

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HATELEY HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

West Bromwich

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 131943

Headteacher: Mrs E Stevens

Reporting inspector: Mrs W Knight  
12172

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2003

Inspection number: 248874

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Huntingdon Road West Bromwich
Postcode:	B71 2RP
Telephone number:	0121 5560370
Fax number:	0121 5052509
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr W Carter
Date of previous inspection:	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2001

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
12172	Wendy Knight	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
9928	Alan Dobson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
30418	Margaret Barrowman	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology The Foundation Stage English as an additional language Educational inclusion	
1811	Judy Boyd	Team inspector	Geography History Religious education	
25623	Ted Cox	Team inspector	English Physical education	Special educational needs
22805	Jo Greer	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hateley Heath Primary School is in West Bromwich and serves a large housing estate. The school was opened in 1999 after the amalgamation of separate junior and infant schools. The school is part of a government project, 'On Track', aimed at reducing disaffection.

Roll	311 (above average)
Age range	3 – 11
Pupils entitled to free school meals	Broadly average (25%)
Pupils for whom English is an additional language	A high proportion (20.2%) are bilingual, but few are at an early stage of learning English.
Pupils with special educational needs	Above average (27.7%)
Ethnic backgrounds	73% are white; 23% British Asian and 3% black heritage
Mobility	13% of pupils left or admitted during the year (above average)
Attainment on entry	Very low

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education. Standards are well below average in English and science, and below average in mathematics. Junior pupils are well taught and children aged from three to seven are soundly taught. The school is strongly led and soundly managed. It gives adequate value for money.

#### What the school does well

- Teaches junior pupils well, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Provides well for pupils with special educational needs.
- Raises pupils' social and moral awareness, having a positive effect on attitudes and behaviour.
- Cares very well for pupils' safety and welfare.

#### What could be improved

- Attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- The rate at which pupils learn.
- Provision for nursery and reception children.
- Levels of attendance.

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

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

Since the school was last inspected in January 2001, it has made satisfactory improvement.

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology have improved somewhat but are still not high enough.
- The timetable has been revised and there is a heavy emphasis on English.
- The English, mathematics and science subject co-ordinators have received relevant training to enable them to monitor teaching, learning and standards in their subjects.
- The management of the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) has improved, being the responsibility of a senior member of staff.
- Teaching has improved significantly and assessment is used more effectively to track pupils' progress.
- The school acted quickly on the issues raised by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools in September 2002, and staff are committed to succeed.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

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

Most pupils have well below average skills when they leave reception but as they start with very limited attainment, their progress is generally satisfactory in the Early Years. By the end of Year 2 test results are well below average in English and mathematics and pupils have continued making satisfactory progress. Although progress increases in Years 5 and 6, it is only reflected in the mathematics results which are average compared with similar schools. Standards in English and science remain well below average. Inspectors judge the current attainment of pupils in Years 2 and 6 to be similar to the 2002 test results. Many pupils throughout the school speak indistinctly, and struggle to give full answers. They sometimes use the wrong word. By Year 2 some pupils read simple texts and use their knowledge of sounds to work out new words, but many struggle to read short sentences. Only the highest attainers in Year 6 read competently, and even they read without expression and with limited understanding. They do not regard reading with any pleasure, or see its use in finding information, and many think it only matters when they are older. Few Year 2 pupils communicate what they want to say in writing and their use of punctuation is inconsistent. Even by Year 6 not all writing makes sense and only the higher attaining pupils punctuate accurately and spell common words correctly. Few pupils use interesting words in their stories and poems. Year 2 pupils are beginning to add and subtract using appropriate strategies, and by Year 6 the majority calculate reliably, although they are disadvantaged by not recalling their multiplication tables quickly. Standards in art, geography, history, physical education and religious education are broadly average, but there are weaknesses in standards in all other subjects. Although the school has not been amalgamated long enough for there to be information on trends in results over time, test results are not rising as fast as other similar schools and the school failed to meet its targets in 2002.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils want to learn and work conscientiously, persevering when necessary, but do not expect to take an active part in learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school – time is very rarely lost in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils carry out any responsibilities dutifully, but seldom take the initiative.
Attendance	Well below average. This is adversely affecting the progress pupils make and limits the effectiveness of the teachers' hard work.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	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 satisfactory from nursery to Year 2, and good in the juniors. However, pupils do not always learn as much as expected because they lack curiosity and seldom take an active part in their learning unless the tasks set stimulate them to do so. Pupils also have limited vocabularies, struggle to explain their thinking and find it difficult to remember what they have been taught. It often takes them a long time to understand. All teachers manage pupils well and provide interesting lessons. In the best lessons, teachers focus on what pupils contribute, use varied methods and build on pupils' strengths, but if they do not plan really effectively, learning is often limited even though pupils put in a lot of effort. English is soundly taught, with a strong focus on basic skills but teachers' expectations are not always appropriate in terms of giving pupils the right reading books and helping them to improve their writing by effective marking. Mathematics is soundly taught in the infants and well taught in the juniors. Basic numeracy skills are taught in the infants and pupils practise regularly but are not always assisted to learn independently by having suitable resources such as counters available. By involving pupils actively in lessons, focusing on understanding and providing regular challenge, teachers in the juniors ensure pupils learn mathematics and science faster. Where teachers plan work to match the different needs of the pupils within the class, pupils are more confident and concentrate longer.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The National Curriculum subjects and religious education are taught, but staff do not always adapt the work to meet the specific needs of Hateley Heath pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Their particular needs are identified and their individual education plans are used well to ensure they receive the right support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Since the school does not make an accurate assessment of pupils' English, it makes no special provision. Pupils are generally helped with work, but any specific language needs are not catered for.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. Opportunities to work together amicably, share, understand different views and learn right from wrong are regularly provided. Pupils have suitable opportunities to reflect on their experiences and to learn about different cultures in their daily work.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Staff are aware of individual circumstances and provide sensitive support as well as ensuring children are safe and secure.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Appropriate information is provided, including on pupils' progress, but more could be done to inform parents about exactly what pupils are doing.
Assessment	Pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is tested and tracked. Information is used well to group them and set suitable work. The youngest children are less effectively assessed to ensure their limited skills are built on early enough.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The senior staff have a clear view of what they want for the pupils and act quickly and decisively when they know what needs to be done.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are supportive and committed, but do not have the training to take an active part in helping the school to improve.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school now uses the detailed records of its work to decide on areas which need developing, like matching work to pupils' differing needs, and has been effective in improving teaching. For good reasons action has only recently been taken on some important improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Available funding is sought and used to provide opportunities for pupils as well as the budget being appropriately allocated to the priorities considered to be most important.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	At the time of the inspection the school had two classes being taught by temporary teachers and no leadership in subjects including science. This was adversely affecting its work. The accommodation is generous. There are some important shortages of learning resources, especially for reading.
The extent to which the school applies the principles of best value	The school ensures it spends money wisely on goods and services and is aware of how its academic results compare with other local schools. It consults on major new initiatives, but does not rigorously challenge its decisions.

## 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>• Children like school.</li> <li>• The staff are approachable, and very willing to discuss parents' concerns.</li> <li>• Pupils are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The headteacher's has made efforts to improve the school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well they are informed about the progress their children make.</li> <li>• How closely the school works with them.</li> <li>• Extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree that the headteacher is taking the right steps to improve the school. They also agree that children like school and work hard, although not always to best effect. They judge that staff readily respond to parents' and carers' concerns. Appropriate information is made available to parents, including on how well their children are doing, but more could be done to help parents understand what pupils are doing, why and how they can help. Working together is a two-way process, though, and too many parents and carers fail to ensure homework is completed and given in on time when children are set work to support learning in English and mathematics. The inspectors judge that although there are not many clubs available, the school arranges valuable residential visits and interesting trips, and visitors to enhance the curriculum.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 By the end of reception children reach few of the expected early learning goals. They do consider each other and share fairly, and have some of the physical skills of the average five year old, but most other skills and knowledge are well below average. Children's limited spoken language and difficulty interpreting questions adversely affects early reading and writing, mathematical development and understanding of the world. Children's lack of curiosity and passivity makes progress slow as they make few discoveries for themselves.

2 The Year 2 test results in 2002 were very low for reading and well below average for writing compared with other schools. Teacher assessment of pupils' speaking and listening was also very low. No pupils reached the higher level 3 in reading or writing. However, the number of pupils reaching the expected level 2 has increased from two years ago, particularly in writing. Compared with other schools standards are well below average at the end of the juniors. Results in Year 6 have not improved over time and fewer pupils reached the expected level 4 than in 2000. However, the 2002 Year 6 did contain about a third of pupils with special educational needs and a few pupils did achieve the higher level 5.

3 Inspectors judge most pupils' speaking and listening to be very poor, which adversely affects all their learning. Year 2 pupils often give one-word answers and do not use the correct words. They do not know the meanings of words which most children would such as 'salmon'. Many Year 6 pupils speak indistinctly and few are confident to explain their thinking or reasoning. Although pupils seem to listen attentively, they do not fully understand what they are told and even junior pupils have problems following instructions.

4 Reading is also judged to be well below average throughout the school by inspectors. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils use sounds to build words, and use pictures appropriately to help them with the text, but they still read word by word rather than for meaning. Average attainers know some sounds, and use these to help them with unknown words, but cannot blend sounds competently to build up the whole word. Many do not remember words they learnt on a previous page when they encounter them again. Lower attainers have limited strategies for tackling unknown words. By Year 6 higher attainers are generally competent at reading most words they encounter, but they read without expression and do not fully understand what they have read. Average attaining pupils often ignore punctuation marks and fail to make much sense of the text. Lower attainers still struggle to build unknown words. Few pupils really enjoy reading for pleasure, and many pupils regard reading as something they might find useful when they are older rather than a tool for learning. Pupils do not have the skills to locate information for themselves.

5 Inspectors judge pupils' writing skills to be well below average. By Year 2 only the higher attaining pupils write in sentences and use full stops and capital letters reasonably consistently. Their average attaining peers often only write in phrases, and although they put full stops after these, they do not understand the correct way to demarcate sentences. Lower attainers often only string together a few words, and the subject and verb do not always agree. By Year 6 higher attaining pupils write with reasonable competence, using the correct punctuation and spelling common words accurately, but they seldom use interesting vocabulary. Average attaining pupils usually use full stops and capital letters correctly, and spell with reasonable accuracy but lower attainers do not check whether their writing makes sense and are not consistent in their use of punctuation.

6 In mathematics, results were well below average at the end of Year 2 and below average by the end of Year 6 in the 2002 tests. When compared with similar schools Year 6 results were average, though. Year 2 results have not improved overall since 2000. A few Year 2 pupils achieved level 3, although the proportion was very low compared with schools nationally, but the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching level 5 is much the same as in similar schools.

7 Inspectors judge current standards in mathematics to be similar – well below average in Year 2 but below average in Year 6. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils add and subtract numbers to 100, recognise odd and even numbers and count in twos and tens to 100. Average attainers add and subtract using appropriate apparatus, and recognise odd and even numbers, but a significant proportion of lower attaining pupils still do not recognise digits reliably and cannot count to 20 independently. Higher attainers in Year 6 are confident with six-figure numbers and two places of decimals, can use all four rules and calculate fractions and simple percentages, while their average attaining peers work with four-figure numbers, one decimal place and simpler fractions. Lower attainers still struggle with the four rules and simple mental calculations, but have a reasonable understanding of tens and units. Few pupils know their multiplication tables well enough for quick recall.

8 Science teacher assessment in Year 2 and test results in Year 6 were well below average in 2002. The percentage of pupils reaching level 4 by the end of Year 6 has fallen since 2000. By Year 2, pupils have some appropriate knowledge of materials and their properties and the living world, although this is often limited to what they have been taught in lessons. They only carry out investigations if told exactly what to do, and many need support from adults to record their discoveries. By Year 6, pupils have increased their scientific knowledge, and have some understanding of principles such as forces. They conduct investigations enthusiastically if they are clear what is expected, and know what results they obtained, but only the higher attaining pupils apply scientific principles and explain why. Pupils are often unable to proceed if expected to make their own decisions, do not plan investigations methodically and struggle to use their numeracy skills to measure and record results reliably.

9 Standards are also well below average in information and communication technology in Year 2 and very low in Year 6. Inspectors judge shortcomings in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of design and technology and music although limited evidence precluded overall judgements. Standards in art, geography, history, physical education and religious education are judged to be broadly average.

10 Progress from nursery to Year 6 is satisfactory overall since pupils start with very limited skills. It does speed up in the juniors, especially in mathematics. Test results in Year 6 compared with Year 2 levels were very poor in English and science and well below average in mathematics in 2002. The school has some data which shows the actual pupils who stayed in the school did make much the same progress as similar pupils in West Bromwich. Since the school began tracking pupils, most pupils have made the expected progress. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards that are very low but appropriate to their level of understanding. They make good progress, often better than other pupils in the school. This progress is a result of carefully planned work that matches their individual needs and provision of extra help through initiatives such as the Nurture Group<sup>1</sup> and reading intervention strategies. Their learning is enhanced by the good quality support they receive from learning support assistants. The school does not identify and assess the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language, though, and although individual needs are considered in nursery and reception no special support is

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<sup>1</sup> A group of pupils taught some of the time in another class where in addition to teaching basic skills, help is given to them to overcome emotional problems which adversely affect their learning.

provided from Year 1 onwards. Although pupils are not obviously making less progress than their peers, it is not possible to judge whether it could be better.

11 The school failed to meet its English target by a significant percentage in 2002, but was close to achieving its mathematics target. It is not possible to judge the trends in results as data is only available since the schools were amalgamated.

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

12 The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. This is a similar judgement to the previous inspection. Attendance has not improved and remains well below that normally found in primary schools.

13 Pupils are proud to be at Hateley Heath and think it is a good school. In class they settle down quickly and are generally keen to participate although much depends on the quality of teaching. When motivated they are attentive and tackle their work conscientiously, but many pupils lack a basic curiosity about the world around them, which, combined with generally poor speaking skills, results in some lessons having a lack of 'buzz'. Teachers have to work hard to promote and sustain many pupils' enthusiasm for learning. When working on a task, too many pupils wait to be told what to do next rather than showing much initiative.

14 Behaviour is good in the school. Pupils understand the rules and think they are fair. Discipline is generally low key, as pupils clearly know what is expected of them and live up to those expectations. Lessons are orderly and pupils are taught in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Behaviour in assembly is good, with pupils paying attention and singing enthusiastically. Behaviour in the dining rooms is good, but noise levels are too loud to allow easy conversation. Table manners are generally satisfactory. Playgrounds are friendly and no signs of oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection. Pupils reported that they do not consider bullying to be a problem in the school and express confidence in the teachers' ability to sort out any problems that might occur. Two pupils were permanently excluded from the school last year.

15 Pupils with special educational needs are well behaved and have good attitudes to learning. The caring atmosphere in the Nurture Group boosts six and seven year old pupils' confidence. Eleven year olds respond to enthusiastic teaching by talking animatedly about their work.

16 Relationships in the school are good. Pupils get on well with each other and the many adults in the school. They are polite, show respect and smile. When working in groups, pupils collaborate well, helping each other when necessary. They are particularly appreciative of other pupils' achievements, for instance, when they spontaneously applaud pupils who are given awards in assembly.

17 Pupils are enthusiastic about helping to run the school. Good opportunities exist for all age groups, ranging from simple class monitor duties in the infants to being 'playground buddies'<sup>2</sup> in Years 2 and 6. Pupils take these duties seriously and were proud to talk about them to the inspectors. School clubs are popular although not all are well attended. Skills in independent learning are not well developed. Little use is made of the libraries for either browsing or research and some pupils even reported only visiting the libraries to tidy up the books. A significant minority of pupils do not take the completion of homework seriously – this appears to be in part due to a lack of parental interest.

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<sup>2</sup> Pupils who help others in the playground by befriending them and providing playmates.

18 Overall, many pupils' personal development is being inhibited by poor speaking (and reasoning) skills combined with a low level of initiative and confidence. This has a detrimental effect on standards.

19 Attendance remains stubbornly low. Last year's rate puts the school in the bottom ten per cent of primary schools in England and this year's figures to date show no improvement. Punctuality is generally satisfactory. Registration is prompt and efficient. Lessons start on time.

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

20 Inspectors judge teaching to be good in the juniors and sound from nursery to Year 2. Overall, three per cent of lessons were excellent, 13 per cent very good, 36 per cent good and the remainder sound. The proportion of good or better lessons in the juniors was greater still (59 per cent), and in Years 5/6 74 per cent of lessons were good or better, with 21 per cent being very good or excellent. When data was analysed further, it showed that the proportion of good lessons taught by the school's permanent staff was 68 per cent with 22 per cent being very good or excellent. These statistics indicate significant improvement since the last inspection, when just 44 per cent were good or better and five per cent were unsatisfactory. Teachers plan more effectively and use assessment appropriately to match work and question pupils than at the time of the last inspection. The lessons observed show teachers now have a range of skills which they can refine to help pupils to learn more effectively.

21 The rate of pupils' learning throughout the school is not always commensurate with the quality of the teaching. Although there were nearly always significant gains in knowledge, skills and understanding in lessons judged to be very good or excellent, sound and even good teaching was sometimes insufficient for Hateley Heath pupils to learn enough to make regular progress. In about a quarter of lessons their learning was judged not to be commensurate with the teaching, usually in subjects requiring understanding and reasoning such as mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The proportion of lessons was even greater in the infants (nearly two fifths). In a further 34 per cent of lessons there was recorded evidence of pupils having problems with speech and language because of limited vocabulary or lack of confidence in explaining thoughts or feelings. As a result of their difficulties in language and reasoning, pupils' rates of learning are often slow. Even when they do understand what they are taught, most pupils need regular consolidation through varied activities and in different situations before they are totally confident.

22 Teaching in nursery and reception is satisfactory overall. When children are grouped for direct teaching of literacy and mathematical skills it is sometimes good. These lessons are thoroughly planned and there is a suitable emphasis on basic skills, including language development. When children are in groups of mixed nursery and reception children, activities are not planned well enough to meet the needs of different children and, because of children's lack of curiosity and passivity activities which are not supervised by adults, often lead to little new learning.

23 English is soundly taught over the long term. In lessons there is often an appropriate emphasis on developing spoken language, and pupils are regularly taught basic skills of reading and writing in line with the National Literacy Strategy programme. However, work is not always appropriately matched to pupils' needs, and expectations are not always appropriate. Many higher and average attaining pupils are given reading books which are undemanding, and although work is regularly marked pupils are not informed why it is good

or precisely what they need to do to improve. Mathematics is soundly taught in the infants and well taught in the juniors. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy to introduce basic skills by much direct teaching, which actively involves pupils and encourages them to adopt a range of strategies for calculating. Pupils are set by ability and in the juniors this leads to regular challenge, which enables pupils to learn more quickly. However, pupils do not acquire essential knowledge of number bonds and tables, despite regular homework being set, and this seriously disadvantages them in lessons.

24 Hateley Heath pupils want to learn and are co-operative, conscientious, willing to concentrate and ready to persevere but they lack curiosity and initiative and are usually passive. Because of the good relationships and effective classroom management, teachers regularly use pupils' positive attitudes to help them learn, but not all lessons actively stimulate curiosity and promote active learning. When teachers do provide activities which appeal to pupils, they become more involved and learn faster. In a Years 3/4 science lesson, for instance, the practical activity of choosing which component to change in a series circuit generated much decision-making and eagerness to predict and discover what would happen to the brightness of bulbs and loudness of the buzzer. Pupils worked hard throughout the session and, although few could express the scientific principles, they were beginning to generalise results.

25 A range of practical activities helps pupils to build on their strengths which are usually their ability to assimilate visual information and to manipulate actual objects. In the best lessons teachers use pupils' existing skills when structuring lessons and planning activities so that they meet pupils' needs, boost their language and appeal to their interests. For instance, in a Years 5/6 English lesson, pupils mimed parts of a story before working co-operatively to discuss ideas in preparation for class discussion and creating the actual play. The structured preparation enabled pupils to increase their vocabulary and improve their Standard English as well as appreciating science fiction texts. They contributed ideas eagerly and recalled the story they had created previously confidently. By providing visual (for identifying angles greater and less than a right angle) and physical activities (for turning through given angles in a given direction) during a Years 3/4 mathematics lesson, pupils' knowledge of right angles, turns and direction was increased and consolidated. Pupils recorded their work efficiently in a table so that any weaknesses in reading and writing skills did not detract from the mathematics. Teachers are often not so good, though, at providing the most useful resources so that pupils can learn for themselves. In the same lesson effective use was made of whiteboards to enable pupils to estimate angles, but no guides (such as set squares) were provided when pupils were comparing angles while carrying out independent work.

26 Where teachers' subject knowledge is particularly good, they manage to develop pupils' understanding across different aspects of work simultaneously. In a Years 5/6 mathematics lesson, for instance, the mental arithmetic and the main focus both illustrated the importance of number pattern while promoting basic skills of addition, subtraction and place value with the lower attainers. Although pupils are often willing to let others answer for them when they lack confidence, by the end of this lesson one pupil turned hotly on her peer and insisted on explaining her own work.

27 Most teachers are skilled at assessing pupils' ability to do the work and adjusting questions or tasks accordingly. At best they use the information to directly assist individuals. In a Years 1/2 mathematics lesson the teacher advised certain pupils to pay particular attention to the use of a strategy for finding the missing number because she had identified this error in their previous work. In many lessons teachers effectively plan work which meets the needs of the differing abilities of the pupils, particularly in English, mathematics and science. While marking is positive and supportive, it does not regularly make it clear why a

piece of work was successful or what the pupil needs to do to improve. Where classes contain two year groups and pupils are not set by ability, not enough is done on occasions to extend the older pupils. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is generally good. Careful assessment of pupils' work means that teachers know the needs of pupils well and plan activities that are matched to their needs. Individual education plans contain well-thought-out targets for improvement that are clearly devised to meet the needs of each pupil. The school has recently introduced individual behaviour plans that concentrate on the personal and social development of pupils. Teachers make effective use of support staff during group work, which has a positive effect on pupils' learning.

28 Nearly all lessons start with effective recapitulation and proceed at a brisk pace so that a great deal of work can be covered. At best, work is put into context so that pupils understand its relevance, and important knowledge and skills are reiterated through different approaches or methods. Pupils concentrate well while teachers maintain their interest, and where enough regular consolidation is built in to lessons they do retain knowledge and skills, but understanding is often slow to develop and only comes once the same concept has been encountered in different situations. In some lessons where teachers failed to realise the pupils' limited grasp of a topic, this led to confusion or misunderstanding about what a task entailed, and reduced the time pupils spent productively. Pupils do not often make connections for themselves, and need overt guidance on where they have experienced similar facts or skills to assist them. Although teachers regularly set homework for pupils to help them to consolidate their learning, many do not complete tasks, even if they are kept in at playtime.

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

29 Improvements in curriculum provision noted in the 2002 HMI monitoring visit have continued. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. Suitable provision is made for health, sex and drugs awareness education through the science curriculum. Personal and social education is well taught using circle time.

30 The curriculum for children in nursery and reception is based on an appropriate framework to include work in all the nationally expected areas of learning, but it does not meet the particular needs of Hateley Heath children. Mixed groups of nursery and reception children make it difficult for staff to focus on their different needs, and fragment the timetable. Because of children's lack of independence, they learn little unless supervised by adults, so spend too much time being unproductive when they need to be making rapid progress.

31 Although there have been improvements in timetabling, lessons of 30 minutes, which are too short for effective learning and skills development, remain. Opportunities to promote information and communication technology have improved significantly with the completion of the computer suite but there are too many sessions when it is not used. Use of information and communication technology is not yet built into individual subject schemes of work.

32 National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are embedded in planning. While they are effective in mathematics in promoting basic skills there are shortcomings in the effectiveness of the literacy curriculum because the National Literacy Strategy has not been adapted to suit the particular needs of Hateley Heath pupils. Setting and grouping by age for literacy in the infants is having a positive effect on progress.

33 As the result of training in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their subjects, co-ordinators now have confidence to adapt the national guidelines to meet pupils' needs more closely. More work is needed to identify links between subjects so that learning is reinforced and relevant.

34 Pupils with special educational needs are given the same opportunities as others. They are supported well in the classroom and when withdrawn in small groups by learning support assistants. Identification and assessment procedures are good. The quality of targets in individual education plans is good. Targets are specific enough to pupils' needs to be able to show clearly the rate of progress pupils make. Good arrangements are made for six and seven year olds who attend the Nurture Group every morning. The adults plan work that is based on work carried out in the previous week by other pupils in the age group. This ensures that these pupils do not miss out on literacy and numeracy lessons, but, nonetheless, are taught at their level of understanding.

35 There is no particular provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school does not have complete data on their home languages or the level of acquisition of English so support is *ad hoc* and only actively provided in the Foundation Stage.

36 Visits to places of interest and visitors to the school make a useful contribution to pupils' learning. Residential visits are offered to all pupils; these make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal and social development as well as supporting areas of the curriculum well. Pupils enjoy activities such as team building tasks while experiencing the different environment of the Welsh mountains. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular clubs.

37 There are sound relationships with the local mother and toddler group. Links with the local secondary school are developing. There are good links with local primary schools through the 'On Track' initiative.

38 The school makes good provision for pupils' moral and social development as it did at the time of the last inspection. All individuals are valued, encouraged to respect others, examine motives for action and provided with many opportunities to contribute to the life of the school.

39 The provision for the spiritual development of pupils is sound although there are still missed opportunities in many areas of the curriculum. Circle time is an ideal occasion for pupils to gain spiritually and they have the opportunity to reflect on human experiences and gain self-understanding. When a teacher provided a sensitive, secure and spiritual atmosphere pupils were able to explore their feelings and express their thoughts without fear of ridicule or reprisal. Other occasions were provided for pupils to develop their capacity to think and reflect for themselves. In particular, where teaching is good, for example in a literacy lesson the teacher provided a very good explanation of the word 'fragrance' and pupils became curious and more engaged in the poetry lesson. This was also seen in a lesson where the skilful storytelling by the teacher developed a sense of amazement for the pupils as the story of *Three Billy Goats Gruff* unfolded. In information and communication technology when pupils were shown how to perform some functions on the computer they became interested, excited and quickly picked up the learning. There is evidence to show that where teaching is excellent and a variety of strategies are used to engage pupils in their learning, they become animated, interested and confident to share their learning. The school could provide more occasions for pupils to explore their spiritual development in many areas of the curriculum through developing a sense of awe and wonder and making more opportunities for pupils to reflect and be creative.



40 The school promotes a clear moral code. The difference between right and wrong is well understood. Pupils earn merit points throughout the school day for good work and for treating others respectfully and courteously. Teachers use praise effectively to encourage pupil participation in lessons. Older pupils take part in the 'buddies' system used in the playground. Pupils in the Nurture Group are encouraged to be considerate to their peers, to be aware of the needs of others, to respect each other and to share meals and activities. Visitors often lead assemblies and the school arranges opportunities for pupils to consider issues of safety, protection, working for charities and the consequences of breaking the law. Some of the content presented by outside groups and speakers is not entirely appropriate for the pupils.

41 Social skills are well developed. There are good opportunities for pupils to take on social responsibilities through the 'monitor' system used throughout the school. Relationships at all levels are positive and the provision for pupils' social development is good. Teachers often praise pupils for the co-operative way that they work well together. Pupils told inspectors that staff quickly sorted out arguments, and occasions were observed when pupils who were not following class rules were quietly reprimanded. Pupils' good work is celebrated by all during the regular good work assemblies. There are a number of clubs that children can attend, including drama, karate, football, netball and rounders. The programme of residential, study and theatre visits positively reinforces social and cultural development. Through the funding generated from the 'On Track' programme, pupils in the Nurture Groups benefit from the 'You can do it' training that raises their self-esteem and enables them to value themselves.

42 The school provides sound opportunities for pupils' cultural development, but this is not as good as at the time of the previous inspection. Visitors from a range of organisations and backgrounds work with pupils. Pupils enjoyed the visit of 'Professor McGinty' who provided experiences of the Victorians and a theatre group that worked with the pupils using the writings of Roald Dahl. There is a drama club that is currently working with two other schools on a production of *Cinderella*. In religious education, opportunities are evident in pupils' work of their awareness of world and other pupils' faiths and cultures. In assembly pupils celebrate festivals from a number of religions. In a music lesson reference was made to African drums and pupils had the chance to sing a Japanese song but there are many missed opportunities for the school to provide cultural development for pupils through this subject both in lessons and in music. Cultural aspects are underdeveloped in subjects such as dance, art and geography to enable pupils to recognise their cultural heritage. Visits to art galleries and museums and opportunities to work with artists, authors and performers would enhance pupils' life experiences.

43 Overall the provision for collective worship is satisfactory although some acts of collective worship during the inspection did not meet statutory requirements.

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

44 The school cares for and looks after its pupils very well. This is a similar judgement to the previous inspection.

45 The school is a friendly and harmonious community where pupils of different races are all treated with equal consideration and respect. Relationships within the school are good and pupils know they can turn to their teachers if they have any concerns. The staff are caring and make the most of any opportunity to boost pupils' confidence. Supervision is good at all times. Pupils are safe, secure and amongst friends at school.

46 Arrangements for dining are institutional and do not provide a civilised social occasion for pupils. The dining rooms are bleak and noise levels are far too high to allow easy conversation.

47 The school takes child abuse very seriously. Procedures for child protection are very good, the person responsible has been well trained and all staff are regularly reminded of current good practice. The school is well aware of health and safety legislation and has good procedures for ensuring pupils' safety. The premises are regularly inspected, equipment checked and fire drills are held termly. There is good first aid cover and accidents are correctly recorded. The school has an appropriate policy for safe use of the Internet.

48 Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from their teachers and classroom support assistants. The school calls on outside agencies to help pupils with speech, visual, hearing and behavioural problems. The Code of Practice for special educational needs is fully in place. The school has effective systems to identify, assess, support and monitor pupils with special educational needs to enable them to make good progress. They are supported well through individual education plans that are reviewed regularly. Target setting is good because targets are specific, for example "learn five high frequency words", so that pupils' success with their targets can be measured easily.

49 Procedures for promoting good behaviour are effective. Rules are well publicised and pupils understand the system of rewards and sanctions. There is a strong emphasis on recognising and celebrating good behaviour through awards. Any serious incidents of inappropriate behaviour, including bullying, are recorded. The school goes to considerable trouble to ensure that bullying is not a problem. Class meetings, small group discussions and assemblies are used effectively to promote an anti-bullying culture. Racism is not tolerated and is not an issue in the school.

50 Procedures for promoting better attendance are not effective. Attendance rates have not improved since the previous inspection and there is no clear evidence that the school has treated the problem with the necessary urgency. The school did not meet its attendance target last year. In the year to date the figure is slightly worse; pupils have missed, on average, almost a tenth of their schooling with an inevitable impact on standards. This is unsatisfactory. Absence is not followed up immediately on the first morning, and parents are not called to account for frequent absence. Parents are not made sufficiently aware of the adverse effects regular absence has on pupils' progress. Although some rewards are given for good attendance, they are not frequent enough and only reward those with regular attendance rather than those pupils who have improved.

51 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. They are better for pupils in infant and junior classes than they are for children in reception and nursery. Although records are kept of progress in nursery and reception they are not focused sharply enough on key skills, nor succinct enough to be useful on a daily basis, so are not informing planning. Pupils' work is assessed in English and mathematics each term and samples of pupils' work are kept in a 'Golden Folder' for each pupil. This work is checked against National Curriculum levels, which enables teachers to identify areas of the literacy and numeracy curriculum that pupils find difficult. The co-ordinator analyses pupils' results in nationally recognised tests taken at the ages of eight, nine and ten, the results of National Curriculum tests taken at the ages of seven and nine, and teacher assessments of pupils aged six and in the reception class. The results of these assessments allow teachers to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils. This enables teachers to have a clearer view of the abilities of pupils in their class, to put pupils into groups of similar ability and to link the targets to work in the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs. The assessment co-ordinator is developing a record-keeping system that will enable teachers to follow the progress of pupils from the reception class to Year 6. The system is

only just being introduced. It will be supplemented by new record-keeping systems to show how well individual pupils are progressing in English and mathematics.

52 The school does not know which children have English as an additional language because data only records ethnicity, not mother tongue, and no member of staff is responsible for co-ordinating provision. Individual language difficulties are dealt with in nursery and reception and bilingual pupils make similar progress to their peers. However, support is not directed at precise, identified needs and any hindrances to learning resulting from differences in the structure of home language, or conceptual difficulties, are not assessed and dealt with from Year 1 onwards.

53 Teachers make good use of assessment information to identify which pupils need additional help. For example, pupils in the infant classes, who have special educational need, are taught in the Nurture Group. Pupils whose results show they are close to reaching the next level of attainment are given additional literacy support. The results of National Curriculum and other tests are analysed to find areas for development. This has enabled the school to identify the need to improve the way pupils use what they have learnt in mathematics and to be more careful when carrying out scientific enquiries. Personal targets are set for pupils using this information and their progress is checked regularly. Teachers assess pupils' work during lessons. Some teachers make good use of the information they gain by amending the work as the lesson progresses. For example, in a lesson with six year olds, the teacher simplified the work during the lesson when it was obvious they did not understand. A new marking policy, although it contains sound principles, is unlikely to improve teachers' marking because it does not contain enough guidance on how teachers can use their marking to help pupils learn.

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

54 Parents who spoke to the inspectors were supportive of the school, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Views expressed in the questionnaire were more mixed, but the total number of parents who offered an opinion is small, relating to around only 15 per cent of the pupils in the school. This response typifies the school's difficulty in building an effective partnership with parents – a significant number of parents appear to have little interest in the school, or their children's education.

Parents highlighted four areas for praise:

- The impact of the headteacher on improving the school.
- The fact that their child likes the school.
- The ease with which parents can approach staff.
- The way the school expects their child to work hard.

The inspection team agree with all these positive views.

55 A significant minority of parents do not think that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspectors disagree. They consider the provision, which includes school clubs, trips to theatres and residential visits, to be satisfactory.

56 The quality of information available for parents is mixed. The prospectus is informative and gives a good overview of the school. The governors' annual report is a poor document – it omits many of the facts that the government consider parents have a right to know. This is unsatisfactory. The school provides little information on how subjects are taught although in the past when sessions for parents have been arranged, these have been poorly attended. An outline of what pupils are going to be taught is given to parents at

the beginning of the school year, but they are not given detailed information every term to enable them to be more involved in their child's learning. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting criticised the lack of a parents' evening in the spring term. The school has responded and parents will in future have an opportunity in February to discuss their child's progress with the teachers. Pupils' reports are generally of good quality. Progress is clearly stated, and parents are given a good outline of what their child can do in the main subjects. Most reports include targets – these are usually specific enough for a parent to be able to help their child, for instance “learn 3 and 4 times tables”. On the questionnaire, many parents felt they were not well informed on how their child is getting on. The inspectors judge that, with the addition of a spring term parents' meeting, the level of information available is now satisfactory.

57 The school tries hard to involve parents in the life of the school and their children's learning but overall this is barely effective. On the plus side, a Parent Teachers' Association has been successfully established since the previous inspection. This is active in arranging social and fund-raising events. Although only a small number of parents regularly help in the school, this help is well organised and is contributing to raising standards. Not so good is the response to the home/school agreement, with fewer than 30 per cent of parents signing it. A reflection of this lack of parental interest is seen in the pupils' homework. There appears to be little pressure from many parents for their children to do their homework. This apathy is having a detrimental effect on standards. Interestingly, on the parents' questionnaire, over a quarter of parents do not think that the school works closely with the parents. The inspectors disagree: what is needed is for more parents to work closely with the school.

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

58 The headteacher provides strong leadership and is appropriately supported by the senior management team who take an active part in bringing plans to fruition. The senior staff are committed to raising standards and accept helpful advice and criticism which enables them to improve the quality of education for the pupils. When criticised by HMI after a monitoring visit in September 2002, they immediately responded by setting individual targets for pupils and succeeded in inspiring staff to see the importance of the initiative. Subsequently, they have been able to demonstrate better progress being made by most pupils as a result. At the same time, the management structure was still being established because of newly devolved staff responsibilities, but the senior management team reviewed communication systems and ensured all staff had opportunities to make positive contributions to developments. Staff are all committed and working together to raise standards. The structures for managing the school and sharing responsibilities have improved since the last inspection.

59 The governing body is supportive and interested and some members assist in school. However, their experience of monitoring educational provision is limited, and many governors have not received relevant training. Although they meet regularly and question the reports and policies put before them to the best of their knowledge, they are not able to challenge proposals sufficiently. Their own information to parents through the governing body annual report does not include all the essential information. Similar judgements were made by inspectors previously, and the governing body has reviewed the function of its committees in order to take a more active role, but this has been too recent to have had an impact on their work. They do take financial matters seriously and regularly agree and review the budget. They seek cost-effectiveness when purchasing goods and services, and are aware of how the standards of the pupils compare with those in similar neighbouring schools, but they do not fully understand the principles of best value. While the headteacher also consults on major new initiatives, she does not fully consider challenge when putting

proposals to governors for a decision either. The governing body fails to meet its statutory requirement in ensuring all assemblies are collective acts of worship.

60 The school improvement plan has been driven by the key issues from previous inspections and has not given the school many opportunities for additional developments. Indeed, some subjects of the curriculum have received very little attention as a result. The action taken to address the key issues has been appropriate, and with support from the local education authority the school has ensured the English, mathematics and science co-ordinators have received relevant training and increased their expertise in monitoring provision. Outcomes of monitoring have been used to identify the most important developments required for improvement, and staff training has been focused on enabling teachers to improve their expertise. Training in differentiation has clearly been effective, and areas for development in the three subjects are having a positive effect on teaching. The significant improvement in teaching since 2001 has been driven by this professional development. The school is also using performance management and effective support of new staff to ensure that development continues. Nevertheless, action on some important developments, such as using information and communication technology to support learning, has only recently been taken.

61 The headteacher makes good use of available sources of funding. Her awareness of pupils' needs prompts her to seek grants and income for particular projects that will benefit the pupils. For instance, training for the member of staff and herself to establish the Nurture Group was sought and provided. When specific grants are used, they are always for the purpose for which they were awarded. Day-to-day financial administration is efficient.

62 Some recent changes in staffing have resulted in the need for temporary class teachers in two classes, and one of these has been covered by two supply teachers. It has also left three subjects, including science, without a co-ordinator. Although unavoidable, this situation is unsettling for pupils who are already relatively insecure and is adversely affecting their progress where teachers are trying to get the measure of their precise needs. The accommodation is generous and has been decorated and used for displays to enhance the environment. However, some areas remain stark, including the libraries, and are not conducive to learning. There are important shortages of learning resources particularly in English, design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education. The range of books that pupils were reading during the inspection was limited.

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

63 To improve the school's effectiveness further, governing body, senior staff and teachers should:

- (1) Raise standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.**

*(Paragraphs: English : 3-5, 23, 102-109;  
Mathematics : 7, 23, 112-116;  
Science : 8, 119-123, 129;  
Information and communication technology : 108, 115, 125, 142, 149,  
152-158)*

**(2) Increase the rate at which pupils learn by refining teaching to meet the particular needs of Hateley Heath children by:**

- actively promoting pupils' curiosity, willingness to explore and discover, and use of their own initiative;
- planning the development of speaking and listening skills within each subject including opportunities for reasoning, justifying, explaining and evaluating;
- identifying and addressing the particular needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language;
- providing more practical activities to reinforce learning;
- developing more cross-curricular tasks which are relevant, and useful in applying newly taught skills and which provide high levels of consolidation;
- giving pupils useful feedback on what they have achieved and what they need to do next to improve, so that they take a more active part in their own learning;
- working with parents to ensure that homework is completed and presented on time.

*(Paragraphs: 1, 3, 10, 13, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28, 31, 35, 39, 52, 102-108, 115, 119-122, 124, 129, 139-141, 145, 147, 148, 154, 157, 169, 172, 173)*

**(3) Improve provision for children in nursery and reception by:**

- reorganising provision to ensure children have coherent, continuous sessions during which they sustain learning and have regular interaction with an adult;
- reviewing planning of activities to ensure the most important ones for developing speaking and basic skills and knowledge are supervised by adults and that unsupervised ones focus on practising existing skills;
- using assessment information to match work to differing needs and ensure children make regular progress;
- developing children's self-reliance and independence.

*(Paragraphs: 22, 30, 51, 68, 69, 73, 74, 77, 80, 81, 89, 92, 95, 97, 100)*

**(4) Actively promote good attendance by:**

- making immediate contact with parents who fail to inform the school of reasons for absence and following up any absences which exceed a reasonable length;
- rewarding good attendance more immediately, including class awards;
- giving rewards for improved attendance;
- actively working with parents whose children are reluctant to attend school regularly;
- reporting regularly to governors on the impact of the procedures for improving attendance;
- regularly highlighting the impact of poor attendance on pupils' progress.

*(Paragraphs: 19, 50)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	70
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	9	25	34	0	0	0
Percentage	3	13	36	49	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.. (Totals may add up to more than 100 due to rounding).

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	256
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		72

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	98

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	60

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	21	14	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	16
	Girls	10	12	13
	Total	23	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (69)	71 (69)	83 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	17	16
	Girls	10	11	11
	Total	23	28	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (72)	80 (56)	77 (75)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	18	25	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	15
	Girls	11	16	17
	Total	22	29	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	51 (57)	67 (49)	74 (71)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	13	10
	Girls	16	18	13
	Total	25	31	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (56)	72 (56)	53 (76)
	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	162	1	2
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	49	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	8	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	15	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	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)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.3
Average class size	25.6

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	710530
Total expenditure	717563
Expenditure per pupil	224
Balance brought forward from previous year	13000
Balance carried forward to next year	5967

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	276
Number of questionnaires returned	29

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	48	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	45	10	10	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	45	14	3	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	66	7	3	3
The teaching is good.	34	48	10	7	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	21	34	10	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	38	3	3	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	41	48	0	3	7
The school works closely with parents.	28	41	17	10	3
The school is well led and managed.	28	55	10	3	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	34	14	3	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	31	24	7	24

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

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

64 The Early Years Unit comprises children of both nursery and reception age. They enter in the September following their third birthday on a part-time basis and become 'full-timers' in the September following their fourth birthday. A few have attended playgroup or the 'Early Start' sessions in the adjacent building before starting nursery, but for many nursery is their first experience of an educational setting.

65 Children's attainments on entry, from observations, discussions with staff and analysis of profiles, are well below average overall, with communication, language and literacy at a particularly low level. Throughout nursery and reception, children achieve satisfactorily but do not reach the majority of the early learning goals, the exceptions being in personal, social and emotional, creative and physical development where some, but not all, of the goals are reached. This is a similar picture to that found at the previous inspection.

66 Since the previous inspection, the Unit has been reorganised and is now managed by a teacher and there are three learning support practitioners, a learning support assistant and sometimes students.

67 The children are grouped in mixed-aged family groups for a good part of the day, and the staff rotate between these groups. For the rest of each session, the children are taught in separate age groups. The teacher and an assistant are responsible at these times for the reception children, and the learning support practitioners are responsible for the nursery children.

68 The children spend a lot of time moving between the various groupings and relating to the different adults in different areas of the unit. While each adult knows her own family group well, she interacts with so many children on any one day that she is not fully aware of the levels of development of every one of them. This is because of the number of children involved and the lack of relevant, succinct records. This is particularly evident in the area of spoken language development where children need clear, targeted teaching with suitable reinforcement from an adult they know well in order to progress at a faster rate.

69 Teaching is broadly satisfactory. When reception children are taught separately, it is sometimes good as it is more focused. Planning for these lessons, which are generally for literacy or numeracy, are thorough and detailed. The plans for the family group activities are usually based on a theme such as the 'Elves and the Shoemaker' and, while the activities are worthwhile and conform to the Foundation Stage curriculum, there is not always any difference between the work planned for the nursery and the reception children. Plans for the separate nursery activities are scant and lack detail. They lack any identification of the specific language and skills to be introduced to the children to make their learning purposeful and accelerate their language development.

70 The Early Years Unit is very spacious. It has areas designated for all the activities in the Foundation Stage curriculum including a language and communication area and a soft play space. The walls are bright and attractive but the whole area lacks cosiness because of its size. The outside play area is only suitable in fine weather and is not easily accessible so the children do not enjoy the freedom of playing outdoors when they wish. In this way, the curriculum is restricted.

71 Parents are happy with the school's contact with them. They appreciate the home visits that staff undertake before children start nursery and feel that the staff share information about their children well. Parents enjoy helping with the tasks that their children take for 'homework'.

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

72 In many respects, children achieve well in this area of learning and reach the early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1. However, there are some shortcomings, namely in children's attitudes to their work and relationships with each other, and in these respects the early learning goals are not reached.

73 Children enter the nursery without fuss or upset. They separate from their main carer confidently and soon establish good relationships with their family group leaders, largely because they are such good role models, in their relationships both with each other and with the children. The staff smile a lot and make the children feel welcome. The children do not, however, relate very often with each other. They tend to work and play alongside rather than with their peers and rarely communicate with each other. Activities which involve discussion are not successful. The children do not squabble, snatch or monopolise equipment, they just do not choose to interact and this lack of interaction means that some of the benefits of learning with other children are lost.

74 Teaching is satisfactory overall. When the staff choose activities for the children and work with them, children concentrate, persevere and progress well but when the staff move away, little effective learning takes place. Also, if staff expect children to start activities of their own, they show little initiative or curiosity and tend to flit aimlessly.

75 The children show a high level of care for others. They are friendly towards visitors and kind to each other. Even the youngest children offer to share equipment and they all wait patiently for their biscuits at snack time, mostly saying "thank you" without prompting. They listen to each other when the register is called and when it is their turn, copy their teacher with a polite "Good morning". They also show respect for living things such as Dougie the rabbit and handle all the equipment carefully.

76 In the Early Years Unit, the children have to adapt to many different adults, places and situations but they cope well for their age. They behave in a quiet, controlled way and this makes the unit a surprisingly quiet place to be.

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

77 On entry to nursery, children's skills in this area of learning are a particularly long way below the standards normally expected. Whilst children make progress during nursery and reception, their skills are still well below national expectations by the time they enter Year 1. This is because they start from such a low base and also because, despite good teacher attention by individual staff, the efforts of all staff are not sufficiently focused and co-ordinated to maximise learning potential.

78 Teaching of communication, language and literacy skills is sound overall. When lessons are planned to teach specific reading skills they are often well taught, with an emphasis on phonics, use of pictures and recognition of frequently occurring words. The Unit provides a range of opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills, such as tape recorders, book corners, writing table, role-play shoe shop and displays about current topics and areas of interest. But these do not tend to be

used unless there is an adult present, and not all teaching is closely enough matched to children's different needs.

79 Children's spoken language is very limited, particularly when they start nursery. At least 20 per cent either speak single words or mutter indistinctly and have to repeat what they say to make themselves understood. Many do not know the correct words for everyday things. For example, one child could not name a pear and another, having asked an adult to open (peel) a clementine for him said, as he ate it, "This gots drinks in it," presumably meaning it was juicy. Answering questions poses particular problems to the nursery children. For example, when asked if his mummy was cooking dinner, one child replied "Mummy, dinner". Even the majority of the reception children cannot explain themselves. One boy said a book was tricky. When asked why, he said it was tricky. Another girl was doing a jigsaw. When asked why she thought a particular piece of puzzle was the one she needed next, she pointed to the two separate parts of the king's crown but said nothing.

80 Children have difficulty interpreting questions unless they concern things they can see. For example, children could say whether they had played a drum or not but when asked whether some music was slower or faster, the teacher got a 50/50 response. Children also have difficulty following instructions, so that when a visiting teacher asked the reception children to reply one way and in the next lesson their own teacher asked them to reply in a different way, they were confused. This did not represent a firm basis for learning.

81 Children who are just beginning English vary in their speaking and listening skills. Some initially stand and stare and look bemused but others are keen to join in activities. Although there is no special provision, these children do learn at their own level.

82 Through stories, children are introduced to the printed word. They listen intently while the teacher reads. The nursery children enjoy looking at the pictures and make the odd comment, know which way up a book goes and turn the pages in order. They are just beginning to realise that print carries meaning although they call the words "numbers". Children recognise their own name on the name cards. The reception children know the repetitious parts of books, for example chorusing, "I want pizza!" at the appropriate time when the teacher was reading. They know what happens in a story and can relate to the feelings. About half the children know some sounds, for example 'p' for pizza and palace but few can combine sounds to make words, needing a lot more practice to succeed.

83 A very small number of children can read a simple book with accuracy but those who can say they practise at home. They approach books with confidence, enjoy their new-found skill and make humorous comments. For example, when Floppy the dog got covered in mud, a perceptive girl commented "He's not naughty. That's what dogs do".

84 Although there are opportunities for children to write, they rarely do so spontaneously. Most reception children make marks on paper and give the marks meaning. Some attempt to copy their own name but only the most able manage this, the majority writing only two letters correctly. They join dot to dot and trace letters and shapes with varying degrees of success.

85 Reception children start to make strings of letters on their own. Once their teacher has persuaded them, they start to copy under her writing then find odd words for themselves from wall displays. Only the most able attempt to write on their own. Their work is brief but it carries meaning and the spellings are plausible. However, lower case and capital letters are mixed in words and full stops inserted on a whim. This means that they are only just beginning to appreciate that writing can be used to record and communicate: this is a very early stage of development.

## **Mathematical development**

86 Children's attainment on entry to nursery is well below that normally expected and despite satisfactory teaching remains below expectations when they enter Year 1. This is because many of them do not have the language skills needed to understand and complete tasks and give them a firm basis for learning. The lower attainers in the nursery have a patchy knowledge of mathematical language. They can use the words 'big' and 'little', but do not know 'top' and 'bottom' and even when prompted, say 'gone' for 'empty'. They know 'heavy' but confuse 'light' with the fluorescent tube on the ceiling. They trace the numeral 1 but cannot draw one object. Others can draw up to three objects but when asked to draw one fish in each of three bowls, they coloured in two bowls completely with no sign of any fish! Higher attainers in the nursery can match shapes with help, trace the numerals 1 to 5, and copy some accurately.

87 By the time they reach reception, about 25 per cent still cannot count beyond 5 but the rest count to 11 and beyond. They can say one number name for each object counted and the higher attainers recognise 28 on the calendar. Teaching is generally satisfactory, with appropriate activities planned to teach basic counting and number recognition, but tasks are not always well enough matched to individual children's needs. With their teachers' help, children make and copy a block graph of the types of shoes children in the class are wearing but they cannot say how many more children have velcro-fastening shoes than slip-ons. They order two items by length but have problems ordering pictures of three shapes according to size. They mostly complete tasks such as sorting, classifying and counting correctly when their teacher is with them, but have difficulty completing tasks unsupported.

88 Children's knowledge of shape is, however, satisfactory. Because they have had lots of experiences making pictures with shapes, they know 'triangle', 'square', 'circle' and 'rectangle', and relate these shapes to real life. This shows that they need very many practical experiences and repetition of the language of mathematics to progress well in their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

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

89 Children do not achieve satisfactorily in this area, and by the time they enter Year 1, they do not reach all the early learning goals. Although planned within the weekly activities, most teaching is incidental and, as so little was seen, secure judgements about the quality of teaching cannot be made.

90 When new ideas are introduced to them, such as the sounds different instruments make, children like to copy the sounds but cannot describe the differences. They show no curiosity in finding out how wet sand differs from dry sand and again, when their teacher points out the differences, they cannot describe or explain them. Even when they themselves make observations, they lack the relevant words to accurately describe what they have found out. All the children have had the experience of baking gingerbread men and enjoyed drawing and writing about it, learning the names of the ingredients. They like Dougie the rabbit, and know he has to eat and drink but make no further observations about him. They talk about where they live in fairly simple terms such as "a new house" but one more able reception child can say where she lives "and it's left".

91 Few of the children can name cold weather clothes but during the inspection were keen to put on suitable clothing to go out in the snow to make footprints. All children show

an interest in learning to control the computer mouse and all handle equipment safely and with care.

92 Despite not being naturally curious, the children enjoy learning new words. For example, when examining different types and sizes of shoes, one child learned the word 'laces' and was very pleased to repeat it over and over again. Although many cultures are represented with the Early Years department, there are few pictures, artefacts and pieces of equipment representing different parts of the world to aid children's cultural development.

### **Physical development**

93 Because of the inclement weather during the inspection, children could not participate in any physical activities out of doors so secure judgements about their all-round physical development cannot be made. However, from the limited evidence available, children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Teaching is satisfactory, with appropriate demonstration and support being provided by adults to help children improve essential physical skills.

94 When they start nursery, many of the children have little skill and control in making marks on paper. Some hold their pencils with a full-hand grip and do not consistently use either their right or left hand. They have immature manual dexterity when trying to thread a lace in a pretend shoe. However, in reception, almost all can follow straight and curved lines. Their hand/eye co-ordination has improved and they can manage to use scissors.

95 All children can move in a variety of ways, such as running, hopping and jumping, but only the older children can skip. The older children can also manage to move in a given space without bumping. Once their teacher has explained and demonstrated what she means, the majority of the reception children can move on tiptoe. They are all eager to join in and show a good level of control and co-ordination.

96 All children are aware of hygiene and change their footwear for physical activity. They are very knowledgeable about the fact that heart rate increases when they exercise and like to feel it slow down as they rest afterwards.

### **Creative development**

97 Generally speaking, children do not achieve satisfactorily in this area of learning and they do not achieve all of the early learning goals. Although teaching is satisfactory when adults interact directly with children during activities, children often only learn when an adult is participating in their role-play and imaginative games. Also, whilst teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for children to explore and experiment in art and design, for many of the sessions the same activities are planned for both nursery and reception children, so there is no in-built progression, even though it does occur.

98 The youngest children in the nursery draw tiny circles and wavy lines to represent people. They have difficulty rolling play dough, lack skill with a paintbrush and do not know the names of colours. However, by the time they reach reception, many can draw recognisable figures and even notice when limbs are missing. They can form dough into objects such as birthday cakes and trains and use colour boldly in their painting and printing. The more adventurous explore what happens when they mix colours and invite their teacher to watch. Even though they cannot describe what they have done, this aspect of creative development is in line with expectations.



99 All the children enjoy singing and even when they do not know all the words, they sing the parts they do know with gusto. For example, in the singing of 'Miss Polly had a dolly' the words "Straight to bed" were almost shouted. They enjoy playing percussion instruments but the opportunities they have are very controlled. They also enjoy listening to music, including Prokofiev. They are very reserved and do not move spontaneously when music plays, but when prompted the reception children can create movement, for example stamping like giants and jumping like frogs.

100 All the children enjoy role-play and imaginative games. However, they only do this with an adult present. For example, one group of nursery and reception children imagined they were doing different activities associated with different footwear. They pretended to jog, jump, run on sand and swim but the children made no spontaneous suggestions apart from one who said that she could see a shark. Also, another group played at being shopkeeper and customers in the shoe shop but as soon as the adult left, the activity came to an abrupt halt. This demonstrates that adult support is required for activities of this kind to fulfil their learning intentions.

## **ENGLISH**

101 Standards are well below average by the ages of seven and eleven in speaking and listening, reading and writing. This indicates similar standards to those reported at the previous inspection in reading and writing for both seven and eleven year olds and in speaking and listening for seven year olds, but a slight fall in standards of speaking and listening for eleven year olds. Following the amalgamation of the schools, there is insufficient information to show trends over time. Nevertheless, results for seven year olds rose from 2000 to 2001 but fell in 2002. Results for eleven year olds fell from 2000 to 2002. However, more than a third of pupils who took the national tests at the age of eleven in 2002 were on the register of special educational needs. Not enough pupils reach higher levels. There is no significant difference in standards achieved by boys and girls.

102 Standards in speaking and listening based on teachers' assessments for the national tests for seven year olds in 2002 were well below average. Standards reached by eleven year olds are also well below average. This is because pupils enter school with very poor language skills. Teachers do not take enough of the opportunities open to them across a range of subjects to develop pupils' speaking skills. They do not make enough use of drama to improve pupils' skills. Teachers often ask questions which need only single word answers so that pupils do not get practice in explaining what they mean. For example, in some physical education lessons, pupils were not given the chance to discuss how well they were doing and how they could improve. In lessons when pupils were encouraged to talk about what they were doing, many lacked the confidence to join in unless the teacher asked them direct questions. They frequently speak indistinctly. However, in a very good English lesson pupils were carried along by the teacher's enthusiastic approach, when they began to act out a play. When they had started to write, several pupils became animated and spoke clearly when describing how they wanted the play to progress. One pupil, however, used 'words' such as 'issited' and 'jibbling' but could not explain what she meant by them. Sometimes, pupils know words but do not know what they mean. For example, one pupil thought 'salmon' was a fruit. Teachers try to counteract pupils' limited vocabulary and poor knowledge of the world by providing them with new words. In a lesson about how fish fingers are made, eight and nine year olds learnt new words such as 'fillet' and 'trawler'. However, although these words were displayed on the classroom wall, they were not shown large enough for pupils to read easily nor accompanied by a picture that would help pupils to make the link between the word and the object. Many pupils do not listen carefully enough to what teachers tell them. In some physical education lessons pupils had to be told several times not to run when moving between pieces of equipment. In an English lesson with eight

and nine year olds, some pupils completed their work incorrectly because they had not listened carefully enough to the teacher's instructions.

103 Standards in reading have remained the same since the previous inspection and are well below average by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils do not make enough progress. Higher attaining eleven year olds recognise most of the words in their books and use their knowledge of letter sounds to work out the words they do not know. Most eleven year olds do not read expressively and their reading is monotonous. Although some higher attaining pupils attend to the punctuation and read fluently, many pupils from all ability groups fail to use punctuation to help them make sense of the story. For example, they ignore full stops and stop in mid-sentence. They do not recognise that this means that what they are reading does not make sense. An average attaining pupil did not know that words were sometimes printed in italics for emphasis. Pupils say they enjoy reading at home and some are members of the local library. They name a limited number of well-known authors such as J K Rowling, Dick King Smith and Jacqueline Wilson and say they like animal stories or those with suspense in the plot. Few pupils show a love of books and reading. Pupils in Year 5, for example, only see reading as useful when they "get older and might need to read and write." By the age of seven, higher attaining pupils read without expression. They have a good knowledge of words, reading words such as 'popular' and 'decided' without difficulty. When they do encounter unknown words, they work them out using letter sounds and clues in pictures. Other pupils are less confident. They read word by word, so that it is difficult for them to get a sense of what they are reading. Average attaining pupils attempt to use letter sounds but still have difficulty working out the words. Some lower attaining pupils know the letter sounds but cannot put them together to make words. They guess at words and their attempts often bear no resemblance to the first sounds in the word. These pupils frequently cannot remember words they have read on the previous page. Pupils in infant classes have books at home and name their favourites. However, none could name any authors.

104 Sound teaching of the National Literacy Strategy means that pupils understand terms such as 'author' and 'title'. By the age of eleven, pupils use the contents, glossary and index pages to find information. A higher attaining seven year old pupil showed good knowledge of the alphabet to search quickly through the index. However, pupils in junior classes do not know how to use the non-fiction library and teachers do not make enough use of this resource in teaching pupils how to carry out research for themselves. Teachers do not take enough care to match books from the reading scheme to the abilities of pupils. The books chosen by teachers are often too easy for pupils and are not used well to interest pupils and help them become better readers. During the inspection pupils were frequently capable of reading books two or three stages higher in the reading scheme than the book they had been given. In one class, a lower attaining reader was reading from a more difficult book than a higher attaining reader. There is only one reading scheme. This means that there is not a broad enough range of books to offer challenge and interest to pupils. Pupils borrow books from the fiction library but are not given enough guidance on choosing books so that some choose books that are too easy and do not make them think hard enough.

105 Standards in writing are well below average by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences. By the age of eleven, pupils write alternative endings to traditional stories such as *Little Red Riding Hood*. They draw comparisons between life in West Bromwich and Bewdley and write in a variety of different poetry styles. For example, an average attaining Year 6 pupil accurately described the main features of a crocodile in the form of a 'kenning' poem when she wrote:

*"The Crocodile"*  
*Sharp teeth,*  
*Scaly back,*

*Short feet,  
Long tail,  
Big Mouth,  
Green Scales,  
Slimy beast.*

Although some pupils try to use interesting words, such as 'lurk', to make their writing more lively, most pupils do not try to find more unusual words. A higher attaining pupil used words incorrectly, writing 'what' instead of 'that'. Most higher and average attaining pupils spell common words accurately but lower attaining pupils do not look carefully enough at what they have written to see that it makes sense. For example, one eleven year old wrote 'whet' instead of 'went'. Pupils are similarly careless in writing stories and introduce ideas that have nothing to do with the plot. One ten year old, for example, introduced a new idea about a burning bush in the middle of a sentence, even though that idea had no relevance to the rest of the story. Consequently, some pupils find it difficult to make clear what they want to write. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 use punctuation accurately, including apostrophes, and are beginning to separate their work into paragraphs. Average attaining pupils use full stops and sometimes commas in the correct place but do not regularly put capital letters on proper nouns. Lower attaining pupils often put full stops in the wrong place and fail to follow them with capital letters. Seven year olds write instructions for cleaning their teeth. Higher attaining pupils write their ideas in sentences, usually punctuated with capital letters and full stops. Although average attaining pupils use full stops to show they have come to the end of an idea, their ideas are often written as phrases and are not developed into sentences. Lower attaining pupils verbally describe the sequence for making a jelly but require the help of the teacher or learning support assistant to write down their ideas. Higher attaining pupils use interesting vocabulary such as 'cackled' and 'garments'. They write well-formed sentences such as "Cinderella had excellent taste in fashion." Some pupils do not make sure that the verb and subject in sentences agree. For example, one pupil wrote "All three was making..."

106 By the age of eleven, pupils' handwriting is below average for their age. Although higher attaining pupils are developing fluent, joined styles of writing, average and lower attainers do not form all their letters and join them correctly. Some letters are not placed correctly on the line and lower attaining pupils confuse letters such as 'b' and 'd'. Teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting are too low. They seldom correct poorly shaped and positioned letters in pupils' writing. In pupils' handwriting practice books, teachers mark pupils' work with a tick and congratulate them on working well when pupils make errors in formation and letter joins that go uncorrected.

107 Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. They benefit from the help they get from learning support assistants. The work they are given matches their needs and enables them to make good progress. The work given to pupils who attend the Nurture Group is targeted particularly well at their weaknesses.

108 Although good, and sometimes very good teaching was seen in lessons in both infant and junior classes, overall, teaching is sound. This is because checking pupils' work shows that teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve in reading and handwriting and not enough time is devoted to improving pupils' speaking and listening skills. The very good lessons were characterised by a sense of urgency and the high expectations teachers had of pupils. In the class of seven year olds, the teacher expected pupils to take a full part in the lesson. She directed questions to pupils who did not put up their hands often enough and comments such as "Come on, everyone should know what we call describing words..." led pupils to concentrate and try hard to answer. Pupils willingly provided more adjectives than they were asked to, suggesting words such as

'crooked' and 'bad tempered'. Concentration was further improved in a reading session when the teacher read all but the last word of sentences and left pupils to complete the sentence. Pupils used coconut shells to imitate the footsteps of the goats in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*. Such was their interest that one pupil wondered how they could alter the sound to show which of the goats was walking. Very good teaching was seen with a class of ten and eleven year olds who were beginning to act out a story they had written themselves. The enthusiasm of the teacher, her willingness to get involved in the pupils' acting and the good role model she presented led to good learning by pupils. In this and in other lessons, pupils' poor background knowledge of English and the world around them means that they are unable to take full advantage of the quality of the teaching. Consequently, their learning sometimes does not match the teaching. Teachers do not make enough use of information and communication technology to support English lessons. Computers are often switched on but not used. In one lesson the teacher typed pupils' ideas into the computer. However, in a lesson with more able eleven year olds, pupils recorded their ideas on a laptop computer. Teachers do not make as much use of learning support assistants as they might. Learning support assistants often have little part to play when teachers are talking to the whole class but make a valuable contribution during group work. Most teachers successfully assess how well pupils learn during lessons and help them to improve their work. When pupils in a top junior class were told they were using 'and' too often to join sentences they put in more effort and began to find different words such as 'furthermore'. Teachers mark pupils' work promptly but the comments they make do not often help pupils make progress. This happens when teachers do not tell pupils why their work is good or how it can be improved.

109 The management of the subject is satisfactory. Many new strategies have been put in place since October 2002 but have not yet had time to raise standards. Individual language records are completed. Pupils complete pieces of work each term, which are checked against National Curriculum levels and are kept in their 'Golden Folders'. These records are used to monitor pupils' progress and to set targets. Alterations have been made to the timetable to allow all seven year old pupils to be taught by one teacher so that greater emphasis can be given to work appropriate to their age and ability. Extra literacy and reading support is given to small groups of pupils who need help to reach higher levels. Pupils from junior classes with special educational needs spend time during the afternoon in the Nurture Group. All pupils take nationally recognised tests at the ages of eight, nine and ten and the results of these tests are used to set targets. However, the subject co-ordinator has not yet analysed the results of national tests taken at seven and eleven to see where weaknesses lie. She checks teachers' planning each term and watches her colleagues teach to monitor teaching and learning during lessons. There are enough books for pupils and teachers to use during literacy lessons. However, there is only one reading scheme available and this limits the choice that teachers have in finding books to suit and interest pupils. The school has both fiction and non-fiction libraries but neither library is well cared for. Books are often left in an untidy state and the rooms themselves do not look welcoming. The non-fiction library in particular looks bleak. Bookshelves are ranged around the walls and some of the books are on shelves that are too high for young pupils to reach. There are no comfortable chairs to encourage pupils to sit and carry out research. All books are coded with coloured stickers and have a simplified number system similar to that found in local libraries. However, there are no posters on the walls to show pupils how to use these systems to find books or to give information about the books.

110 In order to raise standards in English, the school needs to:

- provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills by making greater use of drama and role-play, giving pupils more opportunities to talk about their work and questioning so that pupils have to give longer and more detailed answers;

- offer a wider range of graded reading books and ensure that pupils read books that are matched to their level of ability;
- place greater importance on developing the range of pupils' vocabulary and their ability to spell;
- teach handwriting more effectively;
- use information and communication technology regularly to support reading and writing;
- mark pupils' work more effectively to help them improve.

## **MATHEMATICS**

111 Standards in mathematics are well below average by the end of Year 2 and below average by Year 6, as reflected in the 2002 national test results. Some pupils do reach the expected National Curriculum levels (level 2 in Year 2 and level 4 in Year 6), but the number of pupils not achieving them is above average and a significant proportion struggle with understanding number. Nevertheless, given their very limited knowledge when they start school, many pupils make good progress to reach the standards they achieve in Year 6, and results in 2002 were average compared with similar schools. Although the proportion of infant pupils achieving level 2 is slightly lower than at the time of the last inspection, results have improved in the juniors and this is the consequence of better teaching in Years 3 to 6.

112 Higher attaining Years 5/6 pupils compare the size of fractions by changing them to decimals or converting them to have a common denominator. They mentally calculate simple fractions as percentages and decimals. However, they are handicapped by limited recall of multiplication tables, which makes progress slow and reduces accuracy. The same weakness affects average attainers when working on the areas of rectangles, although most pupils are confident about how to carry out the calculation. Average attainers are reasonably confident about counting in twos, threes, fours, fives and tens and doubling, but rarely work with numbers beyond 100. Some lower attaining pupils struggle even to mentally add and subtract small numbers from two-digit numbers less than 100. However, in a practical task they understand the place value of two-digit numbers and with support some work systematically and apply knowledge of pattern to calculate how many ten and unit blocks had been used to give a set of answers. Higher attaining lower juniors are developing more reliable and quicker recall of multiplication tables, but most are still not secure when they need instant recall. Most are confident though about the eight compass points, multiple right angle turns and responding to the terms clockwise and anti-clockwise. The very highest attainers recognise and estimate angles less than and greater than a right angle. Average and lower attaining pupils name common two-dimensional shapes and give simple properties such as equal sides and right angle corners. Some lower attainers, though, are confused by the number of sides when creating polygons on geoboards<sup>3</sup>. Although they can identify shapes, they cannot always state mathematical differences between them.

113 By Year 2 higher attaining pupils count in 10s to 100 and answer addition and subtraction calculations posed as word problems. They work out the missing numbers in two-digit addition sums by using a number square – a few of them are able to do this mentally. Pupils recognise odd and even numbers. Many average attaining Years 1/2 pupils are not secure with addition to 10 mentally, though. They struggle to write a simple calculation involving two single-digit numbers, an addition sign and an equals sign in the right order. Many pupils within the average band still require counters to add numbers to 12. The lower attaining infant pupils cannot count confidently to 20, and at least a quarter

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<sup>3</sup> A piece of equipment that has a grid pattern of spikes on which rubber bands can be used to mark out shapes.

cannot count to 5 independently. A significant proportion do not reliably recognise digits either. While some lower attainers recognise small denomination coins and can use them to 'spend' small amounts of money, many only recognise 1p.

114 Mathematics is soundly taught in the infants, and well taught in the juniors. Not only were there two particularly successful lessons (judged respectively to be very good and excellent) in the juniors, but also elements of good practice in several other lessons. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy effectively to provide high levels of direct teaching which actively involves pupils, provides them with useful strategies for doing their own calculations and uses their misconceptions to help them understand better. At best, the mental session is well pitched so that answering is immediate and pupils' recall improves. Some teachers, such as in a Years 5/6 set, use devices such as a number stick to keep pupils alert and concentrating through particularly effective questioning. Teachers in the juniors also match work well to pupils' prior attainment so that there are high levels of challenge for all pupils. The higher attainers are regularly set open-ended tasks and work with larger numbers. While average attainers usually cope with the challenges, and this is helping them to reach the expected level 4, some lower attainers show lack of confidence through weaknesses in understanding of place value and unfinished work. Nevertheless, in lessons they are well supported. While infant teachers plan different work to suit different needs, higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged (as observed, for example, when a group of higher attainers could do a task mentally when finding the missing number in their additions). Lower attainers are often unable to work independently because they have such limited skills. While marking is very positive and encouraging, it seldom makes clear to pupils what they need to do to improve. The school's focus on using and applying mathematics is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. In a Years 5/6 lesson on the area of rectangles, for instance, the active promotion of different strategies for tackling compound shapes encouraged pupils to use what they already knew to work out how to solve the problem. Pupils with special educational needs have appropriate mathematical targets on their individual education plans and teachers plan suitable work based on these in lessons, so these pupils usually make good progress.

115 Nevertheless, pupils' learning is not always commensurate with the quality of teaching, particularly when it is sound rather than good. Because a large proportion of pupils fail to complete homework, including tasks aimed at improving knowledge of number bonds and multiplication tables, too many pupils struggle in lessons requiring the use of this basic knowledge. Moreover, their understanding of mathematical vocabulary and ability to express their thinking and reasoning adversely affects their understanding. In a Years 3/4 lesson on two-dimensional shape, for instance, several pupils were eager to respond to a question about the difference between a square and a rectangle, but could not make a coherent statement. One resorted to drawing the two shapes in the air and saying, "It's like this!" because she was frustrated by the inability to say what she knew visually. In a Years 5/6 lesson a pupil similarly resorted to actions to try to describe how to use a protractor. Other older juniors struggled to explain how they had worked out how many ten and unit blocks had been used to give a set of answers and listed their answers instead. Where teachers plan a variety of practical and visual activities, pupils often retain their learning better, such as in a Years 3/4 lesson where one task was to use triangles and rectangles together to make other shapes. Pupils also enjoy and apply learning when games are used to reinforce key knowledge and skills. Although teachers often use appropriate resources, such as the overhead projector to demonstrate methods, there are shortcomings in what is offered to pupils who need apparatus in order to be confident about their answers. In a Years 1/2 lesson, for instance, some pupils struggled to use a number square to work out the missing number in their additions when a number line would have been more suitable to enable them to count on. Information and communication technology was only used during one mathematics lesson during the inspection even though it would have been useful as a

motivating factor and provided much practice for pupils with weak skills. Although some relevant tasks to support numeracy skills are planned in other subjects, such as use of census data in history, they are insufficient to ensure that pupils practise and apply what they have learnt in different situations, and understand the relevance of what they are learning.

116 The mathematics co-ordinator has rightly identified as priorities for development the promotion of mental arithmetic and regular work to strengthen pupils' ability to use and apply mathematics. Monitoring and support have been suitably focused on the priorities. The school's professional training on differentiation has clearly been effective in ensuring pupils are regularly challenged, and this has increased the proportion of pupils achieving level 5 (above average results). Although standards still need to rise, the school provision is improving and pupils are becoming more confident.

117 In order to go on raising standards in mathematics, the school needs to:

- actively promote the learning of number bonds and tables;
- provide a range of mathematical apparatus to enable pupils to become increasingly independent;
- develop using and applying mathematics further and incorporate it throughout planning;
- challenge higher attaining infant pupils more regularly;
- use information and communication technology more frequently to support numeracy lessons;
- use marking to identify how pupils can improve and build this into target setting.

## **SCIENCE**

118 In the 2002 national assessments, pupils were judged well below national average by the end of Year 2. In national tests pupils at the end of Year 6 scored well below the national average; the results were very low compared with those achieved at the end of Year 2. Work seen in lessons and pupils' books confirms these judgements. Very few pupils attain the higher level 5; more than a quarter of pupils do not attain the expected level 4. Statistically standards appear to have declined since the last inspection although at the time inspectors judged attainment to be very low across the school.

119 Pupils enter school with very little knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They have very limited speaking and thinking skills and lack curiosity and initiative. These factors have a severe impact on their ability to learn, reason and explore.

120 In the infant classes teachers work hard encouraging pupils to acquire even very basic vocabulary to enable them to investigate phenomena around them. In these classes teachers plan for pupils to explore simple materials, such as paper, cotton wool, sponge, elastic bands and BluTack, to test if they can be bent, stretched, squashed or twisted. Only about a quarter of the pupils fully understand the words. Teachers spend time well, ensuring all pupils learn to say, read and understand the words before embarking on the task. By the end of the lesson most pupils achieve the task and record their findings by entering a cross or tick on a prepared sheet. Higher attaining pupils achieve the task independently, but at least two thirds of the class need support from the teacher or assistant, both of whom very effectively reinforce vocabulary and concepts through continual dialogue with pupils. Despite the low ability of many pupils, the plenary session observed in one class was used very well to extend the vocabulary of more able pupils by introducing the word 'rebound' to describe what happened to the sponge ball when it was released after squashing it.

121 Lower junior pupils learn to construct a simple electric circuit and record it using standard symbols. They include a manufactured switch and look closely to see how it works. With great effort they describe how the circuit is broken and completed by the switch. They are given paper fasteners, paper clips, foil and card and asked to devise their own working switch. Most pupils have no idea how to begin the task. They are unable to apply what they have seen and described in the manufactured switch. Following many hints from the teacher, one small group succeed in making a working switch. When shown the method pupils can only copy it and are unable to think of any other method.

122 Pupils in the upper junior classes have learned that gravity is a force that pulls objects towards earth. They have experienced the effect of water resistance on the weight of an object when measured with a Newton meter. They know the word 'upthrust'. They are asked to devise a fair test to compare the effect of water resistance on the weight of various objects in the air and immersed in water. Although pupils can explain the task, the majority have great difficulty doing so in a simple coherent way. They also find it very difficult to write down their plan in straightforward terms. In a parallel class pupils are undertaking this task. Only the most able pupils recognise that they need different Newton meters for different weights, and then have difficulty reading the scale on a 2.5N meter, where the divisions are 0.02N. Pupils record their measurements in tables; these results are sometimes used to construct line graphs, but many pupils are unable to discern patterns from their results.

123 Teachers work very hard to plan activities well so that learning is through direct, first-hand experience. Tasks are matched to the different ability groups, or groups consist of pupils of different abilities so the less able can participate effectively. Scientific vocabulary is introduced and reinforced. Pupils are taught how to record their investigations in a straightforward way using subheadings. Much time is spent talking with pupils to reinforce vocabulary, concepts and methods. Higher attaining pupils are challenged well through extension activities, more demanding tasks or more independent learning.

124 Pupils enjoy practical science lessons. They behave very well and work together sensibly on co-operative group tasks. Pupils handle equipment safely. They listen attentively to their teachers and try hard, but limited language and thinking skills and lack of curiosity and imagination inhibit their learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school from a very low starting point.

125 The planned curriculum meets requirements of the National Curriculum. At present the programme of study follows the national guidelines. Teachers now have confidence to review this and adapt it to match more closely the needs of Hateley Heath pupils. At present use of information and communication technology is not embedded in the scheme of work or included in teachers' planning and is not used well enough.

126 Through the good use of questions and circulation during group activities teachers assess how well pupils are learning during lessons and intervene to reinforce or extend it as appropriate. At the end of each topic pupils are assessed against specific criteria. This procedure is fairly new but is already helping to monitor individual progress, especially in scientific enquiry. In time these records will be passed on to the next class teacher so work can be properly matched to individual needs.

127 The role of subject leader was vacant at the time of the inspection. The previous post holder had started a very useful portfolio of carefully annotated work. This is organised with work from different year groups assessed at different levels under each attainment target. When completed it will provide a very helpful guide for teachers when assessing pupils' work.



128 Resources for practical work are adequate for all the topics covered, but some difficulties can arise when parallel classes are timetabled for science at the same time.

129 There have been significant improvements since the inspection in 2001. Work is planned at the right level for pupils of all capabilities with more challenging activities for the more able. The correct scientific language is used and regularly reinforced. The planned curriculum fully meets national requirements. There is some evidence that pupils still do not always record their results in their own words which can limit the teachers' understanding of what pupils are learning. Pupils still do not use computers enough. Despite the current vacancy in subject co-ordination, the recent post holder made significant improvements in managing the subject effectively. The improvements noted in the inspection in 2002 have been maintained.

130 In order to go on raising standards in science, the school needs to:

- focus on language development in terms of relevant vocabulary and individual reasoning and explanation, including in written recording;
- plan greater use of information and communication technology;
- use assessment information to set individual targets for pupils so they know what they need to learn next.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

131 From the limited evidence available, standards in art and design are judged broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, during the inspection, examples were seen of above average standards in some lessons and samples of work of the junior pupils. All pupils achieve satisfactorily for their age including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. This represents a similar picture to the previous inspection.

132 There were no lessons seen in the infant classes during the course of the inspection, but from work displayed on walls, it is evident that by the end of Year 2, pupils can mix colours, paint carefully and print patterns onto many types of paper. They have made colourful clay tiles of houses and large pictures from a wide variety of materials. They have also created pictures and patterns on the computer using the *Dazzle* program. Their pictures and models show that teachers make choices about the work but do not direct it too closely, giving pupils the opportunity to use their developing creative skills.

133 In Years 3/4, some pupils' drawings and sense of proportion are immature, for example cats are as large as people, but they improve satisfactorily over time. Pupils enthusiastically watch and try out new techniques such as mixing paint and sand to achieve the texture of a jumper. They discuss the techniques of famous artists such as Marc Chagall with both their teacher and their friends and incorporate these ideas into their own paintings. They also use the digital camera to record the relationship of people in groups and use the photographs to improve their own portrayal of people, faces and bodies. With teacher support, they suggest improvements to their own work. They are keen and co-operative and take great pride in their work.

134 In Years 5/6, pupils' sketches are fairly proportioned and carefully executed although in examples of still-life drawings seen, the perspective of the legs of a chair were rather immature. Pupils are keen to investigate different techniques such as using a sponge roller and outlining in charcoal. They show good brush control, for example painting every brick on Victorian houses individually. They made ambitious choice of colour but, for their age, are not as good as the younger pupils at discussing and explaining their work. In the work samples seen for these classes, the higher attainers in one class could use line, tone, shape

and form appropriately. In one lesson, pupils drew a ladder, chair and plant together, creating this into an attractive picture. They closely examined objects such as leaves and incorporated them into designs, trying out various colourways to choose the best effect. All pupils are able to use computer programs well to create repeated patterns.

135 No judgement can be made on teaching in the infants. In the juniors, the learning is directly linked to the quality of teaching, which is always satisfactory and often good. Teachers use a variety of resources successfully to increase pupils' knowledge and improve their skills. In Years 3 and 4, they encourage pupils to discuss examples of the work of famous artists. This gives them ideas and helps them evaluate and improve their own work to good effect. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 use a sketchbook to collect visual information to use in their work. Pupils make observations, teachers help them identify what they have found difficult to draw and then they work at improving these. This is an effective method of learning.

136 The subject co-ordinator is both knowledgeable and enthusiastic. The pupils in her class achieve a higher standard than the other classes as a result of her skill. There is a comprehensive art and design policy for the school which the co-ordinator plans to develop by adding ideas, particularly for work which can be linked to other subjects such as history. She recognises the need to monitor the teaching and learning of art but to date has not had the opportunity. Visits are arranged to broaden pupils' experiences and artists sometimes come to school to work with various classes. Also, an art club takes place after school when the evenings are lighter. Work undertaken on these occasions is displayed around the school, enhancing the physical environment and celebrating pupils' achievements. The co-ordinator has worked hard to increase the quality and range of resources. These are exciting, plentiful and accessible and represent an improvement on the previous inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

137 During the course of the inspection, no complete design and technology lessons were seen. It is not possible, therefore, to make an overall judgement, but from discussions with teachers and pupils and from displays and examples of work, standards are well below the national average both at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. This represents deterioration since the previous inspection, when standards were deemed satisfactory.

138 In Years 1 and 2, pupils demonstrate understanding of the different colours, patterns and textures of materials but have not as yet put this to any use. They can follow instructions to put wings on paper owls with paper fasteners and list the materials required but do not know the correct technical vocabulary connected with a moving part. During the inspection, there was no evidence of tools having been used to assemble, join and combine materials and components apart from the owls. Although some preparatory work is being undertaken, such as teaching children to weave paper and fabric, by the end of Year 2 coverage of the design and technology curriculum is limited and there is no evidence of any progress between Years 1 and 2.

139 In Years 3 and 4, pupils have investigated how packets are put together and how different logos are used to sell products. Higher attaining pupils have produced accurate annotated records of work showing understanding of the construction of boxes but the remainder were hampered in their recording by underdeveloped writing skills, making it difficult to ascertain whether the work was correct or not. Pupils have also made very basic pictures with 'talking mouths' and are learning in science how to design a switch in preparation for making a lamp.

140 In Years 5 and 6, pupils can define what biscuits are and have designed them but the evaluation is largely limited to statements such as “taste nice”. They have made hats by putting papier-mâché on balloons but during discussions, they could not recall having made anything that works and showed no evidence of having had opportunities to undertake design and technology very frequently. Years 5 and 6 are in the process of designing slippers but their use of language is rather immature for their age, with words like “good decoration” and “strong bottom” even though the teacher has introduced them to the word ‘sole’. They also have difficulty explaining the design process, particularly those who do not speak English at home.

141 By the end of Year 6, most pupils can plan the design of a product but are less sure of its functionality. They have insufficient knowledge and understanding of materials and components and have had insufficient experience of working with tools and equipment to make quality products that work. Consequently, they have not learned to distinguish between what works well and what could be improved.

142 Design and technology has played an active part in the pupils’ social development as when they staged a parade of hats for the infant pupils. This celebrated and shared success. A similar event is planned when the slippers are made. Design and technology also has links with other curriculum areas such as religious education where infant pupils designed a pointer for the Torah. Older pupils used the digital camera to record the making of the biscuits but information and communication technology is under-used.

143 The co-ordinator for design and technology left the school almost a year ago. Whilst there is a school policy and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) scheme of work is available, there is no subject monitoring to ensure that the pupils are having the appropriate experiences and making the expected progress. Resources for the subject are unsatisfactory. There is a very limited range of materials and too few tools. These are not readily accessible due to their location and lack of organisation. This situation was similar at the previous inspection.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

144 By the end of the infants and juniors pupils attain standards that are broadly average. No overall judgement was made about standards at the last inspection but progress was judged to be satisfactory, indicating a similar picture.

145 Pupils in the infants are able to talk about mountains. They speak and individually write about Barnaby Bear going with the headteacher, who wears special shoes, up a mountain in Wales and that he could see a long way from the top. They are able to use a map of the British Isles and accurately label countries and capital cities. Pupils are working on comparing the urban area of West Bromwich with the Island of Struay, a rural setting. The pupils understand that they do not know everyone in West Bromwich because there are too many people but that Struay is smaller and everyone knows everybody else. Pupils struggle to express their ideas but through skilful questioning the teacher enables pupils to apply their knowledge. They are able to separate some of the physical and human features of the two locations and most pupils recognised that fields, sheep and water are physical features of Struay and that office blocks, roads and cars are human features of West Bromwich.

146 Pupils in the lower juniors know that they need to care for their environment. They collected evidence of the litter in the playground and presented their findings in graphs using information and communication technology. They were able to write directions of a route from their homes to school. They used a map of the locality to identify some features, for

instance the park and churches. Pupils were able to apply their knowledge of the fieldwork they had carried out previously in the locality and consider problems they might encounter on the journey, for instance graffiti. Pupils in the upper juniors were able to demonstrate their knowledge of the effect of water on the landscape. They applied geographical terms in their work, and understood that erosion affected certain parts of the flow of a river and the meaning of 'meander'. They applied knowledge and information from research and a field study of Bewdley when comparing this locality with West Bromwich. Pupils used their notes and diagrams to write reports that demonstrated the difference in housing, shops and streets. They know that there is nothing like the "long, wide, fast flowing" River Severn in West Bromwich. They understood the process of the water cycle and used the geographical terminology of evaporation, condensation and precipitation to explain it.

147 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the infants. Teachers spend time revisiting prior learning to consolidate pupils' understanding. They help pupils develop knowledge of their own locality before they can compare this with a very different rural community. The experiences of the pupils are limited and therefore they have difficulty in understanding what makes a human feature and a physical feature. Whilst teachers employ a good range of teaching strategies and manage the pupils well not all lesson content is appropriately matched to the needs of the pupils. In the juniors the quality of teaching overall is good. Teachers use a wide range of strategies to engage pupils in their learning. They have high expectations of the pupils and effectively use learning objectives to ensure that pupils are clear about lesson outcomes. Teachers plan well and prepare suitable resources for the pupils to use, for instance outlines of maps, maps of the locality and glossy photographs of rivers. The pupils are managed and organised well by the teachers to ensure that they can carry out tasks and activities, intervening as and when appropriate for learning to continue. Pupils settle quickly to work when given clear instructions.

148 As a result of effective teaching pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school even though the wider experiences of the pupils are limited. Pupils' learning is satisfactory; they acquire new knowledge and skills through effective teaching. They are enabled to apply their knowledge and understanding. Teaching is designed to capture their interest and imagination, supported by field study visits to their own and other localities. However, the speaking skills and vocabulary of the pupils are poor and their basic knowledge is immature, which hinders their progress. In the juniors, teachers effectively use discussion with other pupils to test out ideas and effectively use geographical terms such as erosion, transportation and deposition.

149 The subject is currently being managed by the headteacher until the appointment of a new co-ordinator. Some lessons are rather short and teachers find it hard to provide valuable learning opportunities in the time available. Resources are inadequate to provide wider experiences for pupils. The headteacher is aware that information and communication technology is not currently used enough in the subject.

## **HISTORY**

150 It was possible only to observe one history lesson being taught during the inspection, but evidence was supplemented by an examination of pupils' work, classroom displays and discussions with staff and pupils. By the end of both the infants and the juniors, pupils attain standards that are broadly average. Pupils' progress is satisfactory as at the time of the last inspection.

151 Infant pupils sequence events using stories of *Red Riding Hood* and the birth of Jesus. They talk about their family history using words that demonstrate the passage of time; they say that grandparents were born a long time ago. They have spent time

discussing their toys both past and present and understand at their own level that they have 'grown up' and do not play with baby toys any more. Lower juniors have recently studied the Vikings and their work demonstrates their understanding of this period in history through timelines. They know how homes were different and that the Viking mode of transport for crossing the sea was a long ship rather than a ferry or an aeroplane. They use literacy skills to retrieve relevant information and record their findings in writing. Upper junior pupils talk about the Victorians and the experiences they had when a visitor worked with them. They describe the changes that have taken place since those times, in particular, the toys that children played with; a wooden eggcup that had a hole in the top was unlike anything they had played with. They know that lemonade bottles were made of glass with a marble inside that acted like a stopper rather than the plastic bottles we have today. They have recently analysed census information from 1891 and made links with the current census system regarding the type of information discovered about the lives of the people at that time.

152 Pupils indicate that they particularly enjoy history when they have visitors and can participate in reliving parts of history, such as the occasion of 'Professor McGinty's' visit and their research into the town life of the Victorians. There is currently no subject co-ordinator. There are shortcomings in the resources in terms of artefacts and teachers' resources. The use of information and communication technology in the subject is underdeveloped.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

153 Standards in information and communication technology at the end of Year 2 are well below expectations for the pupils' age. By the age of eleven standards are very low. However, in lessons pupils achieve better than this, and there has been some improvement in standards since the HMI monitoring visit in September 2002. Resources have also improved.

154 Pupils in the upper junior classes have had very little experience of information and communication technology during their school career. This largely explains their very low attainment. In some lessons, although teaching is good, pupils have little foundation on which to build so they do not easily remember new skills and procedures. A representative group of Year 6 pupils logged on to the computer and loaded a program successfully. Although they had saved work onto floppy disks, they could not retrieve it because they did not know how to access the disk. When word-processing, they had difficulty with simple tasks such as changing the font size, style and colour, and positioning text. They professed to have no knowledge of importing pictures. Although they had recently been learning how to use a spreadsheet to calculate costs, they were not confident in explaining how this was done. These pupils could not program the screen turtle to make simple forward movements or turns. They were not confident that a right-angled turn necessitated an input of 90°. They have had no experience of using sensors to monitor changes over time, for example sounds or temperature. Some, but not all, had used the digital camera, however. They could identify only a few uses of information and communication technology in everyday life.

155 Most pupils enjoy using information and communication technology but become frustrated when they lack skills or knowledge to meet the task. They are keen to learn new skills. They help one another if they can. They are delighted when they achieve their objective. With more carefully structured and matched skills development and greater familiarity with using computers in future, progress is likely to be good and attainment greatly improved.

156 Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers' knowledge, understanding and confidence have improved considerably recently, but there is still some insecurity. Familiarity with the interactive whiteboard is limited. A lower junior teacher was not confident when

teaching a class to write a set of instructions to move a screen turtle along a particular route. Some of these pupils become over-excited and noisy and distract each other so they do not concentrate properly on what they are trying to do. In some cases this is because they do not understand the task, either because they have not listened properly or because it is too difficult for them. Teaching in the upper junior classes is better. Tasks are matched more closely to pupils' ability levels. Pupils have been trained well to listen carefully and concentrate properly on what they are doing. They have a regular partner to share the computer with. Teaching in the infant classes is equally variable, with some very good practice seen, where pupils made very good progress because of the careful match of task to pupils' ability level and the very good behaviour established. Teachers are not always careful enough to ensure that pupils take turns to control the mouse – some are reluctant to do so, others monopolise it.

157 Although teachers plan lessons using the nationally published guidelines, the work is not always appropriate to pupils' needs because of their lack of computer experience or mathematical knowledge, such as using formulae to perform calculations in spreadsheets or programming the screen turtle. The subject leader is aware of the problem and is planning an analysis of all pupils' skills so that tasks can be better matched to their individual ability and needs. Pupils will then make more rapid progress in computer skills and be able to use them efficiently in different subject lessons. The skills analysis will be a very useful tool to monitor future progress.

158 In November 2002 the computer suite was redesigned and an interactive whiteboard installed. Teachers are very enthusiastic about using these facilities, but are not yet completely confident with them. Other resources, software and hardware, are adequate to teach the requirements of the National Curriculum but more equipment for control and monitoring strands is needed. Although each class has at least one weekly lesson period in the suite, there are seven periods each week when it is not being used. This is a waste of an expensive and important facility. Although there is a computer in each classroom, these are not often used during other lessons.

159 The subject leader took over responsibility for information and communication technology in January 2003 following the resignation of the previous post holder. She has a clear picture of what is needed to raise standards throughout the school. A portfolio of work shows impressive examples of work done, but this does not reflect a true picture of pupils' capabilities. It is not fully annotated to show strands and levels of attainment.

160 Medium-term planning of subjects does not identify when information and communication technology can be used. All subject leaders need to review their planning to include specific reference to opportunities for its use. This needs to be referenced to the new computers as current information for teachers is out of date.

161 In order to go on raising standards in information and communication technology, the school needs to:

- continue to develop teachers' confidence and competence in using information and communication technology;
- closely match tasks to pupils' prior skills in information and communication technology and mathematics;
- ensure resources are sufficient for all strands of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study;
- use the available computers (in the suite and classrooms) efficiently;
- revise planning to ensure information and communication technology is regularly used across the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

162 It was not possible to judge overall attainment in music because just two lessons were observed during the inspection, and both of these focused on performance, so there was very little evidence of pupils' skills in composing or appraising music. Although pupils sing with enthusiasm, particularly in assemblies, and this is largely tuneful, they have limited skills otherwise. These shortcomings in pupils' skills and attainment in performance in the infants indicate achievement is less secure than at the time of the last inspection.

163 Years 5/6 pupils performed a Japanese song they had recently learnt with some appropriate actions, but for some pupils concentration on the actions detracted from the singing. Although many pupils could keep the pulse on the claves, and some could mark the rhythm of the song by clapping, a significant number of pupils could not do so. An even greater proportion struggled to keep both pulse and rhythm going simultaneously. The class also had limited success in performing the song as a two-part round. Some higher attaining pupils were able to identify precisely where the actions came in relation to the song, including those occurring on rests in the music, but most pupils found this difficult. Few pupils confidently use the relevant musical vocabulary, including basic words like 'pulse' and 'round'.

164 In Years 1/2 pupils have some knowledge of pitch, recognising the low sounds made by a bass drum, and higher attainers can relate this to the size of the drum. A few pupils independently identify differences in the sound when drums are played placed on the floor and held by the player. Some pupils independently play the rhythm denoted by notated lines (crotchet), joined lines (quavers) and zigzag (rest). As a group, Year 1 pupils play such notated rhythms with reasonable accuracy, but fewer Year 2 pupils do so. Not all pupils move freely to the rhythm of a chant. On the basis of the evidence available, progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is slow, since much of the work being done by the oldest pupils is not much more demanding than that done by the infants.

165 The teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory. The teachers planned appropriate activities, provided the necessary resources and introduced the relevant vocabulary. Pupils joined in readily, attempted the activities and responded to the instructions, but were not always successful at the tasks. On assessment of pupils' difficulties, suitable attempts were made to improve their performance, but limitations on time restricted the effectiveness of these interventions. Although for junior pupils there were opportunities for further practice, infants have only one short weekly session with a peripatetic teacher, and because of their problems retaining what they have learnt, they do not make much progress over the long term. Some music is played as pupils arrive for and leave assembly, but there is no reference to what it is, or who composed or performed it, so pupils do not learn about instruments, composers or styles of music.

166 A member of the school's staff is nominally responsible for music provision, but in practice is only expected to oversee resources and liaise with peripatetic teachers, so has no active role in the promotion of the subject. There are no extra-curricular activities, although peripatetic brass tuition is available to a few pupils. Pupils occasionally sing for events in the community. However, the whole profile of music is low. It contributes little to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and there are few opportunities for pupils to enjoy musical activities.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

167 Average standards are achieved by seven year olds. In the creative dance lessons seen, standards were above average for eleven year olds. This represents an improvement

for eleven year olds since the previous inspection, while standards have been maintained for seven year olds.

168 By the age of eleven, pupils understand the importance of warm-up exercises at the start of lessons and join in enthusiastically. Teachers plan these sessions well to exercise the muscles and practise the movements that pupils will use during the lesson. In one lesson, pupils responded well to the challenge of changing the way they moved according to the number of times the teacher clapped her hands. This meant that pupils had to listen carefully and concentrate on what they were doing. The beginnings of other lessons with junior classes were less successful when pupils spent a very short time warming up. Pupils listened carefully to the music and, working in pairs and small groups, made their movements represent the way a river flows to the sea. In one lesson, the teacher gave pupils the chance to think about how they had moved in the previous lesson in order to improve these movements. This, combined with the good warm-up exercises and the way the teacher joined in with different groups, led to pupils using their imagination well and moving expressively. In lower junior classes, pupils perform jumps and balances on benches and low gymnastic tables. The pupils had not used this sort of equipment for some time and their inexperience showed when some pupils initially lacked the confidence to jump from a low table onto a mat. However, by the end of the lesson many pupils were more adventurous in what they attempted. By the age of seven, pupils imitate swimming movements of sea creatures well, sometimes sliding across the floor and at other time when moving in an upright position. They learn to perform actions where the different elements flow smoothly into each other. Most pupils show imagination by sliding on their stomach or back, crawling and hopping. They are slightly less successful in working out how to introduce sudden breaks into their sequences.

169 Overall the quality of teaching is good. When teaching is good, teachers use praise and encouragement to build pupils' confidence. They communicate their enthusiasm to pupils and join in the lesson, presenting good role models to pupils. Teachers make good use of incidental events. For example, when a thunderstorm occurred just before one lesson began, the teacher encouraged pupils to think about the sound of the storm and how they felt so that they could interpret music about a stormy sea. In a very good lesson with six and seven year olds, the teacher asked pupils to demonstrate their ideas to the rest of the class and asked other pupils to think how they could improve their own movements to imitate the different ways creatures such as sharks and dolphins swim. In some lessons, however, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to reflect on what they are doing. They do not concentrate enough on improving the quality of pupils' actions by using pupils who have good technique to demonstrate to others. Teachers stress the need for working safely in the hall, particularly when apparatus is set out. However, some teachers do not position themselves where they can see all the class and, because they stand with their backs to groups of pupils, cannot always see if pupils are working safely.

170 At present, management of the subject is sound but the recently appointed subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is determined to raise standards in physical education. Her review of the way the subject is taught has identified that teachers do not use the whole range of facilities available. Consequently, she is shortly to check what training teachers need to improve their confidence. A small but persistent number of pupils avoid taking part in lessons and the co-ordinator has introduced a monitoring sheet to identify those who regularly miss lessons. She is also investigating ways of making sure that all pupils have access to suitable clothing and footwear. Resources for the subject are unsatisfactory. There is barely enough small apparatus for whole-class groups to use, and some of it is in a poor condition. Satisfactory arrangements are made for extra activities. Footballers from West Bromwich Albion Football Club train pupils and there is a karate club run by an outside organisation. Groups of ten and eleven year olds visit a sports hall at another school before



school starts on Monday. Lunchtime support assistants also hold aerobic keep-fit sessions for pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

171 It was possible to observe only one lesson of religious education in the infants, but several lessons in the juniors were seen during the inspection. An examination of pupils' work, classroom displays and discussions with staff and small groups of pupils supplement the evidence. By the end of both the infants and the juniors, average standards are attained by pupils in relation to the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Since the last inspection average standards have been maintained and all pupils continue to make satisfactory progress.

172 Infant pupils know that they have their own special things and that the Torah is a special book for Jews and the Bible for Christians. They have made replica Torah scrolls and use a yad to point to words. Although they know some things are special, their restricted speaking skills mean they actually say very little about their own special objects. Pupils understand that Jesus is special for Christians and sequence the events leading to his birth. They recall stories about Jesus and his friends. Pupils understand that symbols have a special meaning and that the cross is special for Jesus when he died. They understand that baptism is important for some people when the baby is washed to "get rid of badness". Lower junior pupils recount the story of the Good Samaritan and consider the reasons why some people did not stop to help because they were afraid of being attacked or catching a disease. Upper juniors displayed their prior knowledge of Holy Books whilst reviewing their learning in preparation for a discussion on the Ten Commandments and the school rules. Pupils discuss the differences and similarities between sets of rules and the impact they have on their lives. They discuss Jesus being the light of the world as symbolism. They know the holy books for Jews, Christians and Muslims and that some of the teachings of each of these books are similar, for instance the rules for living.

173 The quality of teaching is good overall, with some satisfactory teaching in the juniors. Teachers manage pupils well, maintain a brisk pace and organise the class effectively. Much of the learning of pupils is through discussion and where teaching is most effective teachers challenge pupils to give their opinions and share ideas, and use a variety of strategies for learning to take place. For instance, whole-class, small group and individual discussions, skilful questioning and good organisation of pupils in the classroom all result in effective learning for pupils. Pupils' understanding is further developed when the teacher in a Year 3/4 lesson, through the use of good questioning techniques, prompted pupils to share their ideas and their own versions of the story to demonstrate their understanding of the parable, to help those in need. Where teaching is good, lessons are well planned and set high expectations for the pupils with clear aims and objectives. As a result of effective teaching, pupils make satisfactory progress even though the speaking skills of pupils are limited. Pupils' lack of basic knowledge and experiences of the wider world hinders their progress.

174 The subject is currently being managed by a recently appointed co-ordinator. Although aware of her responsibilities, she has not yet had the opportunity to develop the subject through monitoring pupils' progress and identifying the next steps that need to be taken. The resources for religious education are not adequate. There is a shortage of pupil materials, religious artefacts and additional teacher resources. The co-ordinator has rightly identified the need to develop information and communication technology in the subject and to more clearly define differentiated activities and tasks for pupils.