

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **TIVIDALE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Tividale, Oldbury, West Midlands

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 133261

Headteacher: Mr Les Young

Reporting inspector: Ian Nelson  
2220

Dates of inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> June – 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2003

Inspection number: 249024

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Dudley Road West Tividale Oldbury West Midlands
Postcode:	B69 2HT
Telephone number:	0121 557 1765
Fax number:	0121 557 6748
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Brown
Date of previous inspection:	This is the school's first inspection.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2220	Ian Nelson	Registered inspector	History	What sort of school is it? Standards, results and achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management What the school should do to improve
19697	Janice Moorhouse	Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Care of pupils Links with parents
20326	Peter Clark	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology (ICT)	The curriculum
22805	Jo Greer	Team inspector	Geography Religious education (RE)	
	Wendy Knight	Team inspector	English Music Special educational needs Educational inclusion	
25771	Peter Sandall	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education (PE)	
27369	Carolyn Sandall	Team inspector	Art and design The Foundation Stage Design and technology	
2063	Judith Hicks	Team inspector	English as an additional language	

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number on roll	334 (Bigger than other primary schools)
Pupils entitled to free school meals	32.7% (Above average)
Pupils whose mother tongue is not English	60.7% (Very high)
Pupils on the register of special educational needs	20.9% (Average)

Tividale Community Primary School takes pupils from three to eleven years of age and includes a nursery. It replaces a former school on the same site under the Fresh Start scheme, where a school is closed and re-opened as a brand new school. It opened in September 2000. The school serves an area that includes pockets of social deprivation. Around 40 per cent of the pupils are of white British heritage, another 40 per cent are from the Sikh community and the remainder from a range of other ethnic groups. Around 61 per cent of the pupils do not have English as their home language, with 106 at the early stages of acquiring English. Around 21 per cent have special educational needs, mainly moderate learning difficulties. Of the current Year 6 pupils around a quarter are new to the school. As a Fresh Start school the pupils benefit from extra funding that has enabled the school to keep class sizes to around 22 since it opened but this extra funding is being progressively withdrawn over a number of years. Attainment on entry to nursery is below average.

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. The very clear leadership and very effective management of the headteacher and senior staff have led to rapid improvements in standards since it opened. Teaching of English and mathematics is very good. As a consequence pupils make very good progress and achieve standards that match or exceed the national average in most year groups, except for the current Year 6 where standards in English are well below average. Behaviour and attitudes to work are very good because the school has such high expectations. Standards and progress in information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography and music are not as high as they should be yet. The school provides good value for money.

#### What the school does well

- Very good leadership and management by the head and senior staff have led to a rapid improvement in standards since the school opened.
- Pupils' achievements and progress in English and mathematics are very good.
- Teaching is very good in English and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work are very good.
- The school provides a very good range of after-school and lunchtime activities for pupils.
- The school has very good systems for tracking the progress pupils make in English and mathematics.

#### What could be improved

- Pupils do not achieve as much as they might or reach high enough standards in ICT, history, geography and music in the junior classes, and in creative development in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to choose, plan, organise and evaluate their own work throughout the school.

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

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

As this is a new school this is its first school inspection.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

The table shows that in the national tests for eleven year olds in 2002 standards were below average in English and science and average in mathematics compared to all schools. This represents a marked improvement from the previous year in English and mathematics. When compared with the results of pupils in similar schools standards were average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. The standards of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 are judged average overall. However, it is unlikely that the test results from the current Year 6 will necessarily indicate this because the pupils have not had the benefit of being in the new school long enough and a significant proportion arrived at the school part way through the year. The school did not meet its challenging targets for English and mathematics results in 2002 but has set quite challenging targets again for 2003. Standards in art and design and religious education (RE) are above average in the junior classes. Standards in design and technology and physical education (PE) are average but in history, geography, ICT and music they are below average. The results of the tests for seven year olds in 2002 show standards well above average in mathematics and average in reading and writing. This is also a marked improvement from the previous year when standards in mathematics were below average and in reading and writing they were well below average compared with all schools. In the 2002 tests standards were well above average compared with similar schools. In the teacher assessments in science at seven standards were below average. The current standards in Years 1 and 2 are judged above average in English, well above average in mathematics and below average in science. The provisional 2003 test results show a further improvement in the proportion of pupils gaining the expected level 2 or above. Standards in all other subjects at this age are judged to be average except for music where not enough lessons were seen to make a judgement. The pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose home language is not English, achieve well throughout the school. The school has focused very much on raising attainment in literacy and numeracy since it opened and been successful at doing this. It is now intent on applying the strategies that have raised those standards so significantly to other subjects in the next school year to bring them up to similar levels.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils like coming to school and enjoy their lessons. They work hard and try to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well, particularly in lessons, and try very hard to live up to the high expectations the school sets.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well with each other, working well in groups when asked to, and generally undertaking their responsibilities in a mature way.
Attendance	Despite the school's successful attempts to improve attendance it



	remains below average.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. It is better in English, mathematics and science than in other subjects because these are the areas the school has focused on improving since it opened. The effective teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy means that pupils have a good grounding for their learning in English and mathematics as they move through the school. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been adapted and modified to ensure that all pupils benefit from them and are taught at the right levels. This includes being flexible enough to allow pupils to learn with older or younger pupils if this meets individual needs. Pupils with special educational needs and those whose home language is not English receive good levels of support that help them to achieve well in their learning. The school has not yet been as flexible in modifying the national guidance for subjects other than literacy and numeracy in order to enable all pupils to achieve as much as they might. In some subjects the pupils are not given enough chance to take responsibility for elements of their learning by planning, organising and evaluating their own tasks within the topic being studied. Consequently learning is better in English, mathematics and science than in most subjects, although teaching in RE is consistently good, ensuring that pupils learn effectively and attain above average standards in the junior classes.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The school covers all aspects of the National Curriculum and provides a very good range of after-school and lunchtime activities for pupils. The school has made very effective use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to improve pupils' progress.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they progress as quickly as other pupils and achieve their individual targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Effective support for pupils whose home language is not English helps them to make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. Very good support for pupils' moral development ensures very good behaviour throughout the school. Provision for spiritual and social development is good. Opportunities for cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The school cares effectively for its pupils. Staff know their pupils well, although there are few formal systems for recording details of pupils' personal development. Systems for checking how well pupils are doing in their learning are good overall, particularly in English and mathematics.

The parents have positive views of the school and speak highly of the head and staff. There are increasing opportunities for parents to get involved in the life and work of the school. Although parents support special events like performances by pupils, they are more reluctant to get involved in formal structures like a parents' association.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the future of the school and has already put in place many very effective management systems to raise standards in the pursuit of excellence.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are keen and committed, and work hard to support the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has very effective systems for checking how well it is doing and setting priorities based on very detailed analyses of its performance.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes very effective use of the resources it has at its disposal and applies the principles of best value effectively

The school has a good number of teaching and support staff. The school is making the best use it can of the current accommodation but delays in modifications to the building mean that plans for developing some aspects of learning, like library and computer skills, are not proceeding as fast as the school would like them to. Learning resources are satisfactory overall.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are making good progress.</li> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable approaching staff with questions or suggestions.</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Behaviour in school is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework children are given.</li> <li>• The range of after-school clubs and activities the school provides.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree fully with what pleases parents most. They disagree with what some parents would like to see improved. The school provides an adequate amount of homework. It provides a very good range of after-school and lunchtime clubs and activities.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

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

1 Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in literacy and numeracy aspects of the areas of learning because this is where the school has had its main focus since it opened. Progress in some of the other areas, like creative development for example, is not as good because the structure of the curriculum prevents the children from taking the initiative and showing their creativity.

2 In the 2002 national tests for seven year olds the results were well above average in mathematics and average in reading and writing compared with all schools. Compared with similar schools the results were well above average in all three subjects. These results show a marked improvement on those of the previous year, the first year of the new school. Results in that year were well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. The good improvement illustrates the success of the school in raising standards of literacy and numeracy since it opened in 2000. This is demonstrated in the rise in average points scores as shown in the table below.

**Table showing the increase in average points scores\* between the 2001 and 2002 national tests for seven year olds compared with that of all schools. (\*Points are given for the numbers of pupils who gain each level. The higher the level achieved the more points gained. This is how the government determines the national average in the tests).**

Reading		School	National
	Boys	+1.9	0.0
	Girls	+2.2	+0.1
	Total	+2.0	+0.1
Writing			
	Boys	+2.2	0.0
	Girls	+1.6	0.0
	Total	+1.9	+0.1
Mathematics			
	Boys	+1.6	+0.2
	Girls	+2.8	+0.3
	Total	+2.0	+0.3

3 More pupils gained the expected level 2 or above in the tests in 2002 than in 2001, and this trend has continued with the 2003 results. The two per cent reduction in mathematics represents a single pupil, so the high standards have been largely maintained. This is shown in the next table.

**Table showing the increased proportion of pupils gaining the expected level 2 or above in reading, writing and mathematics tests for seven year olds.**

	School 2001	School 2002	School 2003	National 2002
Reading	74%	89%	96%	84%
Writing	76%	91%	91%	86%
Mathematics	85%	100%	98%	90%

4 The school did well in the numbers gaining the higher than expected level 3 in mathematics, where the results were well above average. In writing, the proportion at this

level was average while in reading it was below average. In the science teacher assessments the school was below average at both levels.

5 The inspection judgement, on a broader range of work than that covered in the tests, is that current attainment in English is above average. In mathematics it is well above average and in science it remains below average.

6 In the 2002 national tests for eleven year olds the results in English and science were below the national average, while in mathematics the school matched the national average. Compared with similar schools the pupils attained average standards in English and science and well above average standards in mathematics. In both English and mathematics the standards rose considerably between the 2001 and the 2002 tests, much faster than standards nationally. In science the standards rose slightly while nationally they did not rise at all. This is shown in the table below.

**Table showing the increase in average points scores\* between the 2001 and 2002 national tests for eleven year olds compared with that of all schools. (\*Points are given for the numbers of pupils who gain each level. The higher the level achieved the more points gained. This is how the government determines the national average in the tests).**

English		School	National
	Boys	+4.3	+0.1
	Girls	+1.1	-0.1
	Total	+2.9	0.0
Mathematics			
	Boys	+3.8	+0.1
	Girls	+2.1	+0.2
	Total	+3.1	+0.1
Science			
	Boys	+1.1	-0.1
	Girls	-1.0	+0.1
	Total	+0.2	0.0

7 The marked improvements in English and mathematics are largely because these are the areas that the school has focused on in its first three years since opening. They show how well the school has adapted and modified the literacy and numeracy guidance to suit the needs of pupils in the school. This increase is accounted for by the marked improvement in the numbers gaining the expected level 4 or above since the school opened. Bringing more pupils to this expected level in English and mathematics was seen as the first priority of the new school and the table below shows how successful it has been, even though the school did not meet its own very challenging targets.

**Table showing the increased proportion of pupils gaining the expected level 4 or above in English and mathematics tests for eleven year olds.**

	School 2001	School 2002	National 2002
English	42%	71%	75%
Mathematics	49%	77%	73%
Science	86%	83%	86%

8 Although the school did very well in raising the numbers gaining the expected levels at eleven, it was slightly below average in English and science and around average in mathematics. The proportions gaining the higher than expected level 5 in the tests were well

below average in English and science but average in mathematics. The inspection judgement, on a broader range of work than that covered in the tests, is that attainment now is broadly average in all three subjects in the junior classes, except for the current Year 6 where English is well below average and science is below average. These pupils spent their first year in the juniors in the former school that was closed and a significant proportion of them entered the school part way through a school year. Pupils throughout the school achieve well, making very good progress, sometimes from a fairly low base. The school's tracking systems include evidence of pupils making considerably more than a year's progress in some aspects of English and mathematics within a single year.

9 Pupils from different ethnic groups make similar progress to white pupils and many achieve well by the age of eleven. Those who speak English as an additional language do at least as well as other groups and sometimes out-perform the rest. Last year, for example, good numbers of pupils from Indian backgrounds reached the higher levels in national tests at the age of seven and eleven. Some individuals who start school with little or no English make very rapid progress in learning the language. On the other hand, relatively weak reading comprehension skills and limited vocabulary still hamper the learning of a few of the older pupils.

10 Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. The use of setting in English and mathematics ensures pupils tackle suitable work and they are assisted when necessary. Additional programmes and withdrawal for extra support enable them to receive the targeted support so that they acquire and practise basic skills.

11 The standards in all subjects are summarised in the table below.

**Table showing the standards found in the inspection in each subject in the infant and junior classes.**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Infants</b>	<b>Juniors</b>
English	Above average	Average
Mathematics	Well above average	Average
Science	Average	Average
Design and technology	Average	Average
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Average	Below average
Geography	Average	Below average
History	Average	Below average
Art and design	Average	Average
Music	Too little evidence	Below average
Physical education (PE)	Average	Average
Religious education (RE)	Average	Above average

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

12 Pupils' attitudes to school and their lessons are very good and their attitudes to learning are positive. Pupils show a great interest in what is being taught and they enjoy coming to school. They rise to the challenge when teaching is demanding and enjoy practical tasks. Pupils' positive attitudes and enthusiasm were noted in nearly all lessons and these enhance their learning. Pupils in Year 2, for example, were motivated to work hard and relished the challenge of solving difficult problems on fractions in a mathematics lesson. During a history lesson based on the ways of protesting against an issue, Year 5 pupils worked enthusiastically and with enjoyment. Pupils are good at working independently and concentrating on tasks. Inspectors saw good examples of concentrated work by pupils in

Year 2 in a design and technology lesson when adding features to a glove puppet and by pupils in Year 5 in an English lesson on writing in the fantasy style of C. S. Lewis. A notable contribution to pupils' personal development was seen in an RE lesson when Year 3 pupils were discussing the effect that Mother Teresa had on the world. Pupils were seen handling equipment and resources sensibly and confidently during lessons in design and technology and PE. Inspectors saw many opportunities for pupils to work in lessons in groups, pairs and teams that enhanced their social development. In a Year 3 science lesson pupils worked together in small groups to set up an investigation into the features of shadows. Pupils in Year 4 enjoyed working together comparing the characteristics of four religious faiths. The vast majority of parents responding to the questionnaire agreed their children like school and the inspection findings confirm their views.

13 Inspectors saw consistently very good behaviour in the classroom. This very good classroom behaviour has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The behaviour of pupils in the playground and during dinner times is generally good. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and positively promoted by the high expectations of all staff. Parents feel strongly that the school promotes good attitudes and moral values and this shows in the way pupils are aware of the standards of behaviour expected of them from the time they start school. The vast majority of parents responding to the questionnaire agree that behaviour in the school is good. The pupils in Year 6 agreed with the parents on this point. They also said that bullying is rare and when it does happen staff deal with it very effectively. There have been nine short-term exclusions from school during the current school year, involving eight pupils. The exclusions all resulted from instances of severe misbehaviour.

14 Pupils respond willingly to opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. The majority of pupils have responsibilities in their classrooms and for keeping shared areas tidy. Some classes have a rota of 'class helpers' and all, including the youngest children, have an opportunity to be register monitor. Pupils from Year 1 onwards have an opportunity to be elected onto the school council. Older pupils have duties and responsibilities around the school and pupils' good sense of responsibility is carried through into the quality of their work. Responsibilities include preparing the hall and overhead projector for assemblies, looking after the school's library and helping the lunchtime supervisors. Pupils take these responsibilities seriously and act reliably and efficiently. These responsibilities make an important contribution to pupils' social and personal development. When talking to pupils, inspectors found them to be interesting, friendly and helpful. Pupils are confident in making decisions, and are keen to share their ideas when working in small groups and discussing tasks. They are eager to praise the efforts of others.

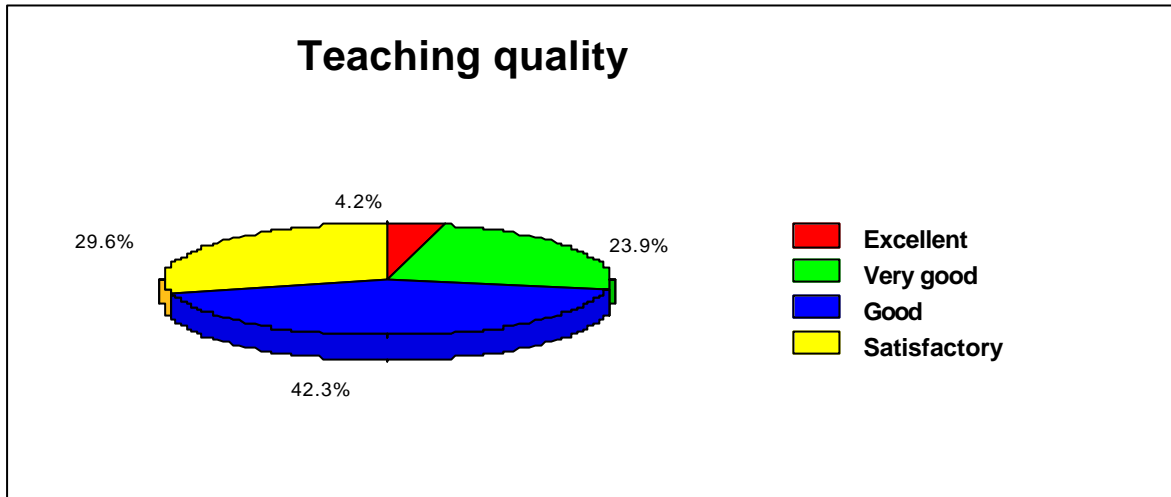
15 Relationships in the school are very good, and enable pupils to develop an understanding of what the school expects from them. Pupils form very close relationships with each other, with teachers and with other adults. They show considerable respect for the feelings and values of others, and incidences of unkind behaviour between pupils are rare. Inspectors saw kind and caring attitudes between pupils of the same age and between older and younger pupils. In classrooms, the relationship between the pupils and the teacher is of a consistently very high quality and has a positive effect on pupils' personal and academic development.

16 Attendance has been poor with figures well below those of other primary schools nationally in the past. However, although remaining below average, figures have improved significantly during the current school year. Unauthorised absence is consistently very low. Figures continue to be affected by the small number of families who do not co-operate as well as they might in helping the school improve the situation. However, the vast majority of pupils are keen to come to school and most are punctual. This enables lessons to begin on time and the school day to get off to a good start.

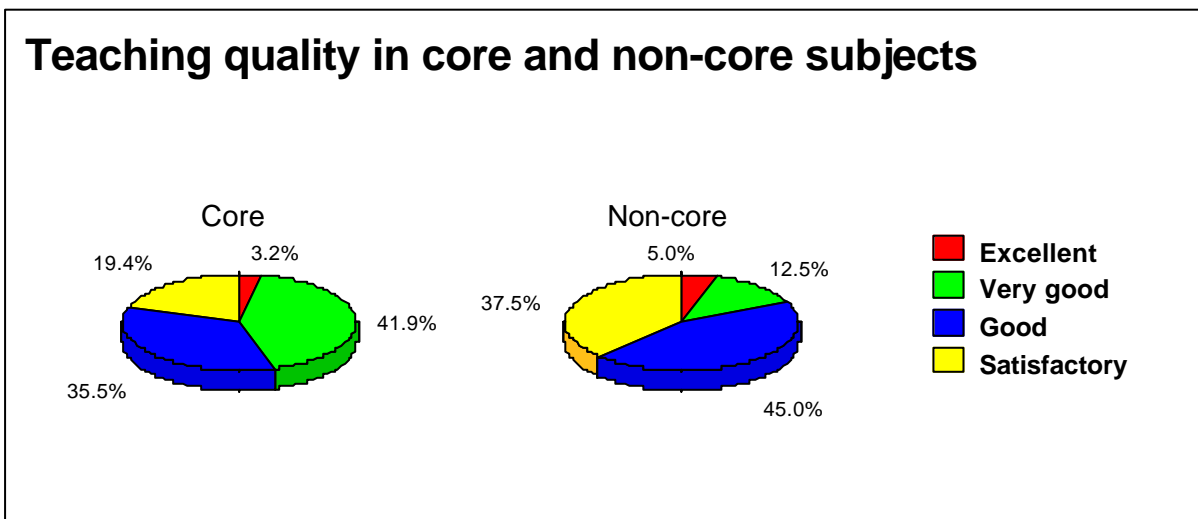
## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17 The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Overall, 28 per cent of lessons seen were very good or excellent and 42 per cent were good. The other 30 per cent were satisfactory. The chart below shows the proportion of lessons that fell into each category.

Chart showing the proportion of teaching in each category



18 Teaching is generally better in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science than in the other subjects. This is shown below and reflects the priorities set by the school when it opened.



19 The best teaching is in English and mathematics where the literacy and numeracy strategies have been fully and very effectively implemented. The school has adapted and modified the guidance from the strategies to ensure that they meet the needs of all pupils regardless of ability or aptitude. This means some pupils joining other year groups because the level of work there is more appropriate to their needs. Teachers have high expectations of how pupils will behave and how hard they will work and consequently they respond well and concentrate hard in their lessons. The pace of the best lessons holds the pupils' attention and they work hard to meet the rigorous timescales teachers set them for completing given tasks. In an excellent literacy lesson in Year 5 for example, pupils concentrated on their tasks

in silence while the teacher worked intensively with one group. Within this group the teacher gave each pupil guidance on how to make their reading even better and set each one an individual target to work towards for the next time. Later in the lesson she introduced a way of learning how to spell long words with several syllables. She created an ethos of success from the start of this session by guaranteeing that her method would work so that pupils expected to succeed. She demonstrated and got each pupil to find a word from the dictionary that was new to them and that they would find useful. As a result pupils learned to spell their new polysyllabic words confidently backwards and then forwards, proving to themselves that the technique works. A couple of pupils demonstrated to the class how easily they could spell their new words as one spelled 'simultaneous' backwards and then forwards and another spelled 'intermediary'.

20 Similar high expectations were evident in a mathematics lesson in Year 6 so that pupils were keen to respond and answer questions in a session requiring the quick mental recall of basic number facts. This teacher also set very clear timescales for completing tasks in group and individual work and gave rigorous targets for the amount of work to be completed. The emphasis on teaching basic skills ensures that pupils have a good grounding on which to build.

21 Teaching in RE is also strong. In a lesson in Year 2 on Guru Nanak, Sikh pupils in the class really enjoyed sharing their knowledge about the symbolism of their religion. The others were very keen to ask questions and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the drumming demonstration that formed a part of this session. In another lesson, in Year 6, the pupils recalled what they had learned about Buddhism, including the importance of the four noble truths and the eight-fold path, before going on to learn about the importance of meditation. The teacher created an appropriate spiritual atmosphere through the use of a lighted candle and incense to give pupils an experience of meditation.

22 In subjects other than English, mathematics, science and RE, teachers too often stick too closely to the national guidance, missing opportunities to modify it in the way they do with literacy and numeracy. Consequently, in some of these subjects, while teaching is often good and is never less than satisfactory, it is not of the same consistent high quality. It tends to be over-directed and overlooks opportunities for pupils to show initiative, make choices and take responsibility for their own learning. This is particularly evident in the Foundation Stage where children tend to be directed from one activity to another with little opportunity to become absorbed in what they are doing or to make choices and develop their independence as effectively as they could. This means that while they make good progress in literacy and numeracy they make only satisfactory progress in other areas of learning like creative development.

23 Good support is provided for pupils who speak English as an additional language. When they plan their teaching, staff draw on a careful analysis of language needs, reflected in individual language plans for the pupils who need most help. Many teachers take care to involve all the pupils fully by tailoring questions and designing tasks to match each individual's understanding of English. Support staff work effectively to encourage the English as an additional language pupils and to ensure that they never struggle with their tasks. Most of this support is based in the classroom, but occasionally pupils are withdrawn, for example to prepare them for a forthcoming literacy session by running through the text beforehand. This is a helpful strategy. There is some scope for an even greater focus on specific vocabulary, for example to help older pupils to express their ideas clearly in scientific language.

24 Because work is appropriately matched to their individual education plans pupils with special educational needs build successfully on what they know, and are clear about what they need to learn next. Adults provide timely support during lessons, either by working



alongside the pupils or by setting the pupils off at the start of the lesson and carefully monitoring their progress and intervening when necessary. As a result, pupils achieve success regularly and are keen to persevere and work hard.

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

25 The school provides a rich, broad and generally well-balanced curriculum to which pupils have equal access. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects, including RE. A comprehensive programme has been introduced for the monitoring, development and reviewing of all areas of the curriculum, resulting in well-focused and appropriate subject action plans that have guided the good improvement in English, mathematics and science.

26 The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, giving the majority of children a sound start in their education. However, opportunities for children to make choices and to plan, organise and evaluate their own learning are somewhat limited. Policies and schemes have been written and implemented for all subjects reflecting recent government guidelines, including social, personal, health and citizenship education.

27 The national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been implemented very successfully throughout the school, and these have had a very good effect on raising standards. Literacy and numeracy are also developed effectively through links with other subjects

28 In a design and technology lesson pupils measured accurately before cutting out material to make scale model chairs. Opportunities are missed, however, for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through all subjects.

29 The school has not yet modified the national guidance for other subjects in the way it has for literacy and numeracy. There is insufficient monitoring of both the subject material that is actually taught and the length of time that individual teachers allocate to different subjects in their planning. As a consequence, attainment and achievement in some subjects, particularly music, ICT, history and geography in the junior classes, are not as high as they could be. These subjects are due to be focused upon in the next school year in line with the 'raising achievement' plan.

30 There is a good programme of work covering health and citizenship that provides a range of useful experiences for all pupils. There is an agreed policy for drugs misuse. The sex education policy awaits final ratification by the governing body. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their social skills through group and paired work in the classroom, for example through organising an experiment to investigate the needs for successful plant growth.

31 The curriculum is suitably enriched by a very good range of lunchtime and after-school activities for pupils, particularly in sport and music. Pupils go on many school trips, including well-planned residential trips in Year 5 and Year 6, and this positively enhances their studies and topic work.

32 The school has good links with the community to aid pupils' learning. The school takes part in community football coaching sessions, dance festivals, skipping demonstrations and local radio events. The dance, choir and school orchestra take part in a number of local events that help boost children's confidence, including entertaining the elderly. Links also include the emergency services, nursing homes and local places of worship. There are satisfactory links with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer.

33 The school includes all its pupils in all the activities it provides and actively encourages the pupils to work co-operatively with each other during lessons. Particular needs are taken into account and the school is flexible about pupils' timetables so that they can work with older or younger pupils if this is appropriate.

34 The school shows a high level of commitment to supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language and to including them fully in all opportunities for learning. Appropriate individual language plans are drawn up for those who need this support, with effective help provided by specialist support staff. All teachers take account of these pupils' needs when planning their work.

35 Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

36 Provision for spiritual development is good overall. Provision through RE lessons is very good. In other subjects and through collective worship it is satisfactory. Although a short period of reflection is included in most acts of collective worship it is not sufficiently well planned to encourage real spiritual development. There are some opportunities in other subjects such as music, art and literature to appreciate how feelings and emotions can be affected by changes in style and mood. A good example was a music lesson where pupils were asked to suggest how changes in tempo and dynamics from favourite songs affect the mood of the listener. In art they considered how the use of colour can change the mood of a painting. Personal, social and health education lessons also contribute to developing pupils' awareness of feelings, emotions and respect for one another.

37 Provision for moral development is very good. The school has successfully implemented a clear policy for behaviour management. Pupils and parents understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. All staff set high expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school and apply sanctions against inappropriate behaviour fairly and consistently. There are reminders of the code of conduct in all classrooms and around the school and opportunities to discuss behaviour and its effect on others are provided in personal, social and health education lessons. One Year 6 pupil explained that he was suspended from school over lunchtimes for unacceptable behaviour in the past and thought this was very fair. Teachers are generous with praise for good behaviour.

38 Provision for social development is good. In the junior classes pupils are given some opportunities for individual learning. In all classes pupils often discuss ideas in pairs with whoever is sitting next to them. In some lessons pupils work in pairs to solve problems. Opportunities are given for small groups to work together towards an end product, as in an RE lesson where pupils were working towards a group poster on the life of Mother Teresa. They had to organise themselves by delegating specific tasks to individual pupils. Pupils throughout the school are given routine monitor tasks, which they carry out sensibly. They learn social responsibility by participating in the school council. Groups of pupils take part in local community initiatives such as sporting, gymnastic and dance festivals. Those who play musical instruments join in schools' concerts. Pupils are encouraged to use their initiative – the school responds positively to pupils' own suggestions for fund raising. Discussions in personal, social and health education lessons contribute well to pupils' awareness of social responsibility.

39 Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. There are some opportunities to learn about other cultures through geography and history projects. Pupils learn Bhangra dancing. They learn about the Chinese New Year festival, although there are few planned opportunities to appreciate non-western art and music. Some understanding of other cultures comes through studying the major world faiths in RE lessons.

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

40 The school takes good care of its pupils. The school's atmosphere is supportive and happy and this makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. The school has a sufficient number of relevant procedures and guidance and welfare policies to guide and underpin its actions. These policies are consistently implemented throughout the whole school.

41 The procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory and all staff are aware of the procedures and the personnel involved. There is evidence of thorough and careful monitoring by the headteacher and the school has a sensitive concern and awareness for the needs of its pupils and their parents. Policies are in line with local procedures and good relationships exist with outside agencies involved with pupil care. There are clear guidelines to ensure pupils' safety when using the Internet. The school has three members of staff qualified in first aid and some members of staff have undertaken basic first aid training, although this training has not been made available recently. All the necessary procedures are in place for dealing with minor accidents or incidents. Arrangements and procedures for the conduct of educational visits fully comply with local authority guidelines. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy. Health and safety in the school is monitored on a daily basis by the headteacher and caretaker and is a regular item on the agenda of meetings of the governing body. Governors are aware of the need to provide a safe environment for pupils and staff.

42 Supervision at lunchtime is well organised through a rota of nine supervisors, a number of whom are employed in the school in other roles. They have received training on the school's policy in managing behaviour and use it when the occasional incident occurs. The two games organisers manage the running of games during lunchtime with the help of older pupils. This makes a positive contribution to the harmonious atmosphere and co-operation of pupils on the playground. Pupils treat supervisors with politeness and courtesy. Lunchtime makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

43 There has been a recent significant improvement in attendance and punctuality. The very good attendance procedures and systems are monitored conscientiously by the deputy headteacher. Through clearly written letters and reminders in the school's newsletter, the school effectively demonstrates to parents the importance of good attendance and punctuality for the smooth running of the school. The school follows up the small number of parents who fail to communicate the reasons for their child's absence, so that for the vast majority of pupils unauthorised absence is minimal. Parents are made aware of their responsibilities in meeting the school's expectation that pupils will attend regularly and arrive on time. The school has recently started to reward good class attendance on a weekly basis. Good attendance is acknowledged publicly during the weekly 'rewards assembly'. Thirty pupils received 99 per cent attendance awards at the end of the last school year.

44 The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. There is an expectation of very good behaviour that is consistent throughout the school. Pupils and parents are aware of the standards of behaviour expected and of the consequences of misconduct. The school has an appropriately worded code of conduct that is displayed around the school and in classrooms. Pupils and their parents sign a copy of the code and parents are asked to discuss the code with their children. Classes display their own appropriately worded class rules and have their own reward systems. Praise awards are displayed in classrooms. They usefully include a clear statement on the reason for the award, for example making an effort. Good behaviour is publicly recognised during the weekly 'rewards assembly'. Inspectors saw very good behaviour consistently rewarded with praise, stickers and house points so that pupils were encouraged to work hard and succeed. Pupils

say that bullying does happen occasionally in school and that they can confidently talk to staff who “sort things out nicely now”. Staff have a very thorough knowledge of their pupils and monitor their progress in an informal way. Pupils are constantly supported and, in turn, promote the caring and welcoming culture of the school.

45 Pupils with special educational needs are well cared for, with appropriate use of a range of external agencies to ensure they receive the required support. Staff know pupils well and respond to their particular interests and difficulties. Pupils with special educational needs are diagnosed early so that their problems can be addressed. Individual education plan and individual behaviour plan targets are appropriate and reviewed regularly to ensure progress against them is checked.

46 The quality and use of assessment are good overall. Teachers assess older pupils regularly in English and mathematics and information is recorded carefully. Assessment for all other subjects is satisfactory, albeit on a more informal basis. Teachers make good use of assessment information when planning what pupils should learn next in mathematics and English, though procedures in other subjects are not as well developed yet. The effective tracking procedures used by the school are beginning to identify the rate of individual pupils’ progress. This information is based on the testing and re-testing of pupils in most year groups. Good progress has been made in entering the information into a computer database. This is already providing the school with much clearer information about the attainment and progress of individuals and different groups of pupils in English and mathematics. Pupils’ attainment is checked on starting school and they undertake all statutory assessments in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6. The school also carries out a range of additional tests in reading and writing for all pupils at the end of each term. From the information, teachers set challenging targets in English and mathematics for pupils to reach by the end of each term. These targets are monitored carefully to ensure pupils are progressing well enough and, if necessary, additional support is given to help pupils further. The school makes a careful analysis of national test results, identifying particular strengths and areas that require further improvement.

47 Assessment of the needs of pupils with English as an additional language is a strength. Each child’s knowledge and understanding of English are carefully assessed on entry, using a nationally approved system, and pupils are re-assessed at regular intervals to check that their progress does not falter. All of these pupils, including the high fliers, are individually tracked and suitable targets are set for them.

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

48 The school is working hard towards building an effective partnership with parents. Parents’ opinions of the school are positive and there are no areas of significant dissatisfaction. The school works well with its parents in a relationship of mutual respect. The majority of parents responding to the questionnaire agree the school works closely with them. Parents receive good quality information that is sufficient, informative and friendly. There are frequent letters presented in a readable and informative style. There is a well-written school prospectus containing detailed and essential information, including the school’s code of conduct and the importance of the home-school partnership. However, the school could usefully investigate ways of making the prospectus more interesting in presentation by, for example, illustrating it with pupils’ work. There are useful, attractively presented half-termly newsletters from each class. They provide parents with information on attendance and punctuality, homework, information on what pupils will study and important dates and events.

49 The contribution of parents to pupils’ learning is satisfactory both in school and in the work pupils do at home. There are an increasing number of opportunities for parents to

become involved in the life and work of the school. Parents are invited to the weekly class assembly, to sports day and to school concerts. A loyal group of parents help in school on a regular basis. They hear children read and make a useful contribution to practical activities in design and technology and art and design lessons. The majority of parents have signed the school's code of conduct and comply with the requirements it contains. The code has strengthened the relationship between parents and staff.

50 Parents are involved from an early stage if pupils are assessed as having special educational needs. They are kept informed of progress, and involved in helping their children, including tasks to do at home as an alternative to the class homework.

51 Parents responding to the questionnaire felt well informed about how their children are getting on at school. There are three formal parents evenings each year and attendance at these meetings is steadily improving. The first meeting held in September is an opportunity for parents to discuss with the class teacher ways of working together over the coming year. At later meetings, pupils' targets for the next term are discussed with parents along with progress made during the previous term. Parents attending the parents' meeting expressed their appreciation of the useful written reports they regularly receive about their children's progress. A sample of end of year reports scrutinised by inspectors contained a thorough and systematic record of pupils' progress and some information on personal and social development. Reports include two or three targets for development in English and mathematics. The arrangements for the setting of homework and the types of tasks pupils may be expected to do at home are usefully included in the school's prospectus. Inspectors saw good practice of homework being set in line with the school's policy and of teachers checking homework and taking an interest in work that had been done by pupils at home.

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

52 Overall leadership and management are very good. A Fresh Start school is one that replaces a school that has been in special measures for failing to provide an adequate standard of education, not responded to those special measures and been closed down. The school then re-opens as a new school on the same site with a new name, a new head and a new staff team, although some of the former staff stay on in the new school. The head was in no doubt about the size of the task he was taking on when he opened the new school. He quickly grasped the seriousness of the situation and established his priorities and expectations. The rapid improvement in pupils' achievement since the school opened is testament to the head's vision and management expertise. He has a very clear vision of where the school is going and what needs doing to achieve excellence. He has communicated his vision for the future to all those involved in the school and ensured that they all share his commitment and enthusiasm for continuous school improvement. Parents at the meeting with inspectors before the inspection were full of praise for the head and the parents' questionnaire shows that 95 per cent of those who responded think the school is well led and managed.

53 As well as having the clarity of vision to set the school on the right track towards excellence the head has set in place the management structures to bring about the rapid improvements evident since the school opened. The 'raising achievement' plan sets out very clearly what needs doing and the order of priorities in the drive towards excellence. It shows how much each element will cost, sets target dates for completion and states how the school will measure its success on each element. There are comprehensive and effective systems for analysing how well the school is doing. The results of the annual tests for seven and eleven year olds are rigorously analysed so that the school can pinpoint any areas where it may need to enhance provision to ensure further improvement. The school's statement of values includes a strong commitment to:

- meeting individual needs;
- equality of opportunity;
- high standards of behaviour;
- mutual respect;
- continuous improvement;
- high standards of achievement;
- strong parent and community links.

54 The commitment to these values is evident throughout the work of the school. They are shared by all the staff, teaching and non-teaching. The office staff play a full and important role in ensuring the day-to-day routines are implemented effectively so that the school runs smoothly. Given that parts of the school are a building site, the caretaking and cleaning staff deserve great credit for the cleanliness and appearance of the building. The kitchen staff and lunchtime supervisors are highly thought of by the pupils and help to ensure happy and harmonious lunch breaks. As one pupil put it, "The dinner cookers are wicked!" Another commented, "The dinner ladies are real fun."

55 The governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They are keen and committed and have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have all the required policies in place, including those for Internet safety, racial equality and access for those with disabilities. They have a clear understanding of the need to challenge spending decisions, ensure they get competitive prices, compare the school's performance with other schools and consult all those with an interest and involvement in the school. They have not yet put in place procedures for taking account of pupils' views of the school but are currently working on this. The governors are fully involved in setting and monitoring the budget. This is set to fund the priorities laid out in the 'raising achievement' plan. Funds allocated for specific purposes like special educational needs or for supporting those whose home language is not English are used properly for those purposes. The governors have a clear understanding that value for money relates to how effectively spending raises pupils' achievement. The school has received a lot of extra funding to help it through the start-up period and this has been wisely used. For example, it has allowed small classes so that all pupils get good levels of support. The extra funding is progressively decreased over the years and the school has carried forward a larger surplus than is usual in order to cushion this reduction. Overall the very good improvements since the school opened justify the extra funding and the school provides good value for money.

56 The senior management team has played an important role in supporting the head and ensuring the structures for school improvement are in place and working effectively. It plays a full role in performance management of teachers, helping to ensure that this meets statutory requirements and is an important element in driving forward school improvement. All the members of the senior management team have a clear understanding of their specific roles and responsibilities and how they contribute to the overall management of the school. Subject co-ordinators are all keen and committed and those with responsibility for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have played a significant role in checking how well the school is doing, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and supporting staff in those subjects. Co-ordinators of other subjects have not had as much opportunity to develop monitoring procedures as the priority has been to raise standards in the core subjects first. However, the 'raising achievement' plan makes it quite clear that other subjects are due for some attention in the next school year in order to raise standards in them and improve pupils' progress in line with the improvements in English, mathematics and science.

57 Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language has a high profile at Tividale. This area is very effectively led and competently managed. Support is flexibly

organised, so that support staff and resources are deployed where they can make most difference. There is a thorough system of assessment and of tracking individual pupils' progress, and information from test results is thoughtfully analysed to see what can be learned. The provision is carefully monitored by the co-ordinator. The arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are also carefully considered and organised so that best use is made of support staff. Administration of special educational needs paperwork is efficient, and the special educational needs co-ordinator has a good overview of provision and liaises regularly with support staff as well as providing effective support to pupils.

58 The school has a very good number of teachers who are deployed effectively, particularly to raise standards in the core subjects. Levels of staffing mean that teaching groups are almost always smaller than those found in most schools, which has a positive effect on pupils' progress. Non-teaching staff make a positive contribution, particularly in supporting pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. They work hard, but more thought needs to be given to their role at times, particularly in the introductory sessions when teachers are working with the whole class. Accommodation is currently satisfactory, although delays to the planned building programme beyond the school's control compromise some aspects of the curriculum. For example, the existing library is reached through a classroom and the computer suite is still to be finished. External works will improve the school's entrance and provide suitable outdoor areas for Foundation Stage children. The school has spent heavily on learning resources which are generally well used, although there are still some areas which need improving, particularly English and music.

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

59 In order to raise standards and improve progress further the school should:

**Modify the curriculum for the Foundation Stage to take full account of statutory guidance and to meet more closely the specific needs of the children in all areas of learning.**

(Paragraphs 1, 62, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 74, 78, 79, 82, 94.)

**Apply the techniques used successfully to raise standards in literacy and numeracy to all other subjects and the Foundation Stage, including:**

- improving assessment procedures to identify precisely what pupils know and can do and need to learn next;
- setting pupils clear targets for improvement based on those assessments;
- tracking pupils' progress to make sure they are achieving as much as they can;
- modifying the national subject guidance and applying it more creatively and flexibly.

(Paragraphs 22, 29, 62-64, 66, 67, 69, 115, 124, 133, 140, 144, 151, 156.)

**Provide training and support for staff who lack confidence and competence in music and ICT.**

(Paragraphs 146, 155, 158.)

**Provide more opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their learning in all subjects.**

(Paragraphs 138, 141, 146.)

**Give all pupils, including those in the Foundation Stage, more opportunities to make choices, and to plan, organise and evaluate their own learning activities.**

(Paragraphs 22, 26, 60, 66, 72, 73, 79, 82, 84, 85, 87, 88, 94, 107, 113.)

**Work with the local education authority to expedite the modifications to the school building that are running behind schedule.**

(Paragraphs 58, 68, 146.)

### Minor issue

The school should give pupils throughout the school, including Foundation Stage, more planned opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	71
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	3	17	30	21	0	0	0
Percentage	4	24	42	30	0	0	0

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

### 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)	29	305
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		100

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR - Y 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	70

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	203

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	49
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	40

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	22	13	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	22
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	31	32	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (74)	91 (76)	100 (85)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	21	18
	Girls	11	13	12
	Total	30	34	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (74)	97 (85)	86 (74)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	28	20	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	23	25
	Girls	13	14	15
	Total	34	37	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (42)	77 (49)	83 (86)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Girls	N/a	N/a	N/a
	Total	N/a	N/a	N/a
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	N/a (40)	N/a (53)	N/a (58)
	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	93	5	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	6	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	108	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	34	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	5	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	13	1	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	4	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	25	0	0

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 - 6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.4
Average class size	22

### Education support staff: Y1 - 6

Total number of education support staff	5.2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	95 plus 32.5 in Reception
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8.56
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	20

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
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	£
Total income	1054252
Total expenditure	1013166
Expenditure per pupil	3061
Balance brought forward from previous year	172872
Balance carried forward to next year	213958

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	334
Number of questionnaires returned	86

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	45	0	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	40	1	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	38	2	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	36	16	2	2
The teaching is good.	69	23	2	1	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	31	7	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	22	1	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	22	0	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	57	30	8	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	67	28	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	33	3	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	27	3	2	10

## **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**

60 The Foundation Stage consists of a nursery and two reception classes. The nursery has part-time provision for 39 children in each session. At the time of the inspection there were 71 children attending the nursery on a part-time basis and 44 children in the two reception classes. Children are admitted to the nursery on or following their third birthday and most children transfer to the two reception classes in September. The nursery and reception classes are bright and attractive, providing a warm and inviting atmosphere. A gradual introduction to the nursery through meetings and visits to school, together with helpful information given to parents, ensures children make a good start.

61 Early checks show that children are below average when they start in the nursery, particularly in their speaking and listening skills. By the end of the reception year, children have made good progress and reach the expected levels in most areas of learning. Some children achieve above these levels, particularly in number in their mathematical development and reading in communication, language and literacy, with progress here being very good.

62 In communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal, social and emotional development and physical development, standards are average and progress is good. Standards in children's creative development are below the expected level by the end of reception year and progress is satisfactory. In aspects such as spoken language, use of imagination, investigation, independence and creativity, children do not make the progress they should because these opportunities are not sufficiently well planned for. Children who have special educational needs are identified at an early stage, receiving good support and making the same progress as their peers. Those children requiring support in English as an additional language make good progress too, again because of the good support and the early intervention.

63 The quality of teaching is good overall but there are variations between classes and year groups. Most teachers work very hard to plan and organise their lessons but for some children these are not sufficiently based on daily assessments so that not all children build on what they have already learnt. The teaching of a subject-based curriculum means that the basic skills are taught well.

64 The quality of teaching in the nursery is satisfactory and sometimes good. The sound teaching involves a committed, shared team approach. Work is planned to the Foundation Stage guidelines involving both inside and outdoor activities. There are good, regular opportunities for children to learn, for example as they count the number of children in class each morning. Where sessions are too long, however, their learning slows because many cannot concentrate for the expected periods of time or work is too hard for them. When staff take part in play activities, however, children's learning is improved, for example when using a camera in the 'home' area to enhance their ICT skills. Time is allowed for children to plan or consolidate their learning in the nursery, for example at the beginning and end of a lesson, but this is not always used sufficiently well to help children think about what they are learning and what they have achieved.

65 The quality of the teaching for the reception children is good overall but inconsistent between classes. For some reception children the teaching of the basic skills is frequently good, hence the very good progress made by some children in aspects of their mathematical development and reading. Those children who need further help are well taught in groups by support staff. However, where teaching is too prescribed and routines too directed,

opportunities to develop children's initiative, independence and creative ideas are few. The support staff play an important role in the development of children's learning in both year groups.

66 Children enjoy coming to school. In both the nursery and the reception classes they are happy and settled into a secure routine. Parents sometimes assist in classes and help their children at home using the 'numeracy packs' and reading books in the reception classes.

67 The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory and provides a sound range of activities across most areas of learning. However, due to the planning of the subject-style curriculum, activities are not sufficiently well balanced to provide for all areas of learning effectively. Good emphasis is placed on aspects of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and on knowledge and understanding of the world but less emphasis is placed on spoken language, and imaginative, creative and personal development. The curriculum is planned using the stages of learning known as the 'stepping stones' but in some cases these are not specific enough to reflect the small stages of learning on a day-to-day basis. Throughout the three classes there are sufficient resources but these need to be more regularly and easily accessible so that children can take more responsibility for their own learning, make choices and learn to think for themselves.

68 The accommodation for the nursery children is good, with separate rooms for reading and role-play together with a covered balcony area. The accommodation for the reception children is satisfactory. The reception rooms are small but the central resource area for these children is good, with water available. However, this area is not used effectively to provide for all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum and would benefit from a more organised and creative approach. Resources are satisfactory overall apart from those in the reception central area. The outdoor provision is for the nursery children only; however the reception children use the nursery area three times each week. Plans to redevelop the outdoor area for early years children is part of the capital programme to commence in the near future.

69 The assessment procedures are satisfactory. The new assessment profiles represent a record of the continuous build of skills and knowledge to the early levels of the National Curriculum, creating a good flow of assessment information. Day-to-day informal assessment highlights those children requiring support and those who are most able. The daily planning, although extensive, does not focus sufficiently on specific activities and does not always form the basis of the following week's work. All staff know their children well and information is regularly collated but not shared between year groups.

70 The leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has attended numerous courses and has tried hard to provide some continuity between the nursery, reception classes and Year 1. Revisiting the Foundation Stage training material by Foundation Stage, Year 1 and 2 staff would help to enlighten and refocus the learning opportunities provided and raise awareness of these throughout the school.

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

71 Most children enter the nursery class with skills that are below average in their personal, social and emotional development. Children make good progress so that by the end of the reception year they achieve most of the Early Learning Goals, the levels expected of most children, in this area of learning. Teaching is good overall.



72 Although younger children do not have enough opportunities to make choices and develop their independence in the selection of resources, they are secure and confident in their understanding of the daily nursery routines.

73 In the nursery they share and play happily, for example as they play in the home room or the 'Sea Life Centre'. They are becoming more confident in the way they play together, but this 'choosing' session is too short to provide valuable experiences and does not match the recommendations set out in the national guidance.

74 Reception children mostly behave well and understand what is expected of them throughout the sessions. Children mostly concentrate and work hard in activities with staff but these staff-directed sessions in the nursery are too long, resulting in many children becoming distracted and unable to concentrate.

75 Relationships are very good throughout and nursery children are happy and secure in their 'family groups'. They manage their dressing and undressing well and also cope with matters of personal hygiene during the nursery day.

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

76 By the end of the reception year standards overall are in line with the expected levels and children make good progress. Standards in reading are above the expected level for many children and they make very good progress by the end of the reception year. Teaching overall in the Foundation Stage is good.

77 The emphasis placed on reading and writing results in good standards. However, there are insufficient planned and incidental opportunities for children to develop their spoken language throughout the Foundation Stage.

#### *Speaking and listening*

78 In the nursery the organisation of the sessions does not allow sufficient time for children to practise and develop their spoken language. Children play in the role-play 'home room' but use a limited range of familiar words to play together. In activities such as 'making a flag' children do not talk to each other and the adult language is mainly concerned with the materials being used. Some language used is beyond the children's understanding, for example 'surf' and 'spinning out of control' and when 'packing a suitcase' in a group, children are unable to name many items shown including 'arm bands' and 'sun cream'. However, when the children played a 'shell' game involving words to describe position all were accurate. On occasions, questions asked demand a low level of response but there are examples of teachers posing questions that require more thought. Children join in with planned sessions of rhymes and songs and respond well to simple instructions, having good encouragement from the nursery staff. There are few incidental songs and rhymes sung throughout the day.

79 In the reception classes children also have few planned opportunities to speak to each other in the course of a session and there is insufficient time planned into the curriculum for the development of children's spoken language. Where there is staff involvement in role-play, children attempt to speak in short sentences and extend their vocabulary, very often through listening to others. However, where the role-play activity is poorly resourced and lacks focus and organisation, the development of children's language is unsatisfactory. Because many activities are too directed, children are not developing their spoken language through independent play and making choices.

## *Reading*

80 Children in the nursery listen and join in with stories in groups with an adult. They are interested in books and join in to share their favourite stories. During 'story time' children listen and respond enthusiastically to a story about a beach ball and recognise items such as the 'title page' but do not at first understand what a beach ball is. Children find their names when they arrive at the nursery and borrow library books on a regular basis.

81 Reception children have a specific area where they can share and enjoy books but there is little time to do so. However, there are regular well-focused reading sessions that are well led by the teachers who ask very specific questions, paying good attention to expression in their reading. Children use initial sounds and picture cues to help them in their reading.

## *Writing*

82 Nursery children practise their writing mostly in directed groups with the class teacher, for example writing in a book about a 'lighthouse'. They have few opportunities in terms of time and resources to practise their writing individually, for example in the role-play area involving 'writing' notes or lists. In the reception classes a good emphasis is placed on the basic skills of writing. Children write over and under their teacher's writing, with some progressing to write their own words in order to create a short sentence. However, children have few opportunities to have fun in their writing activities due to very directed planning. Again there are few opportunities to practise their words independently in organised play situations.

## **Mathematical development**

83 By the time children reach the end of the reception year, they reach the Early Learning Goals, but in number achievement is better. This represents good progress in relation to children's standards on entry to the school. Teaching is good overall.

84 Incidental learning is used well in the nursery to develop mathematical understanding. They take turns to count the number of children in the classroom and write the numbers on a white board. Teachers use snack time in the nursery to extend children's mathematical development as they count how many cartons of milk are needed. They practise their mathematical language using their treasure boxes but there are not enough planned opportunities to experiment and investigate, for example in the home area, or weighing and measuring, or using construction or small sorting apparatus. Children use sand but the short period of time does not allow all children to have these experiences often enough.

85 In the reception classes children record addition and subtraction to a good standard. In practical activities they count on from a given number using a number line and recognise and use numbers to 20. A significant number of children use numbers beyond this level with understanding. Opportunities to investigate in mathematics are not sufficiently planned for and some sessions are over-directed.

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

86 Teaching is good overall and children make good progress, reaching the expected goals by the end of the reception year.

87 In the nursery children are encouraged to decide what should be packed in a suitcase to be taken to the seaside, sorting the objects in a group. They look at different sorts of materials as they make a small-scale nursery garden on a cardboard plate. However,

opportunities to look at how things change as they roll and cut play dough, mix paint and experiment with containers of water, for example, are brief.

88 Reception children cover an extensive programme of work in their books covering a wide range of aspects within this area of learning. Children learn about hot and cold, covering aspects of clothing, the weather, and the changes that happen when an ice-pop is placed in a freezer. To develop their understanding of places, a parent talked to them about Jamaica, showing photographs and artefacts. This then developed into children making paper islands using newspaper and glue. Although a lot of topics are covered not enough emphasis is placed on opportunities for children to investigate and find out things for themselves.

89 Computers are used well in both year groups and the children take photographs of each other using a Polaroid camera.

### **Physical development**

90 By the end of the reception year children make good progress and reach the expected goals in this area of learning. Teaching is good overall.

91 Nursery children practise their climbing and balancing skills both indoors and outdoors and have planned opportunities to use small apparatus, bikes and wheeled toys in their play area. The nursery outside area is safe and good use is made of it for adventurous play. The reception children use this area three times each week. The reception classes do not have a specific play area but development plans to improve the shared nursery playground are part of a whole-school capital programme.

92 Nursery children use the hall on a regular basis and develop a good range of skills through dance. They stop and start during a game of 'traffic lights' following various commands and perform 'sea creature' dances to a variety of music with obvious enjoyment. Reception children all dance together in the hall, make a good attempt when performing the steps of a 'line dance' and have a good sense of space in their Caribbean dances. Teachers use children's ideas well to develop a good range of movements. The wide selection of music in these lessons contributes to the children's good progress. All teachers ensure that children warm up before exercise and that children are aware of the effects that exercise has on the body. Children gain confidence in handling small apparatus and improve their dexterity by cutting, gluing and joining materials.

### **Creative development**

93 Children achieve standards that are below the expected levels by the end of the reception year but are making satisfactory progress. Teaching is satisfactory overall.

94 Creative development of children is hampered by the organised way in which art and music are taught. Lessons are over-directed, resulting in a lack of opportunity for children to use their imagination and to develop their individual levels of creativity. Resources such as paint, fabric and glue and musical instruments are not accessible for the nursery and reception children to experiment with. Through a wide range of planned activities children are taught skills that they will need as they move through the school but opportunities to explore the media and have fun are very limited. Role-play opportunities in the nursery are good but there is a limited amount of time to gain from these experiences. Role-play and other opportunities for the reception children are unsatisfactory in the way they are planned, resourced and accessed and used as a reward for completing a piece of work. The organisation of the lessons and the planned opportunities available are insufficient to promote the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.

## Areas for further development

- Plan more opportunities for speaking.
- Review the curriculum to provide opportunities to develop children's creativity, particularly in the use of their imagination.
- Provide opportunities to develop children's independence, to plan and make choices, and to investigate and experiment.
- Establish a more cohesive and informed team to include Year 1 in terms of planning and understanding.
- Ensure that assessments guide the planning for all children at an appropriate level.

## ENGLISH

95 Attainment overall in the juniors is broadly average, although in the current Year 6 standards are well below average. Year 6 contains a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and a significant proportion of pupils who have not been at this school throughout their compulsory education. Some pupils in Year 5 are already outstripping the Year 6 pupils and achieving well. Pupils throughout the school, including Year 6, are making good progress and are achieving well in relation to similar schools. As the result of the school's work, standards in the infants are now above average in reading and average in writing.

96 Pupils' speaking and listening skills are generally sound in terms of everyday communication, but there are shortcomings in using language effectively for learning. Infant pupils are willing to talk about what they have done, and their personal interests. They listen to instructions and explanations and answer appropriately when asked factual questions. They attempt to use the technical vocabulary introduced in lessons but do not always realise words have exact meanings. Junior pupils talk confidently to adults, and show an awareness of the need to project their voices for a larger audience. They take account of what other pupils have said, although they seldom extend or refute an argument. They know that Standard English is used in formal situations. However, there are weaknesses in grammar, which affect writing, particularly the correct use of irregular verbs like 'did', subject/verb agreement and consistent use of the same tense. Pupils' limited understanding of vocabulary, including shades of meaning, has an adverse effect on their ability to use context when reading and to fully comprehend some texts. In the infants a significant number of pupils fail to answer the question posed and just respond to a key word in the question instead. In the juniors pupils are generally reluctant to give reasons when asked to do so.

97 Reading in the infants is above average, and up to and including Year 5 is broadly average, but there are shortcomings at the expected level (level 4) and beyond for Year 6. Most Year 2 pupils read simple texts accurately and talk satisfactorily about what they have read. When they encounter unknown words they use an appropriate strategy to work out what they are, including looking at the picture, using letter sounds and identifying a word they know within the word such as 'and' in 'standing'. Few immediately use contextual information, though. Older pupils show a general understanding of what they have read and state readily what they have enjoyed, although rarely why. They express tastes for a particular author or genre. Lower attaining Year 6 pupils read independently, but are not always accurate and do not notice when their errors do not make sense. They cannot state readily what they have read and their reading is often monotonous. Average and higher attaining Year 6 pupils read confidently and accurately, often with appropriate expression. They make sensible predictions about a story line, but are weak at summarising what has happened previously. Few pupils infer or deduce meaning. Even higher attainers do not skim and scan for

particular information; they read from the start of the page even when searching for a particular fact or subject. Pupils are not confident about applying their knowledge of the library and the way books are organised to enable them to locate information confidently. They know the library has specified colours for a category of books and locate the shelf, but struggle to find a relevant volume. When prompted they use the contents and index, but their first strategy is to turn the pages or read from the beginning.

98 Writing is average in the infants and broadly average in Years 3 to 5, but well below average in Year 6. Most Year 2 pupils write simple pieces for different purposes. Their writing is structured to suit the purpose of the piece. Spelling of everyday words is generally accurate, and where words are incorrect they follow a rule or pattern which pupils have learnt. Pupils use full stops and capital letters with reasonable consistency. Higher attaining pupils punctuate more accurately, including remembering exclamation marks and question marks when they are needed and use more interesting words to enliven their writing. Lower attaining pupils fail to use many full stops. Older pupils write for a wide range of purposes with an appropriate consideration for the style and audience. They show an increasing knowledge of the use of punctuation marks in exercises, but are less confident about using them in extended pieces of work. Spelling in redrafted work is usually accurate. Higher attainers include a wider vocabulary and occasionally use devices such as similes to enliven their work. Although higher attaining Year 6 pupils use a range of punctuation, more complex sentences and words chosen for a particular purpose, most average attainers just write with some awareness of the style and often quite briefly. They do not sustain the use of punctuation marks beyond full stops. Lower attainers still struggle to remember full stops, make spelling errors in common words and experience difficulty organising their thoughts. Handwriting is a strength throughout the school, with a positive effect on presentation and pupils' pride in their work. Many Year 2 pupils are beginning to join their writing and by Year 6 most writing is neat and fluent.

99 English is very well taught in Years 2, 5 and 6 and well taught elsewhere. The National Literacy Strategy has been very effectively used by the school to plan work for pupils. All pupils are introduced to the themes and genres recommended for their age groups and associated work is tackled in introductions and plenary sessions, but the actual writing tasks set for pupils to complete independently are planned effectively to build on their prior learning. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers because of this approach, work being related to the class topics but reinforcing basic skills, particularly those identified in individual education plans. Effective support by learning support practitioners in lessons and by teachers when pupils are withdrawn ensures pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, are successful. Targeted support for pupils with English as an additional language focuses appropriately on spoken language before any writing so that vocabulary and grammar are corrected. Planned application of skills taught in literacy lessons in subjects like geography, music and RE shows pupils why they need the skills and gives additional practice. For example using poetic writing in science, a Year 3 pupil wrote:

*Long, long ago the earth was a burning ball of gas.  
Slowly it became cool.  
The gas turned to a runny liquid.  
Then the outside grew hard and turned into rock.  
The rocks made a crust around the earth,  
But deep down inside the earth it is still hot.*

100 Basic skills are thoroughly taught and constantly reiterated and consolidated. Teachers effectively model writing so that pupils see good examples to which they can aspire. Expectations of what pupils should achieve are particularly high in the very good lessons and pupils rise to the challenge when set challenging tasks. These expectations also

affect the amount of work completed in most year groups, and result in pupils working hard, being productive and having a lot of practice. Regular homework is set, often useful in reinforcing work of the day, as in Year 2 where pupils had to find five 'wh' words which did not indicate a question.

101 Teachers are very effective at marking pupils' written work, praising pupils for reaching objectives but making it clear what they need to do to improve. There is consistent use of the school's marking policy by all teachers. Everyday focus on targets and effective displays, such as the flies for frogs and bones for dogs in Year 2, actively encourage pupils to know what they need to learn and they want to reach the targets set for them. 'Pen licences' are effective in promoting neat handwriting. Teachers question pupils well and offer regular opportunities to talk to a partner before sharing their thoughts with the class, which builds their confidence in making contributions. However, not all pupils' incorrect speech is corrected and when pupils need time to consider how to express their response it is not necessarily provided (often due to the brisk pace of the lesson). The use of assessment data is not as effective in reading when more advanced skills become necessary, so older, more able, pupils are not given enough guidance on the books they read or on how to apply the skills to which they have been introduced. As a result, higher attaining Year 6 pupils often read fiction books which are too easy. Even though the library was largely unavailable to Year 6 pupils because of the building works, opportunities to use non-fiction texts are limited. ICT is very rarely used in English lessons even though pupils redraft and edit work regularly.

102 There is a shortage of challenging fiction in the school library for older higher attaining pupils, including sufficient works by favourite authors like Roald Dahl and J. K. Rowling. Most Year 6 pupils were reading books brought from home, and the volumes in school did not appeal to them. What is available in the library and in classrooms is not organised well so that pupils can access what they enjoy, and thus is not promoting the selection of a wider or more demanding range. Similarly, there are very few texts on some subjects in the non-fiction collection, and because the books are colour-coded rather than properly classified it is often difficult to find a book on a particular subject even if the stock includes some.

103 To continue to raise standards in English, the school should:

- use ICT regularly for editing and redrafting and for locating and using information;
- guide older pupils into reading material which is challenging and promotes higher order<sup>1</sup> reading skills;
- actively promote those speaking skills which support learning such as the ability to develop an argument, to reason, generalise and debate;
- improve stocks of non-fiction books in the library and challenging and popular fiction for older pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

104 Standards in Year 2 are well above average. In national tests in 2002 every pupil attained the expected level 2, and almost half the higher level 3, and results in 2003 are very similar. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 3 puts the school into the top five per cent of schools nationally. Pupils make consistent progress from the Foundation Stage onwards, being well taught by teachers with high expectations. The dramatic improvement between results in 2000 and 2001 has been maintained, and the quality of learning in the present Year 1 classes indicates that this will continue. Relatively small classes and the practice of teaching pupils in ability sets help to ensure that all pupils are both challenged and supported as necessary. These factors make a significant contribution to pupils' very good progress overall.

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<sup>1</sup> Skills such as the use of inference and deduction, skimming, and scanning.

105 Current standards by the end of Year 6 are average. Results in national tests in 2002 indicated average attainment nationally, both for the proportion of pupils attaining level 4 and the higher level 5. When compared to similar schools, attainment was well above average, although the school's challenging target of 86 per cent of pupils at level 4 was not achieved. Current Year 6 pupils are unlikely to perform as well, as indicated by a lower target of 72 per cent to achieve level 4 or above. This can be related to other factors, including a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs and considerable movement of pupils in and out of school during the year. However, the work produced by pupils in Years 3 to 5, both in their books and in the lessons observed, suggests that standards are improving rapidly and are above those expected nationally. Again high quality teaching, small class numbers and placing pupils in ability sets makes a strong contribution. The fact that these pupils have had all their education since the age of seven in the new school also means they have been exposed to consistent practice and expectations.

106 There is a good focus on mental calculation throughout the school. Sessions are short and sharp, with clear intentions that pupils understand. Teachers are careful to use correct mathematical vocabulary and encourage pupils to do the same, so that by Year 6 many pupils are familiar with terms such as 'inverse operation', and can give examples to demonstrate their understanding. This emphasis on vocabulary is particularly helpful to pupils with English as an additional language, as there is a consistent approach across the school. In a Year 2 lesson, through very effective questioning pupils are encouraged to look for patterns when remembering addition bonds and explain their reasoning. The challenge is to remember quickly and beat their previous best, involving all the pupils fully. Teachers emphasise strategies, so that pupils are used to explaining how they arrived at their answer, and understand that there are different ways to tackle problems. All this supports pupils' understanding, as well as the development of appropriate skills.

107 Work in pupils' books, as well as the content of lessons seen, indicates that all aspects of mathematics are given appropriate attention. The ability of pupils to use and apply the skills they learn is identified as a key objective, and an extra session each week is devoted to this. Pupils are accustomed to solving word problems, with particular attention being given to those whose English is less secure. This is a positive response to an identified concern. Pupils' ability to reason and explain how they achieved their answers when calculating is indicative of good teaching which encourages pupils to think as well as memorise. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2, for example, sort and classify different numbers confidently, explaining why they are in different categories and where these overlap. There is less evidence of pupils investigating independently, for example looking for patterns in numbers, or coming to a general statement from their own investigations.

108 Pupils with special educational needs progress as well as their peers. Teaching pupils in ability groups, both by setting them and within the sets, ensures that learning is usually targeted at a suitable level, and the small numbers and use of classroom assistants lead to plenty of individual attention. Where tasks set are too challenging, as in a Year 2 lesson on fractions, this is quickly recognised and the next lesson changed in response. There is little evidence of pupils' mathematical weaknesses being targeted in individual education plans, and the school is aware of this. Higher attaining pupils are sometimes moved up to the next year group so that they are working at a challenging level, and this is very effective.

109 Good quality regular assessment ensures that teachers are fully aware of pupils' progress, and allows them to intervene where necessary. Marking in pupils' books is regular and helpful, with misunderstandings picked up and helpful comments made. All teachers set short-term targets for individual pupils at regular intervals. Pupils are generally aware of

these, and where they are used most effectively the pupils have a good idea of what they need to do to achieve the next steps in the National Curriculum. The school is working hard to involve pupils in their own learning, so that they (and their parents) know what they need to do to improve. It is therefore out of character that the targets for mathematics in pupils' reports are sometimes vague: for example 'continue to produce work of a high standard'. Classroom and school displays vary, and do not always celebrate either pupils' achievement or understanding as well as they might. Interactive displays, 'challenge of the week', etc, would help to give mathematics the high profile it deserves.

110 The National Numeracy Strategy is used very well, not least because the school has adapted it where necessary to serve the needs of its pupils, for example by the extra emphasis on problem solving and mental calculations. The use of numeracy in other subjects is considered at the planning stage, and plans are sometimes adapted to take advantage of specific mathematical skills being taught currently. A more formal system, for example ensuring that work on graphs in mathematics is always supported by practical applications in other subjects such as science and geography, would ensure that skills learned are made relevant to pupils. At present there is little evidence of links between mathematics and ICT, although there are clear intentions to improve the position once the computer suite is up and running.

111 The work in pupils' books indicates that teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school. Pupils produce a good quantity of work, which is both suitably challenging and largely accurate. The latter is helped by their presentation, which is almost always neat and careful. Most enjoy mathematics and work very hard, responding to high teacher expectations. Pupils enjoy talking to visitors and are confident when explaining their reasoning. Teaching in lessons seen was good in the infants, and very good in the juniors. Teachers work with pace, and with clear intentions which are shared with the pupils. The very good relationships and behaviour management mean that lessons are productive, with little time wasted. A particular feature is the use made of the plenary session at the end of the lesson, when teachers review the learning with the pupils. Rather than just confirming what pupils were supposed to learn, teachers often take this further, challenging the pupils to use their knowledge. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, where pupils had been developing written methods for subtraction, the teacher realised they had coped better than anticipated and adapted the plenary to involve decimal numbers. Because the pupils do this successfully, it builds their confidence and their belief in themselves as mathematicians. Classroom assistants work well when supporting groups or individuals, but are not always used effectively when whole-class teaching is taking place.

112 Both leadership and management of the subject are very good. Very good use is made of assessment and tracking so that the co-ordinator is aware of both the progress of individual pupils and standards overall. Very clear intentions over time, supported by a clear focus on teaching and learning, have led to excellent progress over time. The work in pupils' books is analysed regularly by the co-ordinator but also annually by the whole staff, so that everyone is aware of progress across the school and between groups of pupils. Classroom observations have a specific focus: last time this included use of the plenary session, so it was clearly successful. The subject is in a strong position to maintain and build on the improvement made.

113 To continue to raise standards the school should:

- increase the expectations of pupils' independence and provide more opportunity for pupils to plan, organise and evaluate their own investigations.

## **SCIENCE**



114 The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 indicate standards below the national average and in line with the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 at the end of Year 6 has risen from zero per cent in 2001 to 38 per cent in 2002. The school is rightly proud of its achievements at this level. At the end of Year 2, teacher assessments indicate levels of attainment to be below the national average. However, pupils' achievements in science show a rapidly improving picture across the school, and are average overall. A detailed scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson observations and discussions with pupils indicate levels of attainment at the end of Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 to be broadly average. Scrutiny of pupils' work in the present Year 1 indicates standards to be above average for the age group. This is due to the well-planned opportunities for pupils to undertake and record their own scientific investigations, predictions and simple conclusions that clearly reflect an understanding in scientific terms of what has taken place and why. In other year groups the opportunities for pupils to demonstrate flair and initiative in scientific recording are somewhat restricted by the controlled nature of the work undertaken. By contrast, the scrutiny of work in the present Year 2 and Year 6 indicates standards to be below average.

115 Around 50 per cent of the pupils in the present Year 6 have joined the school during the last two years, and over 50 per cent have required additional support with their learning. This has inevitably had an adverse impact on overall standards. Standards are not as high as they should be in Year 2, as the school's emphasis has been on raising standards in English and mathematics as the main priority. During the inspection no discernible difference was observed in the progress of boys and girls. However, the achievement of some pupils is not as high as it could be, as in some lessons they are provided with only limited opportunities to investigate science independently and do their own research using computers or books. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that the majority of work follows a familiar theme, with all pupils undertaking the same work and following the same format directed by the teacher. Consequently, many conclusions fail to reflect a correct scientific understanding of why things have happened. The school has already recognised this as an area for further development as it revisits the present assessment procedures to include the charting of pupils' progress in the aspect of using and applying in science. An additional area of concern was the lack of science work in Year 6 pupils' books between March and June. In discussion with staff, the reason given was that pupils undertake a series of tasks in preparation for the national tests. Nevertheless work undertaken in relation to life processes and living things is sparse in content and application.

116 Overall, the teaching of science is good throughout the school. A good lesson in Year 1 produced a positive learning opportunity for all pupils to understand that plants need light and water to grow well. The confident teaching consolidated pupils' learning at a fairly rapid pace using good motivational skills. The tasks were well adapted to pupils' existing levels of knowledge and understanding. The teacher skilfully challenged pupils to describe the need to use our observational skills sensibly when comparing the growth between respective plants. Pupils listened very well and the subsequent well-planned group work provided a very good opportunity for co-operation. In Year 4 a very good lesson prompted pupils to select appropriate equipment to make a simple electrical circuit to light up a 'clown's nose'. Pupils discussed in a very mature manner the fact that, when positioned in place to represent the clown's nose, the bulbs needed securely attaching to the rear of the card and that the 'home-made switch' also needed a secure base if it was to operate efficiently. Pupils concentrated throughout, with the teacher insisting that suitable connections to make the simple circuit were rightly positioned. Clearing away at the end was undertaken at lightning speed, very efficiently and with the minimum of fuss. Pupils' behaviour throughout was exemplary.

117 In the occasional lesson where teaching is fairly pedestrian and lacks pace and sparkle, tasks fail to give pupils an active 'hands-on' experience. Teachers' subject

knowledge is barely secure and pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to conduct their own investigations. The class teacher prescribes, in a very controlling manner, all preparation, including the experimental procedures. Often time is ineffectively used where teachers require pupils to write out a list of apparatus, method undertaken and a labelled drawing, thus restricting pupils' opportunity to predict and hypothesise what the outcome might be.

118 The majority of pupils' books reflect a wider coverage of the subject with the exception of Year 6. The quality of pupils' drawing is good throughout the school. There are good opportunities to practise and consolidate literacy and numeracy skills such as recording the health and safety aspects of using electricity in the home. Pupils' recording uses a limited range of charts. The use of scientific language in their spoken and written work is limited. The planned use of ICT to underpin and consolidate pupils' science skills is at present unsatisfactory.

119 The subject co-ordinator, in post since September 2002, has worked hard to support secure teaching throughout the school. Management and leadership are effective and systematic monitoring of teaching and learning has been undertaken. Good assessment systems indicate pupils' gains in knowledge at the end of each science unit taught. The school is aware of the need for additional subject training to boost teachers' confidence related to the way practical work is planned to help pupils to develop scientific understanding in a less controlled framework.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

120 Standards of attainment by the age of seven and eleven are average in art and design. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress.

121 There has been less emphasis placed on art and design due to the greater focus on English, mathematics and science. The time for the subject is short in terms of recommended time allocations, although it is taught in 'blocks' of time, where pupils complete a planned piece of work. The national guidelines for art and design are used as the scheme of work, and an additional supplementary scheme supports the teaching and learning effectively. A portfolio of levelled or annotated work is being compiled, in order to guide teachers and raise their expectations. There is no judgement on the quality of teaching as only one lesson was seen in the juniors, therefore judgements are based on looking at pupils' work, examples of previous work completed during the year and talking to pupils about their work.

122 In the infants, there are examples of pupils developing ideas, involving techniques such as collage and colour mixing. Sketchbooks are used frequently but concentrate on a complete piece of work rather than testing and trying out new ideas. In conversation, pupils in Year 2 had difficulty explaining the term 'texture' in art and were unable to recall any primary colours. However, they know that adding white to black produces grey, and red and yellow produce orange. Pupils draw leaves from observation and explore the technique of 'looking through a viewfinder' to observe and draw an object in close detail. Overall the work produced is of a good quality and in some cases represents an interesting use of media.

123 In Key Stage 2 there are many art examples displayed involving a good range of media. Some teachers plan opportunities to look closely at the work of famous artists, to appraise the quality of their work or emulate their techniques. For example, pupils in Year 5 look at the work of Andy Warhol and reproduce his style in designing food labels. In conversation with some pupils in Year 6, they list Van Gogh, Picasso, Warhol and Alberto

Giacometti as famous artists and explain their styles of art. Year 6 pupils practise making a wire sculpture, following a discussion concerning Giacometti's 'people in action' that was the theme for a series of lessons.

124 Art supports other subjects. For example, younger pupils make Aztec masks and paper collage in history and geography and older pupils illustrate 'life cycles' in science. In Year 3 art is used in an ICT lesson creating patterns using *Dazzle* and it supports literacy in the way pupils are encouraged to talk about their book cover designs for the 'Harry Potter' Day. In Year 4 there are good examples of chair designs, which are used to good effect in creating an interesting and lively display. Groups of pupils in this age group take responsibility for the displays of artwork and this makes a good contribution to their personal development. By the age of eleven, pupils practise drawing facial expressions and movement sketches which are used to produce models depicting movement, using wire and foil. Teachers are imaginative in their ideas and make good attempts to stimulate and inspire their pupils but more planned opportunities need to be provided for pupils to make their own choices and be creative in a more individual way, rather than following the demonstrated model. Skills are being developed year on year and pupils now need to use these learned techniques in a creative way. Where the teacher displays a good level of expectation and expertise, makes suggestions and provides good encouragement, pupils work hard to complete their individual compositions and evaluate their work at the end of the session as they view the 'gallery' of completed work.

125 Pupils' attitudes are good. They are enthusiastic about art and agree that it is their favourite subject. In the lesson seen pupils were keen to achieve well and concentrated and listened to instructions carefully. Pupils worked diligently, displayed good levels of co-operation and learned well. They behaved very well and took a sensible approach to their work. Displays are attractive and pupils take a pride in their compositions.

126 The leadership is good. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively and over the last two years has endeavoured to raise the profile of art in the school. A portfolio of pupils' work is being compiled to aid the 'assessment through sketchbooks' project that is soon to be implemented. Resources are satisfactory but a central storage point would make them more accessible and manageable.

127 To continue to raise standards the school should:

- establish assessment procedures;
- ensure that knowledge and skills are built on systematically;
- use sketchbooks to test ideas;
- plan more opportunities for pupils to make choices and work independently and creatively;
- explore opportunities for pupils to experience art at first hand through visits, artists and artefacts.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

128 Standards are average for pupils by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school, including those pupils with special educational needs because they are supported well by their teachers. The curriculum is effectively planned using the government guidelines for design and technology and makes sound provision for all pupils. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make sound progress because work is well planned and pupils understand what they have to do.

129 Projects are varied and skills are developed systematically through the school, although the absence of a food technology area and resources is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but very good in Year 6. In the infants, younger pupils make items of playground equipment using shapes to build structures such as a swing or slide. Some pupils understand how the structure can be made stable, although some have difficulty joining the materials together with masking tape. When teacher's explanations and demonstrations are lengthy, pupils lose concentration and learning slows. Good resources help pupils to be successful and proud of their achievements. Opportunities are given for pupils to explain what they have done or how it could be better, which supports literacy in the development of spoken English. In Year 2 pupils design and make a glove puppet. Due to the good teaching here, pupils improve their skills and understand that, although a design is important, aspects can be changed. Correct technical vocabulary is encouraged and "the thingy" is not accepted as an appropriate response to a question. Pupils are encouraged to make choices and develop their practical skills, with good emphasis placed on following a design. In conversation with pupils in Year 2 they said that, "if a product is cheap it might fall apart and if it is expensive it is usually good because it is well made." Another boy said that on his father's shoe stall, "Well-made shoes are expensive because the materials are good." In contrast a girl said that the head of her doll fell off, "...and that wasn't well made!"

130 The importance of well-organised and sufficient resources used appropriately was highlighted in a lesson in Year 3. Here the tubing used in a pneumatics experiment was not the same size as the syringe, necessitating the use of sellotape to secure the join which proved to be unsatisfactory. In Year 4 the class teacher suggested foil as a material to be used to make a sound pad to place under a carpet to serve as an alarm. This prevented any further ideas being generated by the pupils. A good range of storybooks to use with the reception children was seen in a Year 4 display. These were pop-up books involving features such as levers and pivots. Skills were taught well, for example in a Year 6 lesson involving the planning stage in the manufacture of a slipper. All pupils were well supported by the very good teaching and all were successful because the lesson was well organised. The emphasis placed on demonstration was sufficient to encourage pupils to develop a good level of confidence and expertise in order to complete the slipper competently.

131 Teachers are more confident since the implementation of the new scheme of work and have improved their levels of expertise in design and technology through supplementary material. Pupils' relationships in lessons are good, they mostly behave very well, and when the teaching is well focused pupils are sensible. When the teaching involves too much time in demonstrations and interest wanes, some pupils become inattentive and silly. The curriculum is good and focuses appropriately on skills' development. A system of assessment is being developed to include the use of a digital camera. A portfolio of work has begun to assist teachers in their assessment of standards. ICT links are being made to support designs and ideas and there are satisfactory links with literacy and numeracy in measurement and estimation and in speaking and listening.

132 The leadership is good, with good strategies being put in place to support teaching and the assessment of pupils. The general resources are satisfactory overall but the storage arrangements and accessibility form part of the action plan for improvement.

133 To continue to raise standards the school should:

- establish assessment procedures;
- monitor teaching and learning;
- provide an area and resources for food technology;
- share good practice in the teaching of design and technology in order to develop more opportunities for pupils to work independently and make their own choices.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

134 Pupils attain most aspects of the expected standards by the end of Year 2. Progress through the junior years is unsatisfactory, especially in mapping skills, so that by the end of Year 6 pupils have not reached the expected level in knowledge or skills.

135 Pupils in infant classes learn about life in their own neighbourhood and compare and contrast it with life on a Scottish Island and in a Mexican village. They also contrast features of their urban area with those of a seaside environment before making a visit to explore the seaside for themselves. Teachers make good use of Barnaby Bear's imaginary travels to motivate pupils when learning about different places. Pupils begin to understand maps by making a map of their route to school and routes around the school. They use simple keys and symbols to represent features on these maps. They learn the country names and locate them on a map of the United Kingdom. Pupils have little opportunity to express views on environmental issues or recognise how people affect it, although these aspects are touched on incidentally during discussions.

136 Pupils in the junior classes do not spend enough time studying geography so they do not reach the expected standard. Much of the work covered is at a superficial level because of the time constraints. By the end of Year 6 pupils have learnt about life in a small Indian village. However, when a group of pupils was asked to locate India on a world map, only one could. These pupils correctly identified the continents and major climatic zones of the world but they were less sure of the oceans. The group were asked to describe the landscape depicted by a section of Ordnance Survey map and found this difficult. The more able pupils sensibly used information in the key to describe some of the features. None of the group was aware of contour lines or what they represented. However, when this was explained the more able pupils used this new knowledge to describe the topography correctly. When asked to discuss which of two possible sites was preferable for a proposed dam and reservoir, they could not recognise the direction of flow of the river, nor the extent of resultant flooding, using the contour line clues. They proposed some fairly simplistic advantages and disadvantages for each option, but could not give genuinely supportive arguments for either. During one lesson observed pupils needed a lot of prompting by the teacher to identify possible benefits and disadvantages of developing tourism in a mountain region.

137 In the few lessons seen, teaching was good. Teachers engage pupils' interest and motivation through interesting activities. Skills learned in English are practised through simple research tasks and different writing tasks, such as producing a travel poster or listing the similarities and differences between two localities. In some lessons, teachers resort to worksheets to complete tasks because of the limited time available. This is not satisfactory.

- 138 In order to raise standards, the school needs to:
- reconsider the amount of time allocated for geography;
  - ensure that pupils develop mapping skills to the required standard;
  - develop skills of analysis to a higher level;
  - ensure that all possible links with English, mathematics and ICT are included in the scheme of work and lesson planning.

## HISTORY

139 Standards in history in Years 1 and 2 are broadly average. At Years 3 to 6 they are below average. In the infant classes pupils learn that things were different in the past and begin to learn about some specific periods of history. Year 2 pupils, for example, learn about the Great Fire of London and know that, “the fire started in the bakers shop. the fire spreaded quickly”. They group famous people, past and present, in two lists. In the past list they include Elvis, Queen Victoria, Guy Fawkes and Samuel Pepys and in the present list have Tony Blair, Gareth Gates and David Beckham. They know some of the key facts about the life and work of Mary Seacole.

140 In the junior classes pupils study periods of history in line with the National Curriculum. In Year 6, for example, they learn about Ancient Greece. Their work shows that they have learned about the different forms of government in Athens and Sparta and about Greek warships. In discussion pupils remember some of the facts they have learned from their lessons. While they recall accurately some elements of their learning, like Greek warships being rowed by slaves, and Athens having a democratic form of government, their knowledge of history is rather superficial. As a result they know things like the order of Henry VIII’s wives from the rhyme they learned and that he had black teeth because they had no toothbrushes at that time. However, they get confused by other elements and think that Greek gods lived on Mount Athens, and that all poor people in Victorian times stole and “whacked their clothes to get them clean”, because they did not wash them. They do not relate the term Victorians to Queen Victoria but say they were called Victorians simply because they lived in Victorian times without much understanding of what that meant. They confuse the order of the periods studied so that Victorians preceded Tudors and Greeks. Time-lines in Year 5 work on the sequencing of periods of history confirm this confusion when pupils put periods in the wrong order. The work on Britain since the 1950s in that year group shows factual errors, such as listing types of communication associated with different periods including ‘mobiles, texting and pagers’ in the 1970s. There is little evidence of the pupils developing skills of historical research, understanding the value of different types of historical evidence or taking any responsibility for their own learning.

141 It was possible to see only one lesson during the inspection so it is impossible to make definitive judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. However, the analysis of pupils’ books and discussions with them indicate that the content of history lessons is always prescribed by the teacher with little or no scope for pupils to pursue their particular interests within the period being studied. There is no evidence of tasks being set at different levels according to pupils’ abilities. Some of the work is word for word the same in the books of the highest and lowest attaining pupils. There is an emphasis on learning some key facts about the period chosen by the teacher rather than on using the particular period to develop a deep and abiding love of history through equipping pupils with the skills to find out information for themselves and explore in depth aspects that particularly interest them. The marking of work tends to be little more than positive comments with no guidance on how to make their work better. There is little evidence of history being used to develop literacy or numeracy skills or of it making much use of ICT.

142 The assessment of what pupils know is not structured or rigorous enough to be able to identify precisely what they have learned already and what they need to learn next. In discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils, history did not feature strongly among their favourite subjects.

143 During the absence of the permanent co-ordinator another member of staff has been in charge of the subject. Keen and committed as she is, her role has been largely to oversee the subject rather than to drive forward improvements, although she appreciates where these are needed. The school has had to focus in its first three years on English, mathematics and science and as such has not developed other subjects as effectively. History features in the 'raising achievement' plan for a focus in the next school year and there seems little doubt that, if the same rigour and vigour are brought to bear on this subject, it will improve rapidly in the near future.

144 In order to improve standards and progress the school should:

- be more flexible and creative in the application of the national subject guidance;
- develop more effective systems for checking what pupils know and can do and use this information to match future tasks to their specific needs;
- give pupils more responsibility and the skills they need for planning, organising and evaluating their own learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

145 Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 are broadly average. However, standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 are below average. Progress has been severely restricted by the lack of resources for ICT, coupled with delays in planned staff training.

146 The school eagerly awaits the installation of the new computer suite, planned to be fully operational in January 2004. Staff training has yet to take place. The use of ICT is not at present in teachers' medium-term planning to support ongoing skills across all subjects. Assessment is unsatisfactory. Most teachers have a shared understanding about what needs to be assessed, but pupils' learning is not currently tracked or evaluated at sufficiently regular intervals to identify those who need more practice as opposed to those who need to refine and extend their skills further.

147 In discussion with Year 6 pupils, they talked enthusiastically about work that involved word-processing skills. It was clearly evident that they do not have enough experience of modelling software and sensing data and of controlling remote devices. This is holding standards down. During the inspection the majority of the computers in classrooms remained switched off, reflecting the subject's present low profile.

148 By the end of Year 2 most pupils know the basics of controlling the computer by means of a keyboard and mouse. They have had experience of basic operations, including the drawing of two-dimensional shapes using the mouse, clicking and dragging, linking numeracy and basic shape recognition.

149 By the end of Year 6, word-processing skills have developed to include the use of full stops and capital letters. Some pupils can copy a paragraph accurately using two hands on the keyboard.

150 An overall judgement about the quality of teaching cannot be made as only one lesson was observed in Year 3. Many opportunities are missed to make use of the computer to

support work in different subjects. Teachers lack confidence in integrating ICT into their work across the curriculum.

151 The nationally recommended guidelines have been adopted and these now form the basis of the work, both in the development of ICT and its use across the curriculum. The aspect of the curriculum covering making things happen through computer control is unsatisfactory at present. Whilst pupils are given planned experiences that contribute to this area of work, these do not give sufficient depth of understanding, nor do they develop pupils' skills and knowledge in a systematic manner.

152 The newly appointed co-ordinators are aware of the subject's areas for development and they are committed to improving the subject's present status. The good subject action plan has effective strategies to rectify the limitations of teacher expertise once the computer suite is fully operational. Improvements are imminent and staff training is planned to make sure that staff confidence and expertise are improved.

## **MUSIC**

153 Standards in music in Years 5 and 6 are below average, and there are weaknesses in pupils' skills and knowledge throughout the juniors. However, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are making good progress, which should enable them to achieve average standards by the time they reach the top of the school. Only one lesson was observed in the infants, so it is not possible to make an overall judgment for the end of Year 2.

154 Pupils sing reasonably tunefully and keep the pitch when accompanied and assisted, but many pupils have difficulty without a strong lead. Pupils also need direction to sing in unison. Pupils throughout the school do respond to direction, though, including starting and stopping on command in Year 2. Their diction is usually clear when singing and, when they have been made aware of how to do so, many pupils attempt to show suitable expression. Weekly song practice is assisting pupils to improve on these aspects of their singing and to introduce relevant vocabulary. However, significant numbers of pupils in the juniors struggle to keep the pulse and tempo, and an even greater proportion cannot reliably maintain a rhythm. Pupils' knowledge of relevant technical vocabulary is weak because they have been introduced to it only recently, and many do not understand that in music words have precise meanings, so offer any musical terminology they have heard. Pupils name general genres such as jazz, pop and opera but do not know any examples or how they differ. Although Year 6 pupils recall composing 'space' music, they are not able to explain how to go about composing or what makes a piece they have composed successful. Year 5 pupils did listen carefully and identify lack of expression when they heard their first recorded attempts at *Land of the Silver Birch*.

155 The teaching of music is generally satisfactory and sometimes better. Where teachers' subject knowledge is sound, they are able to tell pupils what they need to do to improve, and performance is clearly better, but not all teachers are able to identify precisely what needs correcting. While planning is satisfactory in terms of fitting the overall scheme of work, lack of consideration of pupils' prior learning means that some work is too challenging in lessons. The pace of some lessons is too slow and as a result pupils do not have enough practice. However, teachers do manage classes well, introduce and reiterate relevant vocabulary and offer praise and encouragement so that most pupils join in with enthusiasm and enjoy practical music-making.

156 Although there is a progressive scheme of work in place, it has not been taught long enough for pupils to reach the expected standards, and has not been modified so that gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are allowed for. As a result, pupils in Years 5 and 6 do



not have the experience in the subject to perform and compose with confidence. Some shortages of multi-cultural resources and music for appraising limit the scope of the experiences offered in lessons.

157 The subject has not been a priority for the school, so the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to evaluate provision and improve what the school offers. She has, therefore, taken effective steps to raise the profile of the subject and interest pupils by providing a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs including choir, glockenspiel and recorder for both infants and juniors. Pupils also have opportunities to have high quality peripatetic brass and string tuition and to join associated instrument ensembles. During the inspection all these groups and a Bhangra dance group from Year 6 accompanied by a pupil performed during an enjoyable 'sharing assembly' which will inspire more pupils to want to participate.

158 To raise standards in music more quickly the school should:

- increase teachers' expertise and confidence;
- adjust planning to take account of pupils' existing knowledge, skills and understanding.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

159 Standards in PE are average at both seven and eleven. Due to the way the curriculum is organised, it is only possible to report directly on standards in games in the infants and athletics in the juniors. Standards in these lessons were at expected levels, except in a Year 6 athletics lesson, where they were well above average, due largely to the exceptional quality of teaching. Planning shows that all aspects of the PE curriculum are covered appropriately. Swimming is taught throughout the juniors, with all pupils having a 15-week 'block' each year. Despite this, only around half the pupils achieve the national target of swimming 25 metres unaided, due to various factors including cultural issues and the closure of the local swimming baths.

160 There are opportunities for pupils to join after-school sporting clubs, such as football, cricket, aerobics, skipping and dance. These are open to both boys and girls and in some cases to infant pupils, ensuring equality of opportunity for all. Older pupils are also able to take part in a residential visit where some of the focus is on outdoor and adventurous activities. The co-ordinator is building links with the local high school through the 'School Sports Co-ordinator Scheme'. As well as adding to sporting links and encouraging pupils to participate, this is also developing an agreed system of assessment throughout the cluster of schools. This will address a weakness in provision, as there is currently no formal system to assess pupils' progress.

161 Teaching is good overall, with lessons seen ranging from sound to excellent. Pupils were all encouraged to warm up, and knew the reasons for this. In two lessons these warm-ups were excellent, with good aerobic exercise preceding thorough stretching of muscles. Where they were less effective, either one or the other element was missing, or taken in the wrong order. Relationships are a real strength. Teachers have very positive expectations, and pupils respond accordingly. Pupils also get along very well with each other, and there were examples in different lessons of pupils offering advice and helping each other in a thoughtful and sensitive manner.

162 In most lessons it was clear that pupils were building on previous knowledge and in this way developing their skills. Teachers rightly focused on skills; in the best lessons these were carefully explained and demonstrated and pupils were given plenty of opportunity to practise them. Where teaching was less successful, there was less intervention by the teacher and pupils reverted to throwing the ball without much effort at control, for example. In

planning, too, activities were not always pitched at a suitable level so that pupils could make progress. However, in most lessons pupils understood how to acquire new skills and through physical effort and interest made visible progress. In an excellent lesson in Year 6 on sprinting techniques, the quality of instruction and encouragement was matched by the determination of pupils, both natural performers and those who had to work hard. As a result all pupils made visible progress in both athletic ability and self-esteem.

163 The use of pupils as exemplars varied. While most teachers used pupils to show good practice, not all encouraged the others to explain what made their performance successful, or how it might be improved. This was a missed opportunity to use PE as a vehicle for encouraging accurate speaking and listening, especially for pupils with English as a second language. In some athletics lessons pupils were expected to use their numeracy skills in a practical way, measuring and timing each other's performance. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, take a full part in PE.

164 There is sound leadership and management in PE. The co-ordinator has worked hard to provide a balanced programme and develop extra-curricular activities and cross-phase links. He is aware of the need to provide an assessment system that will underpin consistent teaching and learning and has started working on this. Time is soon to be allocated for monitoring teaching and learning through lesson observations. This is especially important in PE, where there is no other way of judging pupils' progress year on year.

165 To continue to raise standards the school should:

- undertake regular monitoring of teaching and learning;
- develop a useful and realistic assessment system to underpin individual progress and overall standards;
- develop some form of target setting, leading to greater challenge and the involvement of pupils in their own learning.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)**

166 At the end of Year 2 pupils have gained the expected knowledge and understanding of religious belief and practice and of what it means to be members of different world faiths. They learn about places of worship, holy books and special festivals. From stories, they learn about special people from these faiths and special people in their own lives. They learn why it is important to have rules and why we should respect one another and each other's beliefs and practices. Pupils visit the local church and listen to visitors from other faiths.

167 Standards at Year 6 are good. Pupils make good progress through the junior years so that by the end of Year 6 they have studied different faiths in more depth. They have gained knowledge and understanding which is above average. Their learning goes beyond mere facts so that they develop a deeper understanding of what it means to have faith, and that it involves feelings and emotions and of how it affects their own and other people's lives. Religious education makes a very considerable contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

168 Teaching is invariably good with some very good and excellent lessons seen. A Year 6 teacher gave an extraordinarily sensitive lesson. Pupils had been studying Buddhism through the story of Buddha's life and teachings. They had learned about the eight-fold path and four noble truths. To deepen their knowledge and understanding further, the teacher set the atmosphere in a most sympathetic way to introduce pupils to a short period of true meditation. Afterwards pupils expressed a high awareness of changes that they had experienced in terms of peace, warmth and happiness. The teacher's relationship with her pupils meant they all trusted her and participated with a positive attitude. For everyone it was a truly spiritual experience.

169 Teachers have confidence in teaching the subject. The co-ordinator has developed the subject well. There is a good supply of resources to support lessons, artefacts to show how different faiths practise their worship and a good supply of pictures, books and videos. Some visits are made and the local priest and leaders of other faiths visit to speak to pupils. Pupils enjoy lessons. Teachers use a variety of strategies to maintain interest and enthusiasm. They make very good use of English skills to vary the tasks, including discussion and different forms of writing, such as narrative, poetry and prayer. Pupils study different texts to distinguish between literal and non-literal meaning and identify different genres in a range of Biblical extracts.

170 Pupils' learning could be enhanced even more by developing additional links with other faiths to give pupils more first-hand knowledge of what it means to belong to them. There is also a rich source of information among the parents, who might be willing to contribute to lessons.