as well as their ability and prior experience allows. The results of national and optional tests are analysed to identify areas of weakness and, consequently, to inform planning. The expectations of teachers and pupils are high throughout school in respect of standards, behaviour and attitudes towards learning. Superb strategies are in place to ensure that every pupil is fully engaged in suitable work in all activities and these strategies are a significant feature of all lesson planning. All work is very well matched to pupils' prior level of attainment. There is effective assessment, recording, target setting and tracking of individual and cohort progress.
98. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is predominantly good. Teachers plan confidently and are all well versed in the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. The specific needs of all pupils are identified and teaching is adapted appropriately to meet them. This leads to all pupils achieving well and making good progress over time. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make very good progress. Lesson objectives are shared with pupils at the start of lessons so that they know what is expected of them. In the shared discussion session at the end of lessons, pupils and teachers review progress towards those objectives and, consequently, pupils know how well they have learned. In turn, teachers have useful information on which to plan future work. The school makes effective use of a commercial scheme to help teachers to match work to pupils' levels of experience and prior attainment. A very able classroom assistant provides valuable support for the more capable pupils in Year 6, so that a good proportion of the pupils attains Level 5.
99. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress towards secure mental arithmetic skills. These skills are developed in the first part of every lesson. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils worked on the five times multiplication table, encouraged by the teacher's use of a 'wizard' glove puppet and effective prompts in their community language from the specialist support teacher. They all made good progress in their learning as a result of good questioning and management of resources. A close examination of pupils'

previous work indicates that they have a satisfactory understanding of number, measurement and time and know the names of most common geometric shapes.

100. Pupils in Year 6 have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of operations in decimals, equivalent fractions and percentages. Their knowledge and understanding extends to two-dimensional shapes, three-dimensional solids and their properties. They confidently explain their understanding of number patterns and measures. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are supported well and consequently learn well and develop knowledge and skills alongside their friends.
101. The school makes very good use of information and communication technology to support learning. For example, a spreadsheet program provided pupils in Year 6 with the challenge of solving problems related to organising a school 'disco' and a project on healthy eating. Pupils in a Year 5 lesson confidently accessed a web site to consolidate their work on fractions, percentages and decimals. They also constructed a database recording their evidence about their friends eye colour. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 investigated pattern making within symmetrical patterns, using a drawing program. In Year 2, pupils have used a simple graph program to illustrate their investigations in measuring hand spans. In Year 1, pupils have carried out a survey on the volume of traffic passing school and have enjoyed using a controllable robot for direction and distance. Across the school pupils have many opportunities to use and develop their mathematical skills in other subjects, such as science and design technology, where they measure and record results with a high level of accuracy. Projects such as the 'Fire of Warwick' enabled pupils to work on shape and time. Shape also featured in the artwork based on a study of the artist Matisse.
102. The good teaching throughout all classes reflects sound subject knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lesson planning is excellent and the full involvement of all pupils is an essential aspect of the provision for all attainment levels. Everywhere there is evidence of high expectations and a sense of urgency that learning opportunities are not lost. Good use is made of appropriate questions to assess levels of understanding and to extend learning opportunities. Work is marked regularly, with comments that are supportive but do not develop children's learning. Pupils' work is presented very well. Pupils take great pride in the standard of their completed work. Good relations between teachers and pupils are underpinned by a mutual respect. Pupils are secure and as a result they make good progress, whatever their ability. Pupils are well motivated and respond positively and with enthusiasm. They are attentive, listen well during lessons and are able to work well, independently or in a group. The analysis of national test results and non-statutory tests in Years 3 to 5 is used to check pupil progress, set targets and inform future planning.
103. The co-ordinator manages and is developing the subject well. Methods and procedures have been standardised. Monitoring of planning, teaching and learning has taken place on a regular basis. The resulting information has been used to inform planning and to set targets for future performance. A robust system to record assessment, set targets and track individual and cohort progress is in place. This will enable the school to provide effectively for the needs of pupils with a wide range of prior experience and attainment.

## **SCIENCE**

104. In the national curriculum tests in 2002, standards of attainment at the end of Year 6, as in 1998, were below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that, overall, pupils achieve well. Nevertheless the well above average incidence of pupils with special educational needs and the high number of pupils who are beginning to learn English as an additional language, mean that standards of attainment overall remain below national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. The school has developed a programme of increased investigation and experimental work. Those pupils who find English difficult enjoy a high level of success in practical work. For this reason, teachers are increasing the opportunities for pupils to pursue investigation work rather than just learning and repeating facts. A significant number of pupils achieve the higher than expected Level 5 in their tests. Some pupils who have special educational needs attain at the expected level as do many of the pupils are second language speakers. The school has concentrated on investigational science this year and there has been some improvement in pupils performance.
105. The school believes that the improvement in pupils' achievement is because:
- *there has been close attention given to detail when reviewing and analysing the results of statutory and voluntary tests, and making changes in the way science is taught;*
  - *teaching is good; teachers have good knowledge and understanding and plan carefully;*
  - *all work is matched carefully to the prior attainment and identified needs of pupils;*
  - *pupils are encouraged to learn through investigation, experimentation, personal research and independent enquiry.*
106. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils achieve well as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support they are given by the teachers and learning support assistants. For example, in lessons in classes for Year 5 pupils, where they investigated food chains, pupils looked for links between the environment and the habitats in which animals and plants would best prosper. Different groups of pupils collaborated to create different key systems to label and identify specific areas. This work was skilfully developed by practical experiences in the school's environmental garden and linked with localities far afield, that pupils explored using the Internet. Comparisons were made with the life-style and habitat of lions and their prey, with observations of a domestic cat stalking birds and small mammals in the garden. All of the pupils involved contributed at their own level of attainment. During the review session at the end of the lessons, the 'Big Idea' was reviewed. As a result of the discussion and sharing of ideas and discoveries, everyone understood clearly how the specialised habitat and the food chain affects different animals in a wide range of localities. Pupils recognised clearly that plants of one kind or another are the food source of some creature, in what pupils refer to as 'the munchline'.
107. Work in books and discussion with pupils indicate that, by the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding and in their investigation skills. They know the different parts of the body and identify these by drawing labelled diagrams. Through their study of healthy foods as part of the healthy-eating programme, and their involvement in green issues, they know which foods are important for the body. They are skilled in relating groups of materials and their properties to their use in commercial or daily life, and how they have been used at different stages of construction in sites in the neighbourhood of the school. They understand and can explain which materials are translucent, transparent or opaque.

108. By the end of Year 6, pupils readily explain more complex facts about the human body and how to keep healthy. Over the year, they have reviewed their work in all areas of science and have particularly enjoyed extending their knowledge of rocks and minerals, linked with their work in geography. They are young experts in environmental issues and are very actively involved in a re-cycling project as a result of their experiences. They manage well the collection and sorting of materials, including paper, metals and computer ink cartridges, with very little help from teachers. Pupils have established different plant habitats around the school and in their lessons in the environmental garden area around the pond. They have transformed a weedy area into a garden that now boasts a range of flowers, vegetables and strawberries. They plan and discuss ideas, carry out the investigations and draw conclusions based on careful detailed observation and measurement. The school uses information and communication technology very well to support learning in science, using videos, spreadsheets and CD ROMs. Pupils use stored data and present it to the class in the form of pie charts, line graphs and bar charts. They are confident when explaining their findings to other groups.
109. Teaching is consistently very good in all but two lessons, where it is excellent. Learning is promoted well by the very secure knowledge and understanding of the teachers. It is supported by a well-structured set of plans that lay out exactly what pupils are expected to learn in each class and lesson. These plans are based on national recommendations, with some additional extension materials drawn from a number of well-structured commercial schemes. Time at the end of lessons is used purposefully to assess learning and to ensure that pupils know what they have learned.
110. Lessons are very well organised and managed. Learning support assistants are used well to support the learning of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Sometimes those pupils new to the school, who are beginning to learn English, are grouped together for specific vocabulary work in Portuguese. Those who speak Punjabi at home often benefit from the interjection of one or two phrases in their home language, during the introductory session, that increase their understanding and extend their learning. There is skilled open-ended questioning that draws on pupils' previous learning and extends their thinking. Teachers motivate pupils by their own enthusiasm. Pupils' concentration as they work co-operatively in their groups has a positive effect on learning during lessons. They work together well and, because all classes contain pupils of wide attainment levels, teachers plan that groups are required to undertake in turn some element of independent learning, so that they can work with others to drive the pace of learning forward. Overall, pupils have positive attitudes to science and behave very well. The relationships between pupils and between pupils and all staff are superb.
111. The subject is managed very well by the co-ordinator. She has good personal knowledge and a clear view of where the development of science should go across the school. Equipment and resources are adequate. Test results and teachers' own assessments of attainment are carefully analysed to identify any weaknesses in pupils' learning. Subsequent planning takes account of this work. This information is used very carefully to track the progress of individual pupils and groups and to set targets. The school is far more aware of the learning and progress of pupils than it was at the time of the previous report. During assessment meetings, teachers work together to monitor pupils' completed work and agree the level being attained. The subject co-ordinator regularly works with colleagues in their lessons and is able to share their experience and extend their expertise.

## ART AND DESIGN

### Strengths:

- *the good quality of teaching and learning;*
- *strong and effective subject leadership;*
- *the wide and rich curriculum;*
- *the involvement of all pupils in interesting activities;*
- *practical links to other subjects and the effective use of information and communication technology.*

112. The standard of attainment in art and design across the school is good and above the level expected by the end of both Years 2 and 6. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Displays in classrooms and around the school reflect a wide range of imaginative, creative, artistic activities and the development of skills, including two- and three-dimensional work. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, achieve well and make good progress. The standard of design is particularly good and this is reflected in the high quality of work in sketchbooks.
113. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons is never less than good, with examples of very good and excellent teaching. Planning is detailed and comprehensive. This ensures that the needs of all pupils are addressed. Particular care is taken to ensure that those pupils who have difficulties understanding English are paired with other pupils who share their first language. Good use is made of additional support staff to encourage pupils to attempt challenging tasks and to ensure that pupils are included fully in all activities. Teachers have high expectations both for the quality of pupils' work and the expected standard of behaviour. They have good subject knowledge and communicate this understanding confidently to their pupils. Teachers plan interesting, imaginative tasks that stimulate the creativity and imagination of their pupils. Consequently, pupils are interested and make every effort to produce work of a high standard. Pupils are encouraged to choose the resources, medium or technique necessary to meet the requirements of the task. Assessment is part of the conclusion of lessons and pupils are able to discuss their work and that of others and how it might be improved. Marking in sketchbooks is good. Progress of pupils is recorded systematically against agreed targets and information gathered is used to inform future planning.
114. There are excellent relationships between pupils and teachers. Pupils enjoy their work and have very good attitudes to learning. They respond well to the challenges presented to them. For example, pupils in Year 5 found some problems manipulating specialist equipment that would enable them to 'draw,' using hot wax or flour paste. They persevered and produced very good designs based on African patterns. In Year 3, following an analysis of work by Salvador Dali, pupils were asked to demonstrate their ability to create tones of colour by mixing colours using pastels. They then considered the evolution of pattern through the work of Escher. Pupils are good at observational drawings and their skills develop as they mature. For example, older pupils are beginning to understand perspective and the use of shading to depict dimension. In Year 2, pupils have a limited knowledge of famous artists but, by the end of Year 6, they confidently contrast and compare the different styles and techniques of artists such as Dali and Matisse. They have many and varied opportunities to experience art and design outside school. Visits to art galleries in Leamington Spa and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, in addition to visits to the National Gallery in London, inspire their work.

115. Many visits and visitors ensure that pupils experience a wide range of styles associated with other faiths and cultures, for example Islamic and Greek art. Art permeates all areas of the curriculum. There are strong links with other subjects, particularly literacy, history and geography. The subject makes a very good contribution to social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. Pupils respect one another's opinions and views. They wait their turn politely and spontaneously help friends who are experiencing problems. Pupils have useful additional opportunities to develop their artistic skills through the art club. Parents make a valuable contribution to the development of the subject by supporting the art club and helping younger pupils to achieve successful completion of their work. Support and provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. They are given the opportunity to participate in all class activities, with additional support from classroom assistants if required.
116. Information and communication technology is integrated into the curriculum and makes a good contribution to enhance and enrich the subject. Pupils are familiar with a range of programs and techniques, including transferring photographs taken with a digital camera to the computer to produce portraits in the style of Picasso. There are many interesting examples of different styles of famous artists attractively displayed around the school.
117. The space available for practical activities is good. Art takes place within classrooms and in adjacent resource areas. Resources for art meet pupils' needs both for illustrative purposes and for more creative and imaginative two- and three-dimensional activities. Pupils show respect for the equipment.
118. The subject benefits from very good leadership and management. The work covered incorporates national guidance for the development of the subject that has been adapted imaginatively to better match the needs of the school. Assessment procedures work well and are used sensibly to guide curriculum planning and to pupils' progress and acquisition of skills.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

119. This subject is taught by the school as part of a linked programme. Work seen in lessons and additional evidence indicates that standards of attainment overall are in line with expectations across the school, but that the design element is particularly good in some projects, and attainment in special projects is often good. The design element is demonstrated effectively in the very well maintained sketchbooks used by all pupils. Work in this subject has improved since the last inspection, when levels of attainment in Years 3 to 6 were judged unsatisfactory. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils' ability to evaluate work in progress and to suggest ways of improving is evident in their discussions of completed work. This attainment is achieved because:
- *the school works to ensure that all of the requirements of the National Curriculum are met;*
  - *pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding are tracked carefully;*
  - *teachers are knowledgeable and plan well, often collaboratively;*
  - *imaginative tasks challenge pupils' thinking; skills learned are used in other projects;*
  - *information and communication technology is used well to support learning.*

120. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and well organised, and their confidence and enthusiasm captivates pupils' imagination and makes them eager to work and learn. Teachers' planning lists the different skills and techniques to be learned or extended. Teachers question pupils about their ideas and, when working in small groups, pupils talk about and question their own decisions and those of their friends as they work.
121. Displays reflect the progress made, from the youngest classes to Year 6. A project about mountains across the world was especially interesting because it clearly demonstrated how pupils' skills and techniques developed over time as their understanding of available media developed. Work seen included ceramics, work with fabrics, books with moving parts and detailed card models, to reflect pupils' studies about life and times in Ancient Greece.
122. Written comments in sketchbooks indicate how the teachers challenge pupils' thinking, and past work is developed to encourage groups of pupils to build on earlier experiences. Pupils automatically seek additional information from the resource books drawn from the school library and from the Internet, which pupils frequently choose as a research vehicle rather than books. When pupils have found satisfactory answers to their prepared questions they speak clearly to the class, sharing the results of their research.
123. Practical assessment strategies are managed well so that pupils' experience all of the required elements of the curriculum. This information is used to assist with planning. Information and communication technology learning, including videos, the Internet and CD-ROMS, is used extensively by pupils and teachers.
124. The subject leaders are new in post and have clear plans for the development of the subject. Expertise is shared readily and completed work is displayed well, with good records of successful projects kept. Teachers are skilled at working together co-operatively in the classrooms. This area of the curriculum is part of the programme aimed at building the confidence of pupils and teachers by developing learning through good cross-curricular links.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY (Humanities)**

125. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment exceed national expectations by the ends of Years 2 and 6. There is a wealth of evidence in books and on walls around the school that compel visitors to stop and look. This represents a good improvement in provision and attainment since the previous inspection. These subjects are taught as separate sections within a humanities programme, with greater emphasis placed on one or the other as is considered appropriate, although often the work in one subject is intrinsically linked with the other. All pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school.
126. Attainment levels are better than those usually found in many schools for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because:
- *the school has adapted the latest national guidance to ensure that all of the requirements of the National Curriculum are met in order to extend pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding;*
  - *teachers plan very well, and capture and maintain the interest of the pupils throughout lessons;*
  - *teachers provide interesting and challenging tasks that match the prior attainment of all pupils, drawing on learning in other subjects;*

- *information and communication technology is used very well to support learning.*
127. The school policy documents for these subjects provide clear, detailed guidance on how to meet the requirements of the subjects for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, particularly those who are newly arrived from overseas. This results in the careful selection of topics to be studied so that there is no unnecessary repetition for pupils where there are mixed-age classes.
  128. The teaching of both subjects across the school is at least good, and is mostly very good. In all of the lessons observed the teachers quickly captured and then maintained pupils' interest and enthusiasm, ensuring that they learned well. This was particularly effective in a lesson in Year 2, where pupils linked work using aerial photographs with studies about the fictional island of Struay. Pupils compared features such as bays and harbours with man-made inlets and commercial boat marinas. Pupils used lists of features to make their own seagull's eye view of a coastline town, including placing the items on the list in appropriate places. They knew that this map work would be two-dimensional in the main but would need to indicate higher ground and notable features. Many found the work challenging but good humour, encouragement and support resulted in completed work that was finished to a good standard.
  129. The detailed lesson plans promoted challenging activities that consolidated and extended pupils' skills as well as their knowledge and understanding. Pupils instinctively turned to the computers to support or check their ideas using planned CD-ROMs, and spontaneous research using secure search engines. Linked with their work about coastlines and islands pupils, investigated seaside holidays in the past and delighted in finding out about traditional entertainment, such as the Punch and Judy Show. This work was linked to a project in design and technology about making puppets, and to written work that reinforced pupils' work in literacy.
  130. In work about schools in Africa, the teachers' planning was detailed and displayed a personal mastery of the subject. Her preparation of resources was superb and, as each item was introduced, pupils were engrossed and enthralled with her explanations and information. Her enthusiasm was infectious and, in an exquisite way, the resources about Africa were presented to a background sound of African children singing quietly but with strong rhythm. Pupils 'bubbled over' as they handled objects from Africa, made from a range of local materials. The precise language and specialist vocabulary from Africa, taught to the pupils equipped them well for the investigations for the new work. This was skilfully linked with computer programs to recreate the teacher's visit to schools in Africa, as part of a group of teachers. Pupils engaged readily with the teacher and one another in their efforts to construct a key to identify and label plants and animals in Africa and how they were suited to their different habitats. Every task was just manageable by the differentiated groups. Pupils were led step by step through a developing process, sometimes because of a quiet prompt in the community language, so that every pupil willingly gave of their best to achieve the ultimate goal of gaining praise for a job well done.
  131. Teachers plan challenging tasks for pupils that draw on other learning. For example, in history lessons and visits to museums close to the school and further afield, pupils explore what life was like in Ancient Greece, Rome and in Tudor times. Pupils have pretended to work as Florence Nightingale and enjoy describing what life was like for children when Queen Victoria was first a princess, then a Queen who had many children. Teachers assess learning effectively through skilful use of questions, and through shared monitoring and evaluation of lessons and completed written work.

Assessment and careful tracking informs subsequent planning and contributes very well to a written record of attainment. Information and communication technology is used very well in all classes to support and extend learning. Video recordings and CD-ROMS are available for a number of topics.

132. These subjects are managed well. The subject co-ordinator works well to monitor planning and to ensure that National Curriculum requirements are met. Resources are not elaborate or generous but they meet curriculum requirements. The emphasis on exploration and first-hand experiences gained through visits to historic places more than makes up for any lack of first-hand historical objects in school. Indeed, some of the borrowed items in interest areas, such as an old fashioned kitchen with washboard and tub, indicate that teachers have access to a rich vein of additional resources as and when required. Teachers work together well and good advice, help and support is always available. The co-ordinator has good opportunities to work alongside colleagues, and has used these opportunities well to support and guide the improvement of teaching and learning.

## **INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

133. Standards attained by pupils at the ends of Year 2 and 6 are above those found nationally. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was below national expectations at age seven and well below them at eleven. This is chiefly because:
- *the school is committed to providing its pupils with ready access to high quality hardware and software;*
  - *besides the computer suite there are other computers networked throughout school with access to the Internet for staff and pupils;*
  - *teachers have participated in an effective program of training and, consequently, are confident in their ability to use computers to raise pupils' attainment;*
  - *staff provide many opportunities for pupils to use computers to support learning across the curriculum;*
  - *pupils work well together and are willing to share their expertise.*
134. All of the teaching staff have benefited from a range of training, both government funded and that organised within the school training programme. As a result, work is well organised, resources are high quality and there is clear and steady progression in teaching of the required skills. A small number of whole-class information and communication technology lessons across the school were observed. Evidence from these observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of their work in other subjects indicate that pupils make very good progress.
135. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use the mouse confidently, and a word-processing program to create imaginative labels for the classroom, class rules and to record their recycling project. They confidently change font size, type and colour, use the shift key for capital letters and are able to correct their story writing. They know how to log on, save and print their work. Pupils provide a sequence of instructions to control a floor robot. They effectively use a paint program to add illustrations and symmetrical patterns. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 use word processing to record their visit to Warwick. They write and illustrate well-known stories like the 'Three little Pigs', using appropriate clipart to enhance their work. In their religious education and history work, they have used the Internet to research the Tudors and to find out about the Gurus in Sikhism. Year 5 pupils, inspired by their art work on Matisse, used a paint program to create and manipulate shapes, used digitised photographs of their Tag rugby as

poses for sketches based on 'The Dancers.' They have successfully used desktop publishing for newspaper reports, articles and interviews. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 enjoy a two-day visit to a well-known centre for technology. Here they have opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding in control, sensing and monitoring. They successfully use light, temperature and sound sensors. They have also had opportunity to construct and control buggies and learn to use control boxes to sequence traffic lights. Year 6 pupils confidently use spreadsheets in respect of managing a disco party and healthy eating. They are able to construct and interrogate databases on animal habitats and classifying animals. They ably use a computer program to present work on their mountain project in geography and work in history on World War 2. They confidently access the Internet with permission and use search engines to select information and pictures, and download these for use in these presentations. Pupils successfully insert clipart, text and sound to enliven their work. They use a desktop publishing program to produce reports in the style of newspaper articles about the visit of a team of Caribbean drummers and their visit to the Ashmolean Museum as part of their work on Ancient Greece.

136. The quality of teaching is very good overall. The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is very good. In a good lesson in Year 3, on using Logo to draw initial letters of their names, the teacher encouraged a Portuguese-speaking pupil to help a child who had no English, and the child was able to understand and so make better progress. In a good lesson, introducing spreadsheets in Year 5, the teacher taught with enthusiasm, challenging and encouraging pupils, and praising them for good work. Consequently, pupils were interested and worked well, increasing their knowledge and understanding. Teachers are supportive and encouraging and, as a result, pupils develop confidence, self-esteem and enjoy their work. Teaching is carried out at a good brisk pace, is eminently purposeful and is an enjoyable learning experience. Expectations are high and there is good quality interaction between pupils and teachers. Staff provide clear and helpful guidelines for all pupils in respect of tasks to be carried out. Pupils are taught and encouraged to become more independent learners. Pupils feel secure and confidently make progress, whatever their ability. They work well together, listen attentively, and are able to concentrate and make progress in lessons.
137. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader has a clear view of how the school needs to move forward, such as by the use of e-mail and staff training. Excellent systems are in place to ensure data security and to protect pupils when using the Internet. An individual assessment record is being developed for each pupil. A portfolio with examples of carefully evaluated work is used well to monitor the subject. Resources are excellent and are used very well. Good quality programs are used effectively to enhance pupils' numeracy and literacy achievement. Very good use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects such as science, art and design, religious education, history and geography and mathematics. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual, cultural and social development.

## **MUSIC**

### **Strengths:**

- *the quality of all teaching and learning;*
- *the full involvement and participation of all pupils;*
- *the interesting and enriched curriculum;*
- *many opportunities to experience music from other than western countries and cultures.*

138. At the time of the previous inspection standards were similar to those expected nationally. Standards have improved since then and are now above expectations at the ends of Years 2 and 6. Music is now a strength of the school and pupils of all ages and attainment levels show great interest in the subject. About three-quarters of the pupils learn to play musical instruments, including recorders, violins and steel pans. There is no orchestra but groups of pupils play instruments to an above average standard, for example recorders in assembly and in school productions. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. Great efforts are made to ensure all pupils share in the music of the school. Support is offered quickly and discreetly to those pupils who display emotional and behavioural difficulties and who, as a result, might find it difficult to cope with exciting and stimulating situations.
139. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and is sometimes excellent. Teaching is mostly provided by specialist teachers from the County Music Service, ably supported by the teachers and support staff from the school. This is part of a process of training in the subject for staff. The high quality of teaching results in pupils showing considerable interest and enthusiasm for the subject. In the few lessons seen, pupils showed their ability to sing tunefully. By the end of Year 2, they readily memorise and sing simple songs. They clap rhythmically and enthusiastically to copy a musical pattern and beat out rhythms using percussion instruments.
140. By the end of Year 6, pupils have become familiar with creating simple musical compositions and are familiar with technical musical terms such as 'dynamics', 'forte', and 'tempo'. Some pupils frequently play their instruments in groups, playing rhythmically and melodiously. Most are sufficiently confident to play solo in front of large numbers of people.
141. The headteacher is currently acting as subject co-ordinator. There is a clear policy, and revised plans of what is to be taught are being developed to meet the increasingly diverse needs of the school. The curriculum follows national guidelines and is enriched by many visits and visitors. Pupils were especially interested when they shared in African drumming as part of the Black History week activities, and when they joined in with the work of a jazz group. The subject makes an excellent contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. For example, when one pupil experienced problems playing the recorder to the whole school, all pupils waited very patiently, were sympathetic to her difficulties and delighted in her eventual success. Assessment and recording of progress is informal but, during the year, accomplishments and records of achievement are completed. The range and level of resources are good. There is a wide range of musical instruments, which include some unusual examples from other countries, with the emphasis on percussion instruments.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### Strengths:

- *extended provision for extra-curricular activities for pupils in Years 3 to 6;*
- *pupils' enthusiasm for the subject.*

142. Standards of work seen by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have remained in line with expectations since the previous inspection. The school has noticeably increased the

range of opportunities for extra-curricular sporting activities for pupils in Years 3 to 6. There is now an appropriate range of activities, including outdoor and adventurous activities, which was judged in the previous inspection report to be a weakness. Pupils represent the school in a number of competitive sports such as netball, football and swimming. In Year 6, pupils have the opportunity to share in a residential visit to the Isle of Wight.

143. Teaching overall is good. In the lessons observed, effective use was made of the good facilities. For example, those classes engaged in games activities outdoors benefited from the open spaces, which enabled pupils to practise ball skills well. In addition to lessons seen, evidence of a range of activities indicate pupils' attitudes to physical education overall are good. This is because teachers make good use of the school's resources, organise their lessons well, provide for pupils of all abilities and experiences and demonstrate a genuine enthusiasm for the subject. As a result, all pupils learn well. Where teaching is very good, there is a clear focus on developing specific skills. As a result, pupils are confident when building on their prior experiences and, therefore, make very good progress. For example, pupils in Year 3 are actively encouraged to channel their energies into meaningful activities as they choose and use a range of simple tactics and strategies to devise their own striking and fielding game. They are keen to explain and demonstrate their ideas so that they can further improve their own performance and that of others.
144. The school has developed a number of worthwhile links with outside agencies that help to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, such as in athletics and dance. Financial constraints and limited availability of facilities reduce opportunities for swimming. This year, pupils in Year 3 swim each week and the school aims to ensure that all pupils learn to swim. There are no additional opportunities for older pupils who join the school after Year 3 to learn to swim. The school is pleased by the positive response and high level of participation in the range of activities amongst older pupils both within and outside lessons but, as yet, there is little additional provision for younger children because of the small number of teachers. Older pupils involved in the British Gymnastics Award Scheme assess their own performances. In addition to gaining a knowledge of their own learning, achievements are acknowledged and incentives provided to improve pupils' performance and to develop their skills further, because the school designs and presents a range of certificates and awards to individual pupils.
145. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has an increasing influence upon the provision for and performance of physical education in school. Parents are very supportive of the school's representative teams. The subject's action plan is clearly used as a working document in which targets are identified, addressed and met. The co-ordinator has yet to observe the opportunities of teaching and learning in lessons to enable her to develop her monitoring role further. Formal assessment procedures are well established, which enables the teachers and co-ordinator to monitor pupils' achievement in each unit of study within the framework of national guidance that is utilised throughout the school.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

### **Strengths:**

- *the raised profile of the subject;*
- *extensive use of the pupils' own experiences to extend learning;*
- *extensive and practical cross-curricular links.*

146. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding extend beyond those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement on attainment at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were in line with the expected level for the respective age groups. Overall, pupils' learning across the school is very good. The improvement in standards can be attributed to the positive approach towards the subject. It is integrated very well into the school's curriculum, pupils have very good attitudes to learning and the subject now has a high profile. Religious education is a strength of the school.
147. Pupils are aware of how important religion is to those who follow a particular faith. They develop their knowledge and understanding by drawing upon the diversity of cultures within the school and the religious beliefs of other class members. When talking about other religions, pupils are encouraged, if they wish, to contribute from their own personal experience. Everyone's religion is celebrated and respected, and pupils from an early age begin to see that there are similarities between religions as well as differences. For example, they learn about the special people, sacred books, places and festivals that are particular to the chosen religion. In Year 1, pupils design and make an accurate representation of a puja' tray as they study aspects of Hinduism and Christianity. Older pupils in Year 5 recognise the source of feelings of awe and wonder as they begin to reflect upon ways in which people respond to them, regularly explaining their ideas by describing examples based on their personal experiences.
148. Work in the subject is very carefully planned and implemented so that the matching of each aspect studied draws on the prior experiences of the pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy religious education because the subject is linked naturally and meaningfully to other curriculum subjects and teachers seek to teach sensitively and purposefully. Observations were limited to three lessons. However, there is a wealth of recorded evidence of a good standard to indicate clearly that pupils have extensive opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of religions. Work undertaken through personal, social and health education is planned to support and extend the work in this subject.
149. Teachers have high expectations and know pupils very well, and relationships are superb. Pupils benefit from the very high level of support in lessons so that those learning English as an additional language and the many pupils with special educational needs continue to enjoy involvement in the subject, and make very good progress. Teaching during the inspection was very good overall. Evidence of pupils' work on display, photographic examples, the wide coverage in pupils' books and meetings with staff and pupils indicate pupils' confidence and enthusiasm towards the subject. Teachers have benefited from staff training, in which liaison with and support from the subject co-ordinator and local authority adviser have focused on implementation of the curriculum and ways into religious education through good practical guidance, with the effective use of the school's much improved resources. The school makes very good use of the local resources, such as the Gurdwara, the local Mosque and Coventry Cathedral. Many visitors to the school, including parents, enrich the curriculum by demonstrating a willingness to share beliefs and experiences. Involvement in activities further motivates the majority of pupils throughout the school to produce a variety and range of well-presented work. For example, pupils in Year 6 study the festival of Navarati, with support from the local authority music service. Pupils' played instruments, dressed in traditional costume, and learned and performed a stick dance from the Indian State of Gujarat. Pupils provided clear written explanations of their activity and evaluations of their study, including their own views and opinions.

150. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator demonstrates an awareness of and an ability to address relevant issues, which are reflected in the quality and range of opportunities provided to meet the pupils' needs. The co-ordinator looks forward to further improving the monitoring of standards of achievement and pupils' progress, with increased opportunities to observe teaching and learning in lessons.