

INSPECTION REPORT

CHUCKERY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Walsall

LEA area: Walsall

Unique reference number: 132076

Headteacher: Mrs N Brook

Reporting inspector: Mr J Francis
17976

Dates of inspection: 20th – 23rd January 2003

Inspection number: 132076

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 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Lincoln Road
Chuckery
Walsall
West Midlands

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr K Hopkins

Date of previous inspection: n/a

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17976	Mr J Francis	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? <i>The school's results and pupils' achievements.</i> How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
13526	Mr R Barnard	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
22967	Ms M Griffiths	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Religious education	
25019	Ms D Butterworth	Team inspector	English Art and Design	How well is the school led and managed?
24678	Ms A Bowyer	Team inspector	Science Geography Music Physical education Special educational needs	
19055	Ms E Statham	Team inspector	History Educational inclusion, including race equality English as an additional language	How high are standards? <i>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.</i> How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This large two-form entry primary school was formed from the amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools in September 2000. There are 408 full time pupils on roll, (204 boys and 204 girls) in 16 classes, and 43 children who attend the nursery part-time. The school is on the border of one of the most affluent and one of the most deprived areas in Walsall and represents a culturally diverse population with at least 11 minority ethnic groups other than white British. Two hundred and twenty seven pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of these being Pakistani (34 per cent), but with significant numbers of black and white Caribbean, Indian and other Asian pupils. There are a few refugees and Traveller children mainly from Pakistan and Romania. One hundred and eighty three pupils have English as an additional language, with 49 at an early stage of language acquisition. Around 23 per cent of the pupils are eligible for a free school meal, which is broadly average. A higher than average number of pupils start or leave during the school year. Just under a quarter of the pupils are on the register of special educational needs (above the national average) mainly for moderate learning difficulties, and two pupils have statements of special educational needs, (below average). Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below that expected for children of this age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides well for its pupils. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory, but there are many good and very good lessons taught. Pupils with special needs (SEN) make good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, including newly arrived refugees, are integrated well into the life of the school. Pupils' personal development is very good: they behave well and have good attitudes. The leadership and management of the school are good. Where there are weaknesses, these are mainly in the standards achieved in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) across the school, and some aspects of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language. The school offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher's leadership and management of the school are both good. There is a clear commitment to raising standards.
- The leadership of the nursery and reception classes and the quality of provision for these children is very good, as is most of the teaching seen there.
- Governors are well organised, have a good understanding of the standards achieved and are effective in their role of holding the school to account.
- Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are consistently good in and around school.
- The care of pupils is good: there are good procedures for improving attendance and for monitoring and promoting good behaviour.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics
- Standards in ICT and the coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- Standards in art for pupils in Years 3 to 6
- The deployment of staff working with pupils who have English as an additional language and the records of attainment kept on these pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

As a recently amalgamated school this is the school's first inspection. However, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	N/A	D	C	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	N/A	E	E	E	
Science	N/A	E*	E	D	

Results from national tests in 2002, show standards in English are average, although the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in English was above the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards in English are well above average. In mathematics and science, standards were well below average and few pupils attained the higher levels in either subject. The school exceeded its targets for English, but did not achieve those for mathematics.

The inspection found average standards in English and science. Attainment in mathematics is below average, but improving with the more effective application of the national numeracy strategy. Attainment in most other subjects, including religious education (RE), is in line with the expectations for 11-year-olds. However, standards in art are below expectations and standards in (ICT) are very low and well below the expected levels.

Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and meet the expectations set out in their individual action plans (EPs). Those pupils with English as an additional language make good progress though reception and Years 1 and 2 in learning English. This slows in Years 3 to 6 as greater demands are made on their writing skills, however, they make good progress overall. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress, and the majority are on course to achieve the expected levels in most areas of learning by the time they leave the reception class. Many will attain higher than expected levels in reading and mathematics by the time they move into Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school and show great enthusiasm, which contributes well to their ability to learn and how they work in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils show very good self-control and self-discipline and there are no examples of any oppressive behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	This is very good. Pupils demonstrate care for each other, and are respectful and courteous. They get on well with each other and are polite to all in school.

Attendance	Attendance is just below the national average. Good procedures are in place to tackle levels of absence and attendance levels have risen significantly in the past two years.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory, few unsatisfactory lessons were observed and there was a significant proportion of good and very good teaching. The teaching in the nursery and reception classes is frequently very good. This results in good and often very good progress. Teaching in English is good, and pupils are improving their English language skills through a wide range of activities and approaches. Teaching is satisfactory in mathematics and good in science. The more recent emphasis on investigative work in science is improving pupils' skills and knowledge. Teaching is satisfactory in all other subjects with the exception of art in Years 3 to 6 and ICT throughout the school. Teachers lack the skills and knowledge in ICT to use it effectively as an everyday tool to assist pupils' learning. As a result, pupils have poor skills. Where there are weaknesses in teaching, these relate to the pace of some lessons, and how effectively teachers use day-to-day assessment to ensure their planning matches the needs of all the pupils. The marking of pupils' work is not of a consistently high standard throughout the school.

Teaching of pupils with SEN is good, but the way teachers use pupils' IEPs when planning their work, is not consistent across the school. For pupils with EAL, teaching in literacy lessons is good throughout the school. Teachers are competent in developing pupils' English language skills but too often this is seen only as being relevant to literacy lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is sound. The curriculum is broad and generally balanced, although the timetabling for some subjects means that lessons are sometimes too short to provide effective learning. The provision for children in the nursery and reception is very good. However, the school does not meet the National Curriculum requirements for ICT.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are clear and consistent procedures in place for providing extra support. There is good liaison between the school and parents and with other outside agencies.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	While teaching is good, the deployment of staff is unsatisfactory. There is no support for these pupils other than in literacy, which limits their progress in subjects such as mathematics, where support is needed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for personal development is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in the provision for pupils' moral development. This results in an orderly school, where pupils are becoming increasingly responsible for their own actions and their abilities to consider the feelings of others.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Overall this is good. Teachers and support staff know pupils well, but occasionally, teachers' responses to pupils, particularly in the oldest classes, are not appropriate. Good provision is made for those pupils who join during the year, particularly those who come from overseas. Assessment is satisfactory, but is not always used effectively to set pupils' targets.
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Relationships with parents are generally good. Communication links between school and home have improved, and parents have more positive views of the school now than those following the amalgamation.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has guided the school well through the difficult period of amalgamation. Staff with curriculum responsibilities work hard to raise standards. There is a commitment to improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	This is good. The governing body is well organised through its committees and has a good understanding of the standards being achieved. It has a good strategic view of the work of the school and takes its responsibilities very seriously.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This is good. There are clear systems for judging the school's success and analysing data. Major weaknesses are identified in a very good strategic plan. While data is analysed well, the use of this to inform teaching and learning is not well developed.
The strategic use of resources	This is good. Financial planning is secure and the budget is linked well to the educational priorities of the school. Governors have a good understanding of best value principles. Day-to-day financial management is good.

Staffing levels are satisfactory and matched to the needs of the school. The accommodation is satisfactory, although the main hall floor is in a poor state of repair. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, and very good for ICT, but this not used well to support learning across the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their children like school and make good progress • their children are expected to work hard • teaching is good • their children are helped to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the information on how well their children are getting on • the way the school works with parents • the range of activities outside of school

Parents' positive views of the school are generally supported by the findings of the inspection. The school is making progress in the way it works with parents and in the information it provides for them. There was a difference in parents' responses to the questionnaire depending on the age of their children. Those with the oldest children in school showed greater levels of dissatisfaction in some areas; for example, in the

way they were kept informed about their children's progress. The range of activities outside of school is similar to that found in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the National Curriculum test results in 2002, standards for 11-year-olds are in line with the national average for English, but below average for science and well below average for mathematics. This shows an improvement in English and science from the previous year. For seven-year-olds, test results show standards in reading to be average but below average for writing and mathematics. As a recently amalgamated school, there is not enough data to evaluate trends over time or how these match national trends. Results over the last two years show an improvement, with no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in English, mathematics or science. However, in mathematics, boys are currently attaining significantly higher levels than girls in Year 6.
2. The school is making good progress towards the targets set for this year in English. However, it is well below the target set for mathematics. The analysis of national and other test results by the co-ordinators and the headteacher has identified areas of weakness. However, the actions taken to address these have not been in place long enough to produce the expected improvements. What reduces the overall attainment at Year 6 is the relatively low number of pupils working at the higher levels. While work in the English and mathematics sets¹ for pupils in Year 3 to 6 is generally matched to the needs of the lower and average attaining pupils, it does not always challenge the higher attainers to use their learning in new ways.
3. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are broadly average. They have many opportunities to develop these skills in a variety of situations, and teachers are asking the sort of questions that develop pupils' speaking skills. Pupils in Year 6, who debated the issue of homework, had a good opportunity to speak formally to an audience. They used Standard English well, and as the debate progressed, developed greater expression in their delivery.
4. Standards in reading and writing are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are able to use their knowledge to break down words, and read more confidently. By Year 6, pupils appreciate a wide range of texts, and are developing an understanding of the work of different authors and genre. Many demonstrate good library skills, understanding how to locate information to help them in their own research. Pupils in Year 2 use capital letters and full stops appropriately, but have few opportunities to write in a range of styles. As a consequence, their writing often lack imagination or interesting vocabulary. Pupils in Year 6 write for a range of purposes and this is used to develop work in other subjects. Spelling is accurate and presentation and handwriting are neat.
5. Standards in mathematics for pupils in Year 2 are broadly average; they make good progress from a low base and achieve well. Most pupils in Year 2 have a good grasp of number, and work at an appropriate level for their age. However, pupils do not make sufficient progress through Years 3 to 6, and by Year 6, standards have fallen and are below average. More recently, with teachers' better knowledge of the national numeracy strategy, pupils have made faster progress and standards are beginning to

¹ These sets are formed from the groups of pupils who have similar standards of attainment in English and mathematics.

rise. Standards in science are average. The greater emphasis on investigative and experimental science throughout the school is bringing about improvement.

6. While there is an appropriate scheme of work covering the ICT curriculum, standards are well below those expected of pupils in Year 6. Basic skills are not taught sufficiently well and not enough use is made of ICT to enhance learning in other subjects. Attainment in RE meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Attainment in all other subjects is in line with what is expected of pupils by Year 2 and Year 6 with the exception of art, where standards are below those expected for pupils at Year 6.
7. Children entering school have much lower levels of attainment than is usually found at this age. In the nursery and reception classes, very good teaching and a good understanding of how the children are learning, means they make good progress in all areas of learning leading towards the early learning goals (ELGs).² By the time they are ready to start Year 1, although only about 60 per cent of the children achieve the ELGs in all areas of learning, a significant proportion will attain higher than expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. Work is generally matched to their needs and they have good support from teaching assistants. However, this is inconsistent in mathematics, where after a good start in Years 1 and 2, their progress slows in Years 3 to 6. The pupils learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress over their time in school, as do those at early stages of English acquisition. This is because they are well supported, particularly in literacy lessons. However, where this support is not available for them in other subjects, for example, mathematics and science, their rate of progress slows.
9. Standards attained by Pakistani pupils (the largest minority ethnic group in school) by Year 2, are in line with national averages in reading, but below average in writing and mathematics. There has been a good rise in Pakistani pupils' achievement in reading and writing by Year 2 over the last two years compared with white British pupils in the school as shown by the most recent national tests, but this rise is not matched by improvements in mathematics. By Year 6, standards for Pakistani pupils are below national averages in English, mathematics and science. The attainment of Pakistani pupils in English has improved over recent years and is above the LEA average for writing, but has not improved as much as white British pupils. The attainment of Pakistani girls is more in line with other pupils than Pakistani boys, who do not achieve as well as their peers. Other minority groups, for example, Travellers and refugees, have not been in school for a sufficient length of time to evaluate their progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Attitudes towards school are good. Pupils expect to learn. Older pupils in school are aware of what is being provided and have ideas as to how the school could be improved. Pupils of all ages are keen on the extra-curricular activities gradually being developed.
11. Behaviour in class and around the school is good overall. Pupils are polite and courteous to all staff, parents and visitors. There is some slippage in class when tasks are not demanding enough or not of interest to pupils. Challenging behaviour is

² These are in the areas of learning that include personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development and physical development that children should obtain by the end of reception year.

generally dealt with effectively in class and around the school. While there is some bullying, the number of incidents has reduced significantly and any instances are dealt with promptly. During the inspection, one potentially racist incident was dealt with sensitively, but effectively in class. There has been one fixed-term exclusion in the previous academic year.

12. Relationships amongst pupils are very good. Pupils from different minority ethnic groups generally get on very well with each other. They respect the staff and each other. Pupils are supportive of others and include them well in pair and group work. Newly arrived pupils, who are at early stages of learning English, are well supported by others, who, for example, provide answers and interpretations of teachers' questions. In one instance, because the questions were linked well to the task, this approach worked well and provided a model that the pupils could repeat on another occasion. Pupils are understanding of those who have special educational needs. Where there is background disruption from those pupils who often find it difficult to concentrate, others cope well. Pupils respond well when faced with choices of tasks and responsibilities offered to them in class. They enjoy helping with routines of class and school. They run the tuck-shop, provide mentoring for other pupils, take registers to the office, escort younger pupils to the canteen and offer companionship at the 'friendship stops' or 'play equipment stops'.
13. The overall attendance level is unsatisfactory being just below the national average. However, there has been a steady, and significant, improvement in attendance levels over the past two years. The level of unauthorised absences is about average for the current academic year but for the past two years was about twice the national average; overall attendance levels have improved by about two per cent over the same period. The reduction in pupils taking holidays in term time, especially pupils of Pakistani heritage, has been a significant factor in this improvement. A small minority of pupils are regularly late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During the inspection, little unsatisfactory teaching was observed, and in six out of ten lessons seen, teaching was better than satisfactory, with one in four lessons being very good. This is resulting in improved standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Good and very good teaching is seen in each year group, but the most consistently good teaching is found in the nursery and reception classes. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs, or English as an additional language, is good and they make good progress.
15. The very good organisation of the nursery and reception, with good planning and clear learning objectives, means that children make good, and often very good progress, from a very low base. In the reception classes, the very good use of language and questioning by the teachers enables them to make accurate assessment of the children's progress. In a very effective numeracy lesson in reception, children were presented with a good range of well-planned and well-supported number activities. As a result, they made very good progress in counting up to ten, matching their numbers to the bears from the story of Goldilocks, and comparing sizes of bears and clothes. The work of the nursery nurses and teaching assistants ensures good provision for children in both nursery and reception, including those with very little English.

16. In most classes, one of the significant factors in the way pupils' learn is the quality of relationships, both between the teachers and the pupils and between the pupils themselves, who are always willing to help one another at any time. Good relationships and interaction between the teacher and the pupils in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, with good questioning and a supportive approach to pupils' mistakes, meant that they were confident to have a go and not frightened of failing. Teachers generally set high expectations of attitudes to work and behaviour, to which the pupils respond well. However, there are instances where teachers' responses, particularly with older pupils, are inappropriate and embarrass pupils in front of others. This does not sit well with the school's commitment to raising pupils' self-esteem.
17. The teachers work well in partnership with the teaching and learning assistants. They play an active part in all lessons and are well briefed as to their tasks. Good examples were seen of them helping pupils during practical activities and supporting those pupils with special educational needs. However, there are fewer instances where they are used to monitor pupils' responses during class teaching sessions to provide the teacher with additional information about pupils' learning.
18. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, or where there are weaknesses in otherwise sound lessons, this is because work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs or the pace of the lesson is too slow. This results in time being wasted. For example, pupils listened to the teacher for too long in PE when they should have been actively involved. Sometimes pupils are unclear about the task, for example, in an English lesson on the use of apostrophes. In these instances pupils failed to make adequate progress in improving their skills or understanding.
19. The work is generally well matched to the needs of pupils. However, the setting of pupils by prior attainment, particularly in mathematics, does not always ensure an appropriate level of work. At times, these setting arrangements are used as a basis to give all the pupils in a set the same work rather than accurately assessing and meeting their needs. For the higher attainers in Years 3 to 6, expectations are not always high enough and the work does not take learning forward sufficiently quickly. Teachers do not always assess work sufficiently well in lessons to identify areas of weakness and plan further work to help pupils overcome these. Similarly, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent across the school. Not enough identifies errors sufficiently clearly or tells pupils what they needed to do to improve their work. Teachers also fail to capitalise on the good ICT facilities in school and not enough planning includes ICT as an everyday aid to pupils' learning.
20. Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is generally good throughout the school. Joint specialist and classroom teacher sessions are well planned. A nursery nurse and classroom assistant are well deployed to interpret for children in nursery. Teachers are competent in developing language skills, but in some cases matching this language development to pupils' needs is narrowly interpreted in terms of teaching literacy skills. In the most successful lessons there is a focus on understanding and expressing meaning. Here, pupils are actively involved in tasks that promote English language development, for example predicting a story from looking at the front cover, choosing and describing characters in pairs, sharing a picnic box in Goldilock's wood and correcting a 'fluffy penguin' who cannot say its sounds. Pupils at early stages of acquiring English or who have learning difficulties are helped to respond by talking to a different adult before answering the lead teacher. In less successful lessons the failure to identify pupils' needs leads to low expectations, there is a focus on grammar exercises, which can be confusing for

some, and little opportunity to rehearse what has been learned in review sessions at the end of the lesson.

21. Currently work is going on to explore differences in pupils' learning styles; this links effectively to the increase in the amount of investigative work taking place. For example, in science the greater emphasis placed on practical investigations is having an impact on raising standards where lessons benefit from pupils' responsible attitudes and good behaviour.

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

22. The curriculum is broad and generally balanced. In the nursery and reception, the children are given a very good range of stimulating opportunities to develop in all aspects of their learning. The curriculum includes RE, and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum except in ICT.
23. Subject planning is at least satisfactory in all subjects except for ICT. Schemes of work provide guidance on planning for continuity and progression. These are backed up by clear medium term and weekly plans. A particular strength is the joint planning of deployment of teaching and support staff. The balance of time allocated to individual subjects from Year 1 to 6 is uneven. Science, history and geography are given a relatively low amount of time. Despite this, with the better focus on investigative work, standards in science have improved. Timetables include 'circle time'³ and spelling in twenty-minute slots, but when there is movement of groups between rooms, part of this time is lost through moving around and lining up.
24. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is satisfactory and being further developed. Pupils already receive sex education and drugs awareness and there are other PSHE elements in the curriculum, for instance circle time and road safety. One particularly effective lesson for Year 2 on ways of getting around ensured that all groups, including old people, the visually impaired and those in wheelchairs, were considered. A healthy lifestyle is well promoted at lunchtime by the midday supervisors and at the tuck shop with free fruit.
25. All pupils have access to the National Curriculum as a result of targeted support. However, the work of withdrawal groups for pupils with English as an additional language is mostly literacy based and the opportunities to develop more cross-curricular links within the classroom itself are lost.
26. Through individual programmes and support pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs) and in their learning across the curriculum. However, there is inconsistency in the way teachers use these in planning pupils' work. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCo) is aware of this and is developing a process that will identify a link between the targets in pupils' IEPs and teaching methods to achieve them. The inclusive nature of the school is reflected in the clear policy for pupils with special educational needs and the existing race equality policy. Plans are in place to update it in line with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act to promote race equality in the curriculum.

³ This is a time when pupils sit in a circle with the teacher to discuss a topic, taking turns to speak and listen to others' views.

27. Initiatives such as the recent whole-school production for parents, 'Rattle Bag', provided good cross-curricular links. There is also evidence of links between subjects in class work.
28. Extra-curricular activities, such as sports and gardening clubs, choir, 'funky' fashion, and the community arts festival contribute soundly to the development of pupils' social skills and their self-esteem. The school has satisfactory links with the community. Good use is made of the local policeman who visits regularly and is well known to all pupils. There are a limited number of visits to local places of interest such as museums and places of worship. These contribute to pupils' social and cultural development.
29. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Assemblies allow opportunities for pupils to reflect on a range of issues such as the seasons, remembering, solving problems and expressing feelings. Opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to express their feelings and emotions and to enhance their joy in learning and discovery and reflection on the wonder of the world.
30. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school behaviour policy sets a strong moral code. Staff generally set good role models, encouraging pupils to distinguish right from wrong and develop good manners and politeness. Themes such as honesty, sharing and promises are addressed well.
31. Pupils' social skills are developed through a variety of activities. Pupils are encouraged to share resources and help others. Especially good is the way they are encouraged to care for the needs of all pupils new to the school. Racial harmony is promoted well, with the school strong on dealing with petty name-calling. Pupils in Year 6 have some responsibilities, for example, in the tuck shop and helping younger ones at lunchtime, but generally there are few opportunities for them to develop independence. Some opportunities are provided to help them develop as good citizens, such as raising funds for charities and improving the environment.
32. Multi-cultural awareness is promoted through the celebration of a wide range of festivals, as shown in an excellent display on the celebration of the Chinese New Year. A range of multicultural stories is studied, for instance the story Handa's Surprise in the nursery and reception, but there are few dual language books and few specific references to the pupils' own cultural backgrounds in classes. The recent whole-school production provided a very good way to encouraging pupils' love of drama and developing their self-confidence and esteem. There is limited promotion of art, poetry and music for instance in displays around the school. The school's ethos is such that racism is not tolerated and sound provision is made in preparing pupils for life in a culturally diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school provides good care for its pupils allowing them to feel secure and valued. Health and safety procedures, and the monitoring of these, are good. The school has adopted a good policy and good measures are in place to identify potential issues and risks. Good care is taken at the end of school to ensure a responsible adult collects the youngest pupils. Child Protection procedures and teachers' awareness of these are good. Sensitive issues are handled well. First aid arrangements are good, with good staff training ensuring all areas of the school are covered. Pupils' personal

development is monitored well and staff provide good individual support. Their health and welfare is seen as important. Staff know the pupils and their backgrounds well. Good inclusion is a key feature of all aspects of the school's work. For example, pupils from Traveller and refugee families have been welcomed and have quickly settled into school routines with the caring help of staff and pupils.

34. The school works hard to promote good attitudes. Parents are positive about recent introductions such as the 'friendship stops' and pupil mentoring which led to an improvement in ethos. Parents feel that the school is a 'secure' place for pupils. The school provides positive reinforcement of academic and pastoral achievements.
35. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are effective. The behaviour policy, with an emphasis on the use of rewards and praise, is having a positive impact on improving most pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Most staff have a consistent approach to behaviour, although at times there is unnecessary 'heavy-handed' discipline with older pupils. Good supervision by lunchtime staff and the provision of a good range of activities are successful in producing good standards of behaviour at lunchtimes, even when it is wet. Procedures to discourage and deal with bullying, racist or sexist behaviour are very good and any potential incidents are monitored and recorded promptly and rigorously. Concerns of parents about dealing with such incidents have been alleviated by a thorough review of procedures.
36. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and have resulted in steady and significant increases in overall levels. Improvements in recording attendance using a computerised system effectively and rigour in following up absences, has resulted in the level of unauthorised absences being halved. Positive steps to impress on parents the importance of continuity in education are helping reduce the number of extended absences in term time. The headteacher has a firm, but fair, approach to the authorisation of absences.
37. Much hard work has gone into analysing academic performance given the technical difficulties resulting from the amalgamation of two separate systems. The strategic planning for collecting and analysing data is good. The school is aware of the level of attainment of particular groups and has introduced strategies to raise achievement but has not yet reviewed the impact of these. Assessment information is not yet being used to inform monitoring, target setting and planning and there is an unhelpful mix of individual and group targets across the school. However, staff have begun to bring tracking records together to identify pupils who have not met targets and note concerns.
38. There are clear and consistent procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs. All records are effective and up-to-date. The SENCo makes good use of specialist advice in planning provision, including the educational psychologist and the LEA support services. Pupils with English as an additional language receive a good deal of encouragement and get instant feedback on how they are doing, particularly in withdrawal groups.
39. The attainment of newly arrived pupils with English as an additional language is not effectively recorded, unless pupils are deemed to have SEN. The SEN teachers and teachers employed under the Ethnic Minority Attainment Grant (EMAG) are clear themselves about the distinction between the needs of bilingual learners generally, and those bilingual learners who also have learning difficulties. However, this distinction is not reflected in the records where 65 out of 108 pupils (60 per cent) with

special educational needs are pupils who also have English as an additional language. As a result, it is more difficult to target teaching and resources accurately. Use of the profiling records provided by the LEA is at an early stage and class teachers do not have easy access to information about language development levels and needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The partnership with parents is satisfactory. However, parents' lack of support at times limits pupils' achievements at school. For example, some parents do not value the importance of regular, prompt attendance.
41. The school is committed to working closely with parents, and links with parents of pupils with special educational needs are good. Staff are approachable and for the younger pupils are available in the playground at the end of the day. This does not happen as pupils become older, especially in Years 5 and 6, which reduces the contact between parents and teachers. Many parents, particularly those who do not have English as their first language, are not confident about coming into school but their views are heard well through the parent governors and issues are dealt with well by the school. Links are made with parents of pupils with English as an additional language wherever possible but this is sometimes difficult in the case of newly arrived pupils speaking languages new to the school.
42. Annual reports give parents good, clear and honest evaluations of their children's progress and set targets for improvement. Parents show limited involvement in the work of the school with few helping in classes and a small core organising Parent Teacher Association events. However, parents support these events and school productions well. Consultation sessions are effective and well attended. The school is making good efforts to involve parents further in the school and their children's education. Newsletters are regular and give good information on school life. However they lack information on curriculum issues. The encouragement of parental groups in reception is a good initiative to encourage parents to help their children, for example, there has recently been a very successful workshop on the introduction of teaching letter sounds.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The headteacher has effectively led the school through the challenging period of amalgamation. She has worked closely with the school improvement consultant, governors and the school's own management team to provide good leadership and clear direction. She has set the school securely on the road to steady improvement. This good leadership and good management have already resulted in some improvements, particularly in standards. Key members of staff are beginning to play an effective part in the development of the school and there is a shared sense of purpose and a determination to further raise the standards.
44. The headteacher has put into place some very good systems to analyse and judge the success of the school and key weaknesses have already been identified. The identification of these weaknesses has given the governors a very clear strategic view of what they need to do. For example, the school is well aware of the need to address weaknesses in standards in mathematics. The very good improvement plan gives a clear lead to the future direction of the school. Weaknesses in teaching have been identified and are now being tackled, and there is a developing commitment to further improvement. Management has been re-organised, with several new subject co-

ordinators; as a result, effective and efficient leadership of many subjects is now emerging.

45. Teachers are well deployed and provide a sound balance of curricular strengths. There are clear policies and procedures in place to support new staff in becoming familiar with the school routines and planning. There is a good performance management system to appraise the work of all teachers, which sets appropriate targets. The leadership, co-ordination and administration of special educational needs are good. All staff are kept fully informed by the SENCo so that they can offer support and monitoring for each pupil. The SENCo and team of support staff provide well for those pupils with special educational needs.
46. The management of provision for English as an additional language is not effective. The school's improvement plan aims to narrow the gap in attainment between different groups, but the co-ordination of staff supporting pupils with English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. EMAG teachers do meet but there is no strategic direction for supporting pupils' English development across a wide range of subjects, most staff are focused on support for the literacy strategy. There is no detailed analysis of what is needed, and while teaching of literacy is good, staff are not deployed to best effect even with the current shift from withdrawal groups to teaching in mainstream classes. The school is not making best use of the resources available from EMAG funding.
47. The governing body is very committed to the school and takes its responsibilities seriously. The governors are well informed, organised and know the school well. They work closely with the headteacher to secure improvements for the school. They fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities and communicate well with the parents, both formally and informally.
48. Financial planning and monitoring are good. The headteacher and governors have a clear understanding of the significant impact that, for example, the changes to pupil numbers each year has on the management and planning of the budget. Financial planning takes careful account of known commitments, resource implications of school improvement planning and flexibility in relation to pupil numbers. The budget surplus inherited at the time of amalgamation has been used wisely in relation to building works and to maintain staffing levels. Funds for pupils with special educational needs are used effectively. Day-to-day administration is good, especially in providing governors, the headteacher and subject leaders with accurate and up-to date information. The school has a good awareness of the principles of best value and these have a positive impact in all areas of the school's work.
49. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The ICT suite provides good quality provision for the subject.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the school further, and raise standards to a higher level, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

Raise pupils' attainment in mathematics* by:

- improving the use of assessment data to match the work more accurately to the needs of all pupils;
- improving the pace of lessons.

(Paragraphs 1, 5, 19, 75, 76, 77 refer)

Raise attainment in ICT * by:

- teaching all of the requirements of the National Curriculum;
- making better use of the computer suite for teaching pupils the skills they need;
- integrating ICT into teachers' planning across all subjects;
- improving teachers' own skills and confidence.

(Paragraphs 6, 71, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108 refer)

Improve standards in art for pupils in Years 3 to 6 by developing pupils' skills systematically as they progress through the school.

(Paragraphs 6, 85, 87 refer)

Improve the provision for pupils with English as an additional language by:

- providing strategic direction for the management of English as an additional language;
- make more effective use of EMAG teachers to support pupils' learning in subjects other than literacy;
- improving assessment arrangements for pupils with English as an additional language, particularly those recently arrived in school.

(Paragraphs 8, 39, 46, 75, 83 refer)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Improve the quality and consistency of teachers' marking (Paragraphs 19, 73 refer).
- Develop more effective use of assessment data for target setting, planning and monitoring (Paragraphs 19, 37, 73 refer).
- Revise the way time is allocated to subjects other than English and mathematics. (Paragraphs 23 refers).

** The school has already identified these issues in its improvement plan and has put measures in place aimed at addressing these weaknesses.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	18	26	26	2	0	0
Percentage	0	25	36	36	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	407
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	96

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	96

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	183

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	34

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	31	28	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	24	30
	Girls	26	26	25
	Total	53	50	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (84)	85 (84)	93 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	29	26
	Girls	26	24	23
	Total	51	53	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (88)	90 (91)	83 (76)
	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	32	21	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	23	26
	Girls	17	9	17
	Total	41	32	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (67)	60 (52)	81 (60)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	23	24
	Girls	15	13	15
	Total	39	36	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (66)	68 (55)	74 (59)
	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	181		
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	1		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	29		
Mixed – White and Black African	1		
Mixed – White and Asian	12		
Mixed – any other mixed background	4		
Asian or Asian British - Indian	8		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	154		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	12		
Black or Black British – African	1		
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese	2		
Any other ethnic group	3		
No ethnic group recorded		1	

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.5
Average class size	25.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	386

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	127.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.25

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	4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	1,142,453
Total expenditure	1,072,356
Expenditure per pupil	2,153
Balance brought forward from previous year	107,543
Balance carried forward to next year	70,097

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	431
Number of questionnaires returned	170

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	38	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	49	2	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	46	7	4	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	45	11	5	2
The teaching is good.	51	44	4	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	49	15	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	42	5	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	46	3	2	1
The school works closely with parents.	29	50	13	5	1
The school is well led and managed.	38	45	8	4	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	52	5	2	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	39	16	4	1

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

50. Many children entering the nursery do not speak English as their first language and need support to acquire English language skills. Children are provided with a well-balanced practical curriculum, which is appropriate for meeting their needs. Effective strategies are used to ensure that they are actively involved in activities and therefore, make good progress in the nursery and also in the reception classes. A significant proportion makes very good progress, achieving higher levels than would normally be expected for children of this age in reading and mathematics. Just under half also achieve the higher level in writing, when they enter Year 1. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress.
51. The nursery and reception classes are well resourced with equipment for all areas of learning, including a secure outdoor play area. The quality of teaching overall is very good, consistently so in the reception classes. Lively activity sessions help the children to concentrate well which promotes their learning. The teachers, nursery nurses and learning support staff know the children well and priority is given to improving their self-esteem and helping them to move forward confidently in their learning. Classes are well organised and very detailed records are kept for all areas of learning. Good methods of planning have been established and this ensures that the small steps of learning recommended in the national guidance are planned for daily. The recently appointed early years co-ordinator has a very good overview of the nursery and reception provision.

Personal, social and emotional development

52. A significant number of children enter the nursery with immature personal independence and lack confidence in playing and relating to others. In the nursery, the children are introduced warmly and sensitively to school. Children are encouraged by all adults to interact and play together with others and to be more independent. The reception children's confidence is further boosted, such as when they go into the hall for assembly, to help them to integrate well into school life.
53. In the nursery and reception, children learn about the daily school routines. They know that after their planning sessions, there will be a time of review when they talk to the group about the activity that they have been doing. They know that after tidying away their activities, they must sit on the carpet and look at a book. All adults are good rôle models, which helps the development of the children's own social skills.
54. Children in the nursery learn the rules for working and playing together and understand that they must take turns, such as when they are choosing favourite songs to sing. Careful teaching helps them to understand what is expected of them in school. They learn how to work together co-operatively in small groups, for example, when they are using tape to stick things together. All staff in both the nursery and reception effectively use praise and gentle reminders to make ensure that children's behaviour is good.

Communication, language and literacy

55. Teaching is satisfactory in the nursery and good, sometimes very good, in reception classes. All adults encourage the children to speak clearly and help them to increase their vocabulary. When children speak during review time in the nursery, they are confident about telling others what they have been doing during activity time. In reception, after listening to the story of Little Red Riding Hood, children retold the story and they listened carefully to each other. Although some children were hesitant, the teacher sensitively encouraged them to take part.
56. Children in the nursery make marks on paper and know that print carries meaning. They practise using a variety of writing tools, such as crayons, felt tip pens and pencils. Children enjoyed a visit from a parent with her baby; their writing and drawings about the visit are displayed on the wall along with photographs. In both the reception and nursery, writing tables are available with a good supply of paper, pencils and crayons. Some reception children write their names and simple words such as 'went' and 'to' and higher attaining children are beginning to write short sentences with help. Many hold their pencils correctly and remember to use finger spaces between words. They write for a variety of purposes, such as making shopping lists after listening to a story about Handa.
57. In both the nursery and the reception classes children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories and readily share books with adults. They enjoy taking home books to share. In the nursery, some children know the correct way to hold books and handle them carefully and talk about the pictures. In a lesson in reception, good opportunities were given to the children to vary the loudness of their voices according to the size of the letters when they shared a story with their teacher. This helps them to read with expression. Teachers are aware of the importance of promoting interest in reading and are beginning to teach an appropriate range of skills. Children in reception know a number of letter sounds and try hard to remember them. They enjoy their reading activities and are well motivated because of the enthusiastic approach by their teacher.

Mathematical development

58. The children benefit from good teaching in the nursery where many incidental opportunities are used to count, such as counting the number of children who have received reward badges. The children enjoy singing number songs and count forwards and backwards from five and most are able to match fingers to the number used. Most children are at an early stage of understanding shape and the school's 'shape trail' is used well to reinforce the names of simple shapes.
59. Teaching is very good in reception and higher attaining children count and recognise numbers to ten. They are able to put the correct number of different decorations on the Christmas tree that they have traced. In a lesson about comparing sizes, children were able to put teddy bears in the correct order.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. Teaching in the nursery and reception is very good and the children enjoy a range of activities in a stimulating environment that gives them many opportunities. Nursery children learn about how people change as they grow when they bring photographs of themselves as babies. They know that sticky tape is a good way of joining boxes together when they are making models of their recent visit to Cannock Chase.

61. Reception children enjoyed making sandwiches for a teddy bears' picnic. They spread the sandwich fillings carefully, choosing what was to go into the sandwiches. They found out how to make porridge for the three bears. They cut card for a bag for Goldilocks and explained that they must test the bag to see if it is strong enough to hold a chocolate bar. They know the names of colours and talk about the colours that they have chosen for making furniture for the three bears' house.

Physical development

62. Teaching is very good in the nursery and reception classes. The children enjoy their outdoor play sessions and have access to a climbing frame, prams and scooters and also smaller equipment, such as hoops and balls. They have a good range of small and large construction apparatus for building which they use to produce recognisable models. They show awareness of space when they line up to go home and some are able to fasten the buttons on their coats.
63. The children in reception enjoy various activities to improve their physical development. They know that warming up is important before they take exercise and show awareness of space as they do stretching exercises. They roll balls carefully towards targets and staff help them to improve their technique by showing them what to do. Children cut out carefully when they are making bags for Goldilocks and use various types of construction kits to make a suitable house for the three bears. They control the mouse carefully when they are 'dressing a teddy' on the computer.

Creative development

64. Teaching is very good in the nursery and also in the reception classes. Children enjoy singing in the nursery, confidently joining in with songs that they already know and the actions that go with them, for example, about the elephant washing his clothes. They model with clay and stick boxes together to make recognisable models, such as robots. Their paintings of people in their families and snowmen are good, as are their printed patterns with different kinds of fruit.
65. Children in reception join in enthusiastically with the song about going home. Their painting of a recent visit to Cannock Chase is done well and they build on this experience with a teddy bears' picnic in their rôle-play area, which is a forest. The display of pinecones, branches and leaves gives opportunities for observing patterns and colours in the environment, which children use well in their painting. Dressing up in role provides the opportunity for them to take part in imaginative play. This is effective in developing their spoken English.

ENGLISH

66. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils reach broadly average standards. Overall, teaching and learning are good across the school. During their time in school pupils make good progress. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4, but this picks up and is again good in Years 5 and 6.
67. Most pupils speak clearly and with confidence and have been taught the necessary vocabulary to express their ideas. They listen carefully to each other and to their teachers, join in discussions, answer questions and give explanations with varying detail according to their ages and abilities. For example, a teacher in a Year 2 class posed good questions during the reading of "The Ugly Duckling". The pupils used their knowledge of the story and the new vocabulary they had learned to reply in full sentences based upon the teacher's good example. Time was given for the pupils to

talk together in pairs and they confidently described their understanding of the duckling's feelings when he has no mother to keep him warm and told the teacher what they thought would happen next. By Year 6, pupils speaking and listening is good. In one class they confidently debated the issue of homework. Supported by previously made notes, they presented current research and debated and argued a reasoned point of view because the subject was of interest to them. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress over their time in school in learning to speak English.

68. Pupils make good progress in reading in Years 1 and 2. Higher attaining pupils develop fluency and expression in their reading. All pupils have a good knowledge of letter sounds, but average and low attaining pupils rely heavily on this strategy and are not also actively taught to look at the pictures and use the sense of the story. Progress is slow in Years 3 and 4 because the pupils continue to rely on one strategy to work out what print says. The use of a range of reading cues, very helpful to pupils with English as an additional language, is not taught rigorously enough. Most pupils talk confidently about books and express their preferences and opinions; many are encouraged to keep a reading journal although this is not consistent in all classes. The school library is small for the number of pupils and not well used, but it is due to be relocated to a larger space very shortly. However, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 understand how the books are classified and arranged.
69. By Year 2, pupils have made good progress in learning to write. They write their ideas in sequence and in simple sentences, using capital letters and full stops accurately. There is little opportunity for the pupils to reach higher standards because the range of writing is limited and they rarely write stories or poems. This restricts the opportunity to use more interesting and detailed vocabulary. Spelling is usually accurate and work is neatly presented. While pupils are taught handwriting, including joining their letters, this skill is not transferred into their everyday writing.
70. By Year 6, pupils write for an increasingly imaginative range of purposes. They describe characters from books they have read and write poems, letters, reports, and some simple play scripts. One higher attaining pupil wrote at length about her impressions of the book '*I am David*'. She acknowledged the author's style and use of emotion and was not afraid to present an opposing view judging the strength of the book to be the plot. When writing a mystery story, pupils make a dramatic start and develop the plot well, but do not manage to sustain it to a strong ending. For the lower attaining there is not always sufficient support to help with structuring their written work. Handwriting is consistently joined in style, and work, written in pen, is usually neat. Spelling is good.
71. There are good opportunities for pupils to improve their reading and writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum for instance, pupils write about their experiments in science or make notes in RE. However, computers are not used effectively as a drafting tool and stories and poems are mainly typed out from previously handwritten and corrected work.
72. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The most successful lessons are supported by detailed planning and clear intentions for learning. Good levels of challenge ensure that all pupils within the sets are given appropriate tasks. The pupils understand what is required of them and behave well. Teachers provide interesting resources and vary teaching methods to engage their pupils fully throughout the lesson. The impact of this is evident as the pupils make progress whether working independently or supported by an adult. Where teaching is less successful, teachers'

subject knowledge is weak, expectations are lower and there is a lack of planning for the needs of pupils of all abilities. In these lessons the teaching is not sufficiently focused on specific groups to raise their levels of understanding, but is often spent on supervisory activity and opportunities are missed to assess the learning of the pupils. The teaching assistants work well with the teachers and, in most lessons, successfully support pupils' learning.

73. Procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory overall. Although test data is analysed, with some plotting of progress, the results are not systematically used in all classes. Group targets are set, but too often these are very broad and not translated into language that the pupils can understand. This results in variations in progress across the school, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Marking does not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
74. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and has worked with the school's management team and school improvement consultants to analyse national tests and plan appropriate action for improvement and staff training. A plan to monitor the quality of teaching has recently been introduced to further improve the quality of teaching and raise standards. The subject leader is now well placed to address the remaining inconsistencies in planning and raise the expectations of the teachers.

MATHEMATICS

75. In Year 2, standards are average and pupils' achieve satisfactorily. Standards of attainment are below average in Year 6. However, work seen during the inspection shows a trend of improvement. Previously, progress was limited because the national numeracy strategy had not been fully introduced throughout the school. This has now been successfully implemented and is having an impact on raising the standards achieved. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress up to the end of Year 2 but progress becomes unsatisfactory for these pupils as they move through the school. Not enough of their work is securely matched to their prior attainment: teachers are not assessing their needs sufficiently well. Pupils with English as an additional language receive little direct additional support to help them understand what is needed of them and improve their mathematical vocabulary. Boys' attainment is slightly better than girls in Year 2 but the gap widens as pupils move through the school and it is significantly greater by Year 6.
76. Many pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of place value to 100, with quick mental recall of addition and subtraction to 20, for example, when working out simple shopping sums. They recognise odd and even numbers and estimate length before measuring with rulers to check. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand partitioning when calculating and explain the method confidently. By the time that they reach Year 6, most pupils have a secure understanding of basic number and tables and recall them reasonably quickly. They calculate using the four operations and some pupils have effective strategies for working things out mentally. However, only the higher attaining pupils use a range of calculating strategies and know which is the best one to use or have a secure grasp of fractions and decimals and use what they know to solve problems.
77. Teaching is satisfactory overall and in some lessons it is good or very good. Teachers are now secure in teaching to the national numeracy strategy, but do not always use this effectively. The setting of pupils by prior attainment does not always provide sufficient difference in the work they are presented. There is sometimes an

over-reliance on teaching to the numeracy strategy for a particular year group rather than matching learning to the requirements of the pupils based on their prior attainment. This slows the pace of learning for some higher attaining pupils and presents work at too high a level of challenge for lower attainers, particularly pupils with special educational needs, who do not make enough progress.

78. Teachers generally have a good rapport with pupils and manage lessons well and as a result, they sustain pupils' interest. In the very good lessons, the combination of challenging activities and positive attitudes leads to effective learning. Good use is made of mathematical vocabulary in these lessons and this means that pupils also used the correct vocabulary confidently. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher talked of partitioning and multiples of ten when the pupils were using a 100 square for subtraction. In good lessons, teachers check understanding by asking pupils to explain the strategies they use. For example, in a Year 3 lesson on using money, pupils were asked to explain how they arrived at their answers, when doing shopping sums.
79. The recently appointed subject leader has good knowledge and understanding of what needs to be done to bring about improvements. For example, more thorough assessment to better inform teachers' planning, a better match of work to pupils' needs and more challenge for higher attaining pupils. The school has taken advice from the LEA advisory team and the subject leader has put together an action plan so that the subject is now well placed to improve.

SCIENCE

80. Standards have improved and, for pupils currently in Year 2 and 6, attainment is average. Pupils' investigative skills and their knowledge and understanding of science also reflect this improving picture. However, few pupils attain better than average levels because the work does not always stretch their thinking sufficiently.
81. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils showed a secure understanding of different parts of the body and could identify these. Higher attaining pupils were able to make such comments as, *'the spine is a big bone that keeps us upright and helps us to bend'*. Well-chosen activities meant that pupils were keen to take part and achieve the learning target. They enjoyed tasting various flavoured crisps and discussed the different tastes with each other. Pupils in Year 2 have learned about living things and are aware of the effect of exercising and eating the right types of foods. Pupils explain what a fair test is but cannot consistently apply this knowledge. For example, in a lesson on forces the investigation became a practical activity as pupils pushed cars around without a real purpose.
82. During Years 3 to 6 pupils make steady progress. More opportunities are being given for pupils to carry out scientific investigations and answer the questions they have raised. For example, Year 4 pupils were planning to find out if boys' hands were bigger than girls. They knew that only one thing should change during a fair test and were able to use the guidance in the display on fair tests from last term. In Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the way light is reflected so that we see objects. The pupils were also investigating the gravitational pull and air resistance. They correctly identified that, when using a parachute, gravity was the stronger force otherwise the parachute would not descend. They have a good understanding of the food chain, knowing that it always begins with a plant and correctly identify the consumer, predator and prey.

83. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good and in some lessons very good. This means that overall, the pupils' learning is good. On occasions where teaching does not result in sufficient progress this is because the teachers' knowledge is not secure or the activity is not properly focused. Talking to pupils in lessons demonstrates that they have an interest in science. Very good teaching was a feature of a lesson when the teacher used resources most effectively. Here the teacher produced a very large toothbrush to show the children how to brush their teeth correctly and individual mirrors to look at the different types of teeth they have. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs. For example, in a Year 6 class, the learning support assistant was given very thorough notes on the objectives for the lesson and how pupils would achieve them. This ensured pupils with whom she worked were kept on task. However, pupils with English as an additional language do not have sufficient direct language support to enable them to have a full understanding of what is expected of them.
84. The curriculum, based on national guidance, ensures sufficient breadth in pupils' experience. There are now agreed assessment procedures but these are not always carried out consistently. As a result, work is not always accurately matched to the needs of the pupils. Work in books show that pupils of different levels of attainment are frequently given the same task. Where this consists of copying activities, pupils concentrate more on the task of writing than the gaining of a clear understanding of the science. Some analysis of pupils' test results has taken place and the school has identified what it teaches well and areas for development. However, there is little opportunity for the subject leader to make appropriate checks on the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

ART AND DESIGN

85. Although drawing skills are insufficiently developed by Year 2, overall standards are at the expected levels. By Year 6, standards are lower than they should be. Teaching is unsatisfactory through Years 3 to 6, and not enough time is given to systematically teaching the skills pupils need.
86. Children in Years 1 and 2 experience a wide range of techniques and materials they make sound progress. They have good opportunities to work from direct observation and to try out different methods. A particularly impressive piece of work in Year 2 took place over a period of six weeks. Starting from an observational drawing of flowers, the pupils developed a small section of this work. This was reproduced in pastel crayons and collage and finally framed with individualised decorative borders made from a variety of collage materials.
87. Older pupils do not acquire the drawing skills they need to produce satisfactory results. Sketchbooks are not consistently used for practice or drafting work. In many instances the portraits drawn by pupils in Year 3 are more primitive than those drawn by pupils in Year 1. In Year 6, the impact of some colourful camouflage pictures was reduced by poor colour mixing skills and the final products lacked tone and shade. The teachers have too low an expectation of their pupils and do not challenge them sufficiently to produce work at the appropriate level. Too many pupils do not have enough time to practise and develop their skills. This is, in part, due to the fact that art is badly placed on the timetable and valuable time is lost.
88. The subject leader is well qualified and enthusiastic about her role. She ensures that there are adequate resources; and plans are in place to review some units of work.

However, she has not yet monitored standards or put in place the necessary improvements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

89. Because of the timetabling arrangements, no lessons were seen. Judgements have been made from pupils' work, teachers' planning, and information from the subject leader. This indicates that standards are broadly in line with what is expected of pupils by Year 2 and Year 6 and that pupils make satisfactory progress. Teaching is broadly satisfactory, but while construction skills are appropriately taught, the planning and evaluation elements of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 are less effective.
90. The required curriculum is covered in a way that progressively develops the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. As part of design and technology and as a whole-school issue, good attention is paid to food technology and healthy eating. For example, pupils in Year 5 design a biscuit and then a box for transporting it in.
91. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have appropriate cutting and sticking skills. Pupils in Year 1 make well-constructed 'rocket ships', which can be moved across their background sky, and snowmen with moveable arms. Year 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in their drawings of artefacts showing greater detail and neater labelling. They cut out a teddy bear template and attach limbs correctly, articulating them well with split paper fasteners. In all the work seen, the pupils attain appropriate levels in investigating, designing, making and evaluating their work. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils designed a wheeled vehicle, but too much of the lesson time was taken up by the teacher introducing the topic. This meant that pupils had only time to work their design and were not able to begin their construction, as most were keen to do.
92. At Year 6, pupils' construction skills are satisfactory. Structures demonstrate sound measuring, cutting and joining skills. Work in their books shows a range of drawings, mostly labelled and annotated neatly. However, many of the drawings are freehand and are not as accurately proportioned as they could be. Opportunities are missed for the higher attaining pupils to develop their mathematical skills by drawing to scale or including indicative sizes on their drawings. The evaluation process is broadly satisfactory but not sufficiently well developed to enable pupils to exceed expectations by requiring more thoughtful, fuller responses. Some use is made of ICT in designing repeating patterns, for example, for printing wrapping paper.
93. Co-ordination is informal. The subject leader has not carried out any detailed monitoring and, therefore, does not have a clear idea of standards and progress as only records of curriculum coverage are kept, not of pupils' attainment or progress. This reflects the current low priority of the subject within the school development plan.

GEOGRAPHY

94. Whilst no lessons were seen during the inspection, work seen and discussion with the pupils indicate that pupils make satisfactory progress and that standards are in line with those expected nationally.
95. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn about their school environment and the local community. They follow routes from home to school and identify landmarks. They visit the local arboretum and suggest ways how it could be improved for the community. On walks around the area close to the school, pupils are taught to look carefully around them to see, for example, how the weather has affected the buildings. They make satisfactory

links with numeracy when they construct bar charts about the way pupils travel to school.

96. By the age of 11, pupils have a secure understanding of the nature of geography. They know about river settlements and the importance of water for industry. They study India and find out about village life and compare it to a village in England. Throughout Years 3 to 6 they develop their map reading skills well. They identify natural features such as mountains, deserts and volcanoes and use atlases well to locate countries and places. They learn about plans and maps and study places in the school's locality. However, pupils are not given enough opportunity to demonstrate their learning, for example, they do not present or organise information in graphs or charts.
97. Teaching is satisfactory. The range of work covers the requirements of the National Curriculum and teachers plan their lessons accordingly. However, in pupils' books there are too many examples of the same, copied work or photocopied work sheets. Pupils are not enabled to use their literacy skills to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in geography.
98. The subject leader has carried out an audit of the subject and written an action plan identifying areas of priority. There has not been any monitoring of pupils' work or how they are taught and there is no formal assessment of pupils.

HISTORY

99. The standards attained are in line with those expected nationally for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. By the age of seven, pupils are able to distinguish between the past and the present and place personal events in chronological order. Paintings on display showed a clear understanding of changes in the local area. By the age of 11, pupils are beginning to select information to describe the main features of life in the past. In one lesson researching into World War II, a group of pupils learnt quickly to refine their search on the computer to distinguish between dogfights in general and a World War II fighter plane dogfight as a description of a particular skirmish.
100. Teaching is good throughout the school. Lessons are well planned with particularly good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills, for example, in role-play, and by asking rather than answering questions. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported to develop their historical skills whatever their level of literacy, but extension tasks for higher attaining pupils are merely the amount of writing rather than the development of historical skills. Teachers write constructive comments in pupils' books in Years 1 and 2 and there is sensitive monitoring of responses in class.
101. In Years 3 to 6, lessons focus on developing inference, refining searches, interrogation of sources and linking historical enquiry to other areas of the curriculum. Artefacts, computers, edited commercial film, and snippets of drama are used to motivate pupils alongside commercial materials, questioning and discussion. There is good support for pupils of differing abilities in Years 3 to 6. There were alternative worksheets in a lesson on Greeks and different outcomes were expected when drawing propaganda posters or working on the computer. A pupil at an early stage of learning English was encouraged to name and use the correct colours for a Greek vase.
102. Pupils are managed well, behave well and generally respond well to the range of active tasks offered to them. In a Year 1 class boys played enthusiastically with washday artefacts. Indeed one boy's tummy ache magically disappeared when he

was invited to demonstrate how the Victorian scrubbing board worked. In one Year 6 class there was a collective sigh of disappointment when the session on using Internet search engines to explore key words finished.

103. The curriculum is soundly planned, in some cases adapted from national guidance. History is well led. The subject leader has a clear view of the way ahead. Medium term plans are analysed to identify gaps in skills progression, pupils' work is analysed and progress is noted termly. The subject leader provides support and materials for staff; a recent focus has been on the development of enquiry skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

104. Standards overall are well below those expected of pupils of this age and progress is unsatisfactory. Too few opportunities are taken to use ICT during lessons and the computer suite is not used sufficiently for teaching pupils the skills they need. As a result, older pupils have little knowledge of the range of applications in ICT such as spreadsheets, data handling or programming the computer to control events. Their keyboard skills are weak.
105. In Year 2, pupils' skills, while still below the levels expected for this age, are showing some improvement through sound teaching in the classroom and the computer suite. Much of the work is based on simple word processing or the use of painting programs; pupils successfully navigate their way around the screen using the computer mouse and the displayed menus. However, pupils do not spend sufficient time on computers, which means their knowledge of where letter keys are is poor. Not all teachers have the skills they need to teach the subject effectively; pupils are not always taught the most efficient ways to use the keyboard, for example, when making a capital letter some are being taught to use the capital lock rather than the shift key.
106. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 is well below that expected for their age. While they are competent in using the word processor, much of this is copy typing of work previously hand written and corrected. As a result, they have little experience of drafting and editing directly onto the screen, moving block of print around or using facilities such as grammar or spell checks. They have used the computer successfully for research purposes but have no experience of data handling or email.
107. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers lack the subject knowledge and confidence necessary to help pupils develop the skills they need. As a result, they do not create opportunities for pupils to use computers as an everyday tool in lessons such as English or mathematics. Teachers are not planning for pupils to meet the full range of the National Curriculum in ICT.
108. The level of resources, including the well-designed suite of computers with an interactive white board and projector, is good. However, while all classes have timetabled sessions in the suite, these are not all taken up and this expensive provision is only used for little over half of the teaching day. Much of this time is used for learning in other subjects, such as history or RE, and for simple work in literacy and mathematics. Not enough time is given to developing the necessary ICT skills.
109. The subject leader has put in place a sound curriculum, based on national guidance, that takes account of the statutory requirements and that meets the current needs of the school. However, this is not being sufficiently monitored to ensure it is being delivered and that pupils are making appropriate progress through the units of work. Assessment procedures have been developed but are not yet effectively in place. The

subject action plan is not sufficiently focused on raising standards and there is no clear assessment of the teachers' own skills or plan for improving their knowledge and confidence.

MUSIC

110. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are broadly in line with what is expected. Satisfactory progress is made in music as pupils move through the school. In the lessons observed, teaching and learning was good overall, including some that was very good.
111. By Year 2 pupils have learnt the words and tunes to a good range of songs. Pupils enjoy singing and all participate. They sing well unaccompanied as demonstrated by the singing of 'Good Morning' to the headteacher. They clap and use instruments to maintain rhythm and pulse and to communicate different sound patterns.
112. By Year 6 pupils have extended their range of songs and singing skills. They listen with interest and growing appreciation to a wide range of music and instruments. A growing strength in teaching and learning is the opportunity for pupils to compose music using a variety of instruments. For example, a very good lesson in Year 6 enabled pupils to extend their understanding of rhythms when composing by using poetry as a stimulus.
113. There is good opportunity for pupils to extend their knowledge of music and to perform in a variety of situations. Pupils have the opportunity to listen to a range of music. This is contributing to their cultural development and good links are being made with other subjects such as history. Pupils In Year 6 learn songs of the war years as part of their history project on World War II. They have also listened to a variety of music including Indian dance during assemblies. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn an instrument from visiting specialist music teachers. There are plans to start a recorder group after school. Pupils take part in the regional carol service held at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham singing with a choir of 3000 children and adults. There are many opportunities for pupils to perform using their singing skills.
114. The new subject leader is enthusiastic and has good subject knowledge. She has audited the school's provision and resources. Through the detailed action plan for music the areas for development and improvement are well documented.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

115. Pupils across the school are attaining the standards expected and make satisfactory progress in gymnastics, swimming and dance. Other aspects of the subject were not being taught at this time.
116. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers generally show good classroom management skills and are aware of health and safety arrangements. Lessons start with a suitable warm-up session, maintain a good level of activity, with pupils working hard and becoming breathless, and end with an appropriate activity. However, on occasions, teachers spend too much time talking to pupils and as a result, pupils become restless in their desire to get on with the lesson. This slow pace leads to unsatisfactory progress.
117. Very good teaching of gymnastics to pupils In Year 1 had a positive impact on the attainment. Pupils' interest and involvement, together with the pace of the lesson,

meant that behaviour and attitudes were very good. They have an enthusiastic approach to their work and put much effort into activities, showing good imagination when producing a variety of shapes and movements. The very good teaching and increased challenge helped pupils to improve and extend their skills at a good pace. In another lesson, pupils in Years 3 and 4 displayed imaginative skills in dance. Good demonstrations, and active involvement by the teacher, helped pupils improve their skills. In a Year 6 gymnastics lesson, pupils worked well in pairs to develop their movements into a routine. However, the lack of evaluation of their performance either by the teacher or other pupils meant that they made only limited progress in improving their technique.

118. The curriculum is organised satisfactorily so that all areas are developed, and swimming is taught in Years 2, 4 and 5. A good range of extra-curricular activities is available and is well supported by pupils. This includes the opportunity for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to spend a weekend at an activity centre. The subject leader has produced a detailed action plan that identifies areas for further development and shows clearly what needs to be done to further improve standards. Arrangements for assessing pupils are currently being developed.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

119. Pupils make satisfactory progress and standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
120. An analysis of pupils' work over time shows that teaching overall is satisfactory. However, in lessons during the inspection, teaching of the subject was good or very good. Teachers used a variety of activities in lessons in order to promote learning. Pupils in Year 2 learning about the Moslem faith listened to the call to prayer by the muezzin. The teacher helped them to understand the importance of this by first playing the sound of a telephone ringing, indicating that a sound is telling someone to do something. Good discussion followed about what things are important in people's lives. Pupils in a Year 3 lesson enjoyed thinking about a week in the life of the vicar and this gave opportunities for them to consider the vicar's role in the community. When pupils in Year 6 considered their ideas about heaven, the teacher provided a very good starting point by reading a poem 'Grandad's Dead'; and the pupils then had a very meaningful discussion about their feelings about heaven. Throughout the lesson, the teacher gave good reminders about showing respect for what people believe and this meant that there was a 'secure ethos' for pupils to share how they felt with each other.
121. Leadership is good. The subject leader has devised a scheme of work that draws from the locally agreed syllabus and provides good coverage of the subject, thus giving pupils opportunities to learn about major world faiths. A portfolio of assessed work has been assembled, which is a useful resource for teachers when considering pupils' progress.