

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH of ENGLAND (VA)
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bedworth

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 133282

Headteacher: Mrs Rosemary Bird

Reporting inspector: Barbara Crane
21227

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th November 2002

Inspection number: 249040

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: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Hazel Grove
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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr John Beaumont

Date of previous inspection: Not applicable

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21227	Barbara Crane	Registered inspector	English, art and design.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13485	Paul Widdowson	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion.	Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18703	Christine Canniff	Team inspector	Mathematics, music.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27541	John Collins	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology, special educational needs.	
16773	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, history, geography, physical education, English as an additional language.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This Voluntary Aided Church of England school is larger than most primary schools and has 271 pupils aged from four to eleven years. It opened in September 2001, following the amalgamation of an infant and a junior school that shared the same site but separate buildings. Plans are in hand to enable all of the pupils to be taught on one site next year. During its first year, the school had a very high turnover of staff. Half of the teachers are new to the school this year. When the children start at the school in Reception, attainment for most is very low, with particularly poor skills in language. Pupils from neighbouring infant schools join the school at the start of Year 3 and the attainment of most of these pupils is well below average. Thirty-five per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is higher than average, and six pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is also above average. The pupils' special needs include mainly learning and behavioural difficulties. In some year groups the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is much higher; for example, in the present Year 6 almost half of the pupils have special educational needs. Twenty-seven per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above average. A very small number of pupils are learning English as an additional language or come from Travellers families. Almost all of the pupils come from a white British background, but a small number are of dual heritage or come from Asian families.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school provides a sound education for its pupils and their personal development is supported very well. Standards are well below average in writing and mathematics and lower than most schools in reading and science, reflecting the low attainment when pupils are admitted to St Michael's. Following reorganisation last year, test results were disappointing, but most pupils, including the large number with special educational needs, now make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The teaching is satisfactory, although there is room for improvement so that all pupils are making the best possible progress. The management of the school is good and it has a good capacity to further improve because of the high quality lead given by the headteacher and the way in which the staff and governors work together to meet the targets set. The school provides satisfactory value for money

What the school does well

- The pupils' work in information and communication technology (ICT) is good.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception class.
- The pupils' behaviour is very good and they are keen to learn and take advantage of what the school offers.
- The school provides very well for pupils' personal development and so they grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- Support staff are used very well to help pupils' learning.
- The school communicates very effectively with parents and has built a strong partnership with them.
- The headteacher leads the school with a clear vision that is very firmly based on improving the quality of education provided and raising standards through checking what is working effectively and identifying what needs to improve.

What could be improved

- Pupils' progress in writing, mathematics and science is not as consistent as it should be because work is not always pitched at the right level.
- Standards in geography and history are too low.
- Teachers' expectations of what more able pupils can achieve are not always sufficiently high.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is the school's first inspection as it is a new school.

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				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	N/A	N/A	E	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	E	E	
Science	N/A	N/A	E*	E	

This is a new school and so it is not possible to see trends over time. The performance of eleven year olds in English and mathematics in 2002 was well below the average in most schools and the same in schools in similar circumstances. In science, the pupils' results were in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally and well below the results in similar schools. The performance of seven year olds in the 2002 tests in reading and mathematics was well below the national average and the average in similar schools. In writing, results were in the lowest five per cent of all schools and similar schools. On the basis of the work seen now, although standards are still well below average in writing and mathematics, more Year 6 pupils are reaching the level expected for their age but very few pupils are reaching the higher level. There is a similar picture of standards in writing, mathematics and science in Year 2. In reading, standards are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in science are below average in Year 6. Most of the pupils are making satisfactory progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science but the school's few more able pupils should be doing better. There are also occasions when the progress of lower attaining pupils is not as secure as it might be. This is mainly due to teachers not having sufficiently detailed information about the gaps that pupils have in their previous learning and so the work is sometimes pitched at the wrong level for pupils. The school has worked diligently and effectively over the past year to identify areas where pupils are not making the expected rate of progress and this has led to steady improvement. It is on track to meet the targets it has set for this year.

Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in lessons and rapid progress when they are taught in withdrawal groups. The very small number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language and pupils from Traveller families make satisfactory progress because their needs are taken into account. The pupils' work in ICT is better than expected for their age by the time they leave the school and they use computers very competently to support their learning in other subjects and to present their work. Attainment in history and geography does not reach the expectations for seven or eleven year olds because the pupils have too many gaps in their knowledge and understanding in these subjects. In all other subjects, attainment is broadly as expected for pupils' ages. Children in the Reception year make good progress and make considerable gains in learning from a low starting point, by the time they start Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils are very interested and keen to take part in activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils know what is expected and respond very well to the school's expectations.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils willingly take on responsibility and help each other. Their relationships are very good.
Attendance	Well below average attendance, mainly because of the high number of holidays taken in term time.

The school's strong Christian principles are well reflected in the pupils' very good relationships; pupils of all abilities and backgrounds play and work together happily. They enjoy school and want to learn because they feel secure and

valued. They are sensible, polite and respect each other and adults. They understand that they need to think about others' needs and feelings.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory but there are some lessons where teaching is not effective. Strengths in teaching include the good management of pupils' behaviour by all teachers and the way in which teachers encourage pupils to work together. Support staff enhance pupils' learning because they have a clear idea of what to do and check pupils' progress carefully. Teaching for Reception children is good because the teacher understands how young children learn and plans to meet their needs. Teaching in ICT is good because teachers have a good level of expertise and confidence in the subject. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good when they are taught in small groups because the work is very well matched to pupils' needs; as a result, pupils make rapid progress in these sessions. In classrooms, teaching is satisfactory but the work sometimes lacks the sharp focus on developing the skills that the pupils need and so their progress, while satisfactory, is slower. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory but there are times when the work is not planned at just the right level because teachers are not sure about the gaps in pupils' prior learning. This leads to work sometimes being too hard or easy for pupils and slows their progress. The teachers' expectations of what the more able pupils can do are sometimes too low and so the work lacks challenge for these pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is satisfactory. There is a very good range of activities outside lessons. The pupils use ICT well to support their learning in other subjects. The provision for personal, social and health education is a strength in the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school has made this a priority and has developed good systems to support these pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very small number of pupils is appropriately supported.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. The pupils know what is right and wrong because the school provides them with a firm framework. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to work together and help each other; as a result they get on very well. Pupils are encouraged to think about important things and reflect on their feelings. They develop a good awareness of their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The pupils' well-being is given a high priority. Staff know pupils well, give them good advice and provide a warm and supportive atmosphere in which pupils feel secure.

The school provides very well for pupils whose use of language limits their ability to relate to others, and these pupils gain in confidence when they are supported in the nurture groups. The teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to share their concerns and feelings at quiet times of the day when they sit together and listen to each other. The school has a good partnership with parents and provides them with very good information about its work and how well their children are doing. The school has worked very hard to establish ways of checking how well the pupils are doing. The lack of information about pupils' previous learning has hindered its ability to closely pinpoint gaps in both the infant and junior pupils' learning but the systems now in place are secure.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides a very good direction for the school; she is well supported by other staff with management responsibilities. The school has worked on the right things first and knows what it needs to do next.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors do everything they should and have a secure grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Although they are few in number, they work effectively to support the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school looks closely at teaching and learning to find areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school uses additional funding well to boost the attainment of pupils and provide additional support. The governors seek the best value for their expenditure, for example in the investment in ICT, which has led to better standards.

The school has been very well led through a period of change. There has been a great deal to do and in spite of considerable barriers to progress, all necessary policies and schemes of work have been devised and implemented. The effectiveness of the school's management is clearly seen in the success of its work to improve pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour. Having established this good climate for learning in its first year, the school is now working equally diligently and effectively on improving standards through careful checking of what is working well and where pupils' progress should be better. The governors, headteacher and staff work closely together as a team and the school's aims are clearly reflected in its everyday work. While there is still work to do to improve its provision, the school is in a good position because of the foundations it has laid in the past year.

The school's staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children like school and are expected to work hard. The teaching is good and children make good progress. The school is well led and managed. Children are helped to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents do not feel that the school works closely with them.

The inspection evidence supports most of the parents' positive views but not their concern. Children do like school and are expected to work hard but some could be doing better and there is room for improvement in teaching. The school makes a very good effort to work closely with parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children in the Reception year make good progress. Although few are likely to meet the goals for their age in any of the areas of learning except for physical development and in their personal and social development, they make considerable gains in learning, from a low starting point, by the time they start Year 1. This is because of the good teaching that meets the children's needs and caters for all abilities.
2. The school has worked hard over the past year to identify areas where infant and junior pupils are not making the expected rate of progress and this has led to steady improvement in their progress. Most pupils are now making satisfactory progress. The very small number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language and pupils from Traveller families make satisfactory progress because their needs are taken into account. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in lessons. When taught in small groups with the close support of learning assistants, progress is often good because they are able to make the small steps in their learning more quickly. This is because the targets in their individual education plans are in small steps that are attainable, clear and measurable. For example, the special educational needs co-ordinator worked very effectively with a group of Year 3 pupils to develop their literacy skills through a mixture of games and activities that were well matched to their previous knowledge and understanding. In some lessons where specific support is not available, the teachers do not match the work as well and so pupils' progress is slower. While the more able pupils are making satisfactory progress, there are occasions when their progress is slower than expected because the work lacks suitable challenge to move them on more rapidly.
3. The school's first results for seven and eleven year olds were in 2002 and so it is not possible to look at trends in standards over time. However, the school acknowledges that the performance of the pupils last year was affected by the turmoil of amalgamation and the difficulties with changes of staff over the school's first year, and that as a result, a significant number of pupils underachieved.
4. The performance of eleven year olds in English and mathematics in 2002 was well below the average in most schools and in schools in similar circumstances. Only just over half of the pupils reached the level expected for their age. In science, the pupils' results were in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally and well below the results in similar schools. More pupils reached the level expected for their age than in English and mathematics but few reached the higher level. The performance of seven year olds in the 2002 tests in reading and mathematics was well below the national average and in similar schools. In writing, results were in the lowest five per cent of all schools and similar schools.
5. Standards are improving. On the basis of the work seen now, although standards are still well below average in writing and mathematics, and below average in science, more Year 6 pupils are reaching the level expected for their age but very few pupils are reaching beyond the higher level. There is a similar picture of standards in Year 2, with more pupils reaching the level expected for their age in writing, mathematics and science, but few pupils are likely to reach beyond this. In reading, standards are better but still below average in Year 2 and Year 6. Most of the pupils are making satisfactory progress in reading, writing, science and mathematics but the school's more able pupils, although a relatively small proportion of the total pupils, should be doing better. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils and whilst these pupils often make rapid progress when they are taught in small groups, there are occasions in class when the progress of these pupils is not as secure as it might be. These weaknesses in both higher and lower attaining pupils' progress is mainly due to teachers not having sufficiently detailed information about the gaps that pupils have in their previous learning and so the work is sometimes pitched at the wrong level for pupils.
6. Pupils' speaking is well below average. Their listening is better than their speaking but is below average. The younger pupils have a short attention span but the pupils' enjoy reading and the infant

pupils listen carefully to stories. They answer questions about what happened in the story but find it harder to explain why events happened or what might happen next. This difficulty in inferring from the text is seen again in the junior classes, where pupils find it hard to explain why characters acted in a certain way and often resort to simply saying what characters did rather than explaining why they reacted in a particular way. Pupils of all ages often struggle to find the words to say what they mean because of their limited vocabulary. Pupils read for information competently and use the index and contents pages appropriately. They use their reading skills well to search menus or information when they use computers. In spite of teachers' efforts to extend pupils' vocabulary, many pupils find it difficult to remember technical terms, in science for example. Pupils are keen to write but the older pupils lack some of the basic skills in spelling, punctuation and handwriting. Some lower attaining pupils in Year 4, for example, have difficulty in reading back what they have written, unless asked to do so within a very short time of writing the piece. About a quarter of the oldest pupils do not spell simple common words accurately and some do not form letters correctly or join their writing. The school's good emphasis on spelling and handwriting over the past year has improved these basic skills for the infant pupils but the older pupils have considerable gaps in their learning. Opportunities to extend pupils' skills in writing and enable them to write for different purposes are sometimes missed in lessons other than English.

7. Many pupils lack the vocabulary to explain how they have solved mathematical problems and they do not always remember important information that will help them work out which methods to adopt. Through good checking of pupils' performance, areas of weakness in infant pupils' previous mathematical learning, such as recognising coins and finding totals, are being steadily resolved. Year 2 pupils know the addition and subtraction facts to ten and more able pupils apply this knowledge to numbers to 20. Most seven years old are beginning to solve simple money problems, know about two-dimensional shapes, measure using standard units and understand the place value of digits, but a significant proportion are still struggling with aspects of their work. Year 6 pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables is being extended as they learn these for homework and some of the extra mental mathematics session is spent practising and improving their recall. Their work shows that they are making fewer errors. However, they have not yet fully grasped the link between multiplication and division and many find it hard to apply what they know in solving mental mathematics or written problems. Pupils multiply and divide by 10 and 100 and more able pupils work with decimals. Most pupils accurately calculate fractions of simple shapes or whole numbers, but for a significant proportion this understanding does not extend beyond $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, or $\frac{3}{4}$. Almost all of the pupils can construct bar graphs and line graphs, but lower attainers are not so confident in explaining the data. The work is too often the same for the more able pupils and lacks the challenge necessary to move them on more quickly.
8. Pupils make satisfactory progress in science and standards, while still below average in Year 6, have improved from last year's results. The pupils' scientific knowledge, as in other areas of their work, has gaps that mean that standards remain below average. In addition, the pupils' skills in investigating and experimenting are weaker than expected for their ages. The school has recognised this and has emphasised this aspect of work in teachers' planning this year; for example, Year 6 pupils work out how to separate solids and liquids and devise their own experiments. Year 3 pupils devise a test of which material would stretch the furthest and Year 5 pupils find out about sounds and how they are made. Year 2 pupils name the main parts of the body and know that exercise is good for them and affects their bodies. The more able pupils, of all ages, however, are often not challenged by work that takes them further in their understanding than other pupils.
9. The pupils' work in ICT is better than expected for their age by the time they leave the school and they use computers very competently to support their learning. Pupils turn to computers as a natural way of presenting or organising their work. Year 6 pupils, for example, import graphics, resize and re-position them on the page and change the style, size and colour of the different fonts they wanted to use in creating a page for a newspaper in connection with work in literacy. Pupils create multi-media presentations and collect information for a database in science, enter it in the computer and then make an analysis to print out data in the form of graphs.

10. The pupils' work in most other subjects broadly meets the expectations for their ages by seven and eleven years. Pupils' attainment in history and geography does not reach the expectations because the pupils have too many gaps in their knowledge and understanding in these subjects and these subjects have too little time given to them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The pupils enjoy coming to school and they are keen to learn. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, have good attitudes to learning which impact significantly on their progress. In most lessons, they are given appropriate encouragement and support, which gives them confidence to answer questions and participate in discussions. Where lessons have a good pace, pupils find the work interesting. When teaching is good, pupils are attentive and concentrate well because they find the work challenging and clearly understand the tasks they are given. In some lessons where teaching is not planned at the right level for their different abilities, pupils concentrate less and progress is slower.
12. Pupils behave very well. They have a clear understanding of the school's expectations of good behaviour and understand the difference between right and wrong. In most lessons pupils settle quickly and respond well to the instructions given by the teachers, which means the lessons start promptly. Pupils work quietly and sensibly on their own, in pairs and in small groups. They share resources well and help each other. The school took a firm stance on establishing good behaviour last year and this has paid dividends; its effectiveness is seen in the good standard of behaviour now evident amongst all ages of pupils. There was a high level of exclusion of pupils last year, mainly older pupils who found it hard to comply with the school's expectations of acceptable behaviour, but this problem has now been resolved.
13. In the playground, pupils are lively and boisterous but they are very well supervised. An extensive range of games and equipment is provided that pupils treat with care and respect. At lunchtime, on the infant playground, the pupils enjoy a very good range of games that are often organised by the mid-day supervisors. Pupils know the rules and keep to them and boys and girls take turns, for example, when joining in a game of taking penalty shots. In the junior playground pupils are responsible for setting out the equipment at playtime, a task that they do quietly and sensibly. There is a very harmonious atmosphere in all the playgrounds and boys and girls and pupils from different backgrounds play well together. There is no evidence of isolation, harassment or oppressive behaviour and the playground is a friendly and safe place.
14. Pupils are sensible when they move around the school. They open doors for visitors and are polite and friendly. During the whole school assemblies, pupils of all ages are attentive, quiet and well behaved. Lunchtime is a social occasion and pupils are well mannered. At the end of lunchtime the pupils gather on the playgrounds in classes quickly, and without fuss, to go back into classrooms.
15. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults in the school are very good. Whilst many of the staff are new to the school, a sense of mutual respect and trust has been quickly established. As a result, pupils feel confident to approach staff with any problems or concerns they may have. The organisation of the two junior playgrounds that mix Years 3 and 5 and Years 4 and 6 is extremely effective in strengthening friendships between the older and younger pupils. Friendship and caring are successfully encouraged at the school and reflect the school's strong Christian principles.
16. Pupils' personal development is very good because the school works hard at valuing and respecting the pupils. Pupils have a good range of individual responsibilities in classrooms that they take seriously. In Year 6 this is extended to helping in the library, assisting at lunchtime, distributing attendance registers and getting the classrooms ready prior to the start of school. In Year 6 one class is currently trying out a class council that the school hopes to extend to include all classes this year. They have discussed issues such as how to improve tidiness in the classroom and the quality of handwriting pens. The council has an elected chairman, vice-chairman and secretary and it provides a good forum for discussion and helps pupils understand the consequences of their actions. As a result of their decisions, they feel that their classroom is now better organised and the presentation of their work has improved because new pens

have been purchased. A number of Year 6 pupils volunteered to attend a play leaders' course to help the younger children at playtime. They had to apply in writing and nine pupils were selected to attend the course, which has just been completed. These pupils are proud of the contribution they are making to the life of the school. The residential visit for the older children has a significant impact on establishing pupils' independence and self-confidence and building team spirit.

17. Attendance at the school is well below the national average. The high level of authorised absence is mainly due to pupils taking holidays during term time but is also adversely affected by a very small number of pupils with a very poor attendance record. The school has worked well with appropriate agencies to resolve the problems. This term there has been a slight improvement in the attendance rate although there were a particularly high number of sessions missed by pupils taking holidays in the first few weeks of this school year. Punctuality at the school is good and this ensures a prompt start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The teaching is satisfactory but there is some unsatisfactory teaching and some aspects need to improve in order to promote pupils' progress better.
19. Teaching for the Reception children is good because the teacher understands how young children learn and what they need to make them secure and confident. The activities that are planned take good account of the children's developing social and emotional needs. Good routines are established so that children know what to expect and what is expected of them. The teacher's planning ensures that children's experiences are relevant, imaginative and enjoyable. It includes elements of the national strategies for teaching in literacy and numeracy that suit children's level of understanding. The teacher and the nursery nurse work well together. The work in most activities is well planned to match children's different levels of abilities. The teacher has generally good expectations of children's work.
20. The teaching of pupils in groups, to improve their social use of language and their ability to consider the needs of others, is good. Pupils enjoy these sessions and gain a great deal from them. A group of infant pupils, for example, responded very well to the teaching assistant's calm and supportive manner in one nurture group session. The pupil chosen to organise the refreshments for the group showed a good level of initiative as he served drinks and biscuits and pupils expressed their thanks as they chatted about their school day and the work they had completed. The teaching assistant's sensitive encouragement and questions enabled even the most reticent pupils to play a full part in the activities.
21. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good when they are taught in withdrawal groups. This is because the work is tightly focused on pupils' needs. In classes, teaching is satisfactory when there is no direct support for these pupils; sometimes work needs to be adapted more for pupils to make better progress. Teachers value the answers and contributions of pupils with special needs as much as those of other pupils, and this raises pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The needs of the few pupils who are learning English as an additional language and pupils from Travellers families are taken into account and so these pupils make the same progress as other in the class.
22. Teaching in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory. There are similar strengths and weaknesses in teaching each of these subjects. The strengths include:
 - teachers know what they are going to teach and usually make this plain to the class so that pupils are quickly tuned in to what they are going to learn;
 - the teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and so there is a good working atmosphere;
 - teaching assistants know what to do and talk to teachers about what went well or what was not as successful in pupils' learning;
 - pupils have plenty of opportunities to work together.

23. Teachers make plain their expectations of behaviour and pupils are handled consistently and positively. Some challenging behaviour is well managed so that it does not disrupt other pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of well-trained support staff in lessons. They are used effectively across the school and plan detailed support work with class teachers. By asking further questions and giving useful clues, they support such pupils well. Examples of such work were seen in a Year 6 design and technology lesson and a Year 4 science lesson, where effective support enabled pupils to have help when they needed it and the opportunity to talk about their work. Pupils developed in confidence as the lesson progressed and they were able to play a full part in later discussions. The work of support staff is valued by all other staff at the school and by the parents of pupils with special educational needs.
24. The weaknesses in teaching include:
- work for pupils that does not take sufficient account of their different abilities;
 - teachers' expectations of what more able pupils can achieve are sometimes too low;
 - the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow and so pupils' interest wanes;
 - a lack of suitable guidance in teachers' marking so that pupils know how to improve.
25. The teachers understand how to use the national teaching strategies for literacy and numeracy and basic skills are soundly taught, but in English and mathematics lessons, as well as in science, there are times when the teachers' lack of awareness of what pupils already know and can do leads to work being pitched at the wrong level. This was a feature of the unsatisfactory lessons in both the infants and the juniors in music, history, mathematics and physical education. There are relatively few more able pupils in each class but teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of what these pupils can achieve and too often give them the same work as their classmates, or make them start at the same point. There are times when pupils become restless or inattentive because the pace of lessons is too slow or they have listened for too long. Although there are examples of good marking that gives pupils a clear idea of what to do to improve their work, this is not done consistently in all classes.
26. Teaching in ICT is good because teachers are confident and enthusiastic about the possibilities offered by technology. They transmit this to the pupils, who readily turn to ICT as a way of enhancing their learning or presenting their work.

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

27. The school has worked diligently to plan and deliver a sound curriculum for its pupils in which all subjects required by the National Curriculum are represented. The curriculum for the Reception children is well planned and takes into account all of the areas of learning for this age, and as a result they make good progress. Over the past year, the school has put in place policies and schemes of work for all subjects of the National Curriculum. This has been achieved in spite of the high turnover of staff. The school rightly places a strong emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy skills, of pupils' speaking and listening and on the development of pupils' personal skills, because pupils enter the school with low levels of both literacy and social skills. This has led to some good improvements, particularly in pupils' ability to listen to teachers and to each other. The skills learned in times when pupils sit in a circle and share views and opinions are seen in other lessons, when they sustain concentration and listen to what others say. However, the extra time allocated to English and personal, social and health education creates some imbalance. For example, there is too little time spent on teaching geography and history and so these subjects are not covered in sufficient depth and pupils are not progressing at a fast enough pace. Pupils have considerable gaps in their knowledge from the past that cannot effectively be filled with the amount of time given to these subjects. There is still work to do to ensure that the more able pupils' needs are met through suitable planning.
28. Teachers plan together in year group teams, ensuring that pupils of the same age receive the same curriculum. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are firmly established. The school has identified the raising of standards in pupils' writing skills and mental mathematics as priorities and has

allocated additional time to these. However, there are times when teachers are not sufficiently aware of which skills need to be developed, because of the lack of assessment of what pupils can and cannot do, and this limits the effectiveness of some of these sessions. In addition, teachers do not always plan enough opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects to help improve their knowledge and understanding of written English. Planning for mathematics is sound and teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills in ICT through data handling activities. However, mathematics is under-represented in other subjects of the curriculum such as science.

29. Teachers make every effort in lessons and activities to ensure that the contributions of all pupils are celebrated and valued. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the life of the school. All pupils are fully included in all that the school provides. Provision for special educational needs pupils is good. The support for all the different groups of pupils with special educational needs is wide ranging and well tailored to their different needs. Pupils are taught through a mixture of good support in class and through the withdrawal of small groups for well-focused work in literacy and mathematics by the special educational needs co-ordinator and well-trained and qualified support assistants. There are, however, times when support is not available and teachers do not adapt work as carefully to pupils' needs. Pupils with specific statements of need are given good support to reach the targets of their individual education plans.
30. There are very good arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education. Teachers promote these areas regularly as part of a well-planned programme, which is embedded in the work of the school. Good initiatives, such as the Social Use of Language Programme and nurture groups, help to develop pupils' personal and social skills, and reinforce their understanding of how to become a good learner. The curriculum includes suitable provision for sex education and teaching about the dangers of the misuse of drugs. This is successful because pupils have regular, planned opportunities to develop greater self-awareness and confidence. The school is gradually extending opportunities for pupils to become independent and responsible. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils are training as play leaders and in Year 6 one class is piloting the establishing of a school council.
31. The school provides a very good range of activities outside lessons, which provides pupils with an interesting and exciting range of experiences, and enrich the quality of the curriculum. Pupils visit well-chosen places of interest, which enhance their learning in religious education, history, science and art. For example, pupils visit a range of religious buildings, such as Coventry Cathedral, a mosque and a gurdwara. This contributes well to the development of their understanding of religious education and the different cultures represented in British society. The residential visit makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development, because pupils have to learn to live with each other for 24 hours a day. The interesting range of after-school clubs provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and interests in activities such as sport, computers, music, gardening and cooking.
32. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Spiritual development is good. Opportunities are given in assemblies for the pupils to explore a range of values and beliefs that influence their lives. In an infant assembly, the symbolism of the theme of light and its meaning to the Hindu faith is developed very well to lead pupils to consider its use as a symbol of how Christians think about God. The achievement assembly for junior pupils gives them opportunities to consider the value of their contributions to the life of the school and develop their self-esteem. This is also evident in a number of displays of junior pupils, for example the Year 6 display on 'My special talent'. Through the ways in which the teachers value their answers and contributions to lessons, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are able to develop a sense of respect for themselves and others. Older pupils have used the colours and patterns of Kandinsky to develop their creative awareness. Moral development is very good. The school provides a clear moral code of behaviour that teaches right from wrong. All adults provide good examples for the pupils to follow. The pupils are clear about the school and class rules and all the staff reinforce these consistently. This helps all pupils across the school to develop their own set of moral rules to decide what is right and wrong. School displays reinforce values and models for consideration for others, for example in the funds raised for local and national charities. The awareness of older pupils has been enhanced through topics that

develop their concern for the environment, for example, the joint topic by Years 5 and 6 on the conservation work of David Shepherd in Africa and the work being done to save the rain forests of the world. A noticeable feature of assemblies and many lessons is how pupils are happy to celebrate the achievements of others as much as their own.

33. Social development is very good. The school provides very good support for many groups of pupils to ensure they are fully included in all aspects of its provision. Specific help is given to develop the social skills of groups of pupils with special educational needs, such as the nurture groups and the initiative to develop the social use of language. These, along with an impressive number of similarly well-targeted support groups, are very effectively developing the social skills of a considerable number of pupils across the school. The pupils have opportunities to participate in community experiences that help to develop their social skills. The Year 6 pupils help staff at lunchtimes by acting as 'friends' with Year 3 pupils. All pupils of all ages have opportunities to take responsibilities for acting as register monitors or helping around the classrooms. Small games in physical education help pupils to develop a team ethic and partnership, and paired working in lessons develops co-operation and collaborative working. Cultural development is good. Assemblies are used to promote a positive experience for pupils so that they are able to feel part of the school community. This is particularly so when the successes of the pupils are shared in their achievement assembly. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own cultural backgrounds are enhanced through their work in geography, history, art and music, for example art work in Year 3 on the artist Matisse. The visits to a Hindu temple, a mosque and places of Christian worship develop well the pupils' sense of different cultures and their own and others' beliefs. The awareness of the contributions of different cultures is enhanced by the many, colourful and informative displays around the school that also reinforce the school's own values.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school provides a safe and caring environment and this creates a good environment for all pupils, regardless of their gender, background or ability. There are regular checks on health and safety and all issues for action are recorded. The school has two qualified first aiders and clear and detailed procedures for dealing with accidents, all of which are recorded appropriately. There are clear procedures for administering medicines at school and staff know the special medical needs of individual pupils. The school has an effective child protection policy and the person responsible for child protection has received appropriate training. The school follows the local guidelines for child protection but there has not yet been any training for new staff on how to identify children who may be at risk.
35. The school has an effective behaviour policy with a clear system of rewards and sanctions that is applied consistently throughout the school. This policy has had a significant impact on raising the standards of behaviour in the school. The good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour ensure that the school now functions as an orderly community where pupils can learn well. There is a good anti-bullying policy with good procedures in place for handling any incidents. As a result, bullying is not perceived as an issue by parents, pupils or teachers.
36. The school provides effective support and guidance for all its pupils including those with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator oversees a wide range of support groups, for pupils who experience difficulties with behaviour and social skills, that have been very effective. The nurture groups provided for both infants and juniors have been particularly successful in improving socialising skills and communication and helping pupils who experience difficulties during playtime. All reviews of the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are carried out as appropriate and the support of outside agencies such as the Speech and Hearing Support Units is involved as necessary. The school receives good support from the local authority's Behavioural Support Unit for its pupils, and teachers act upon advice given to effectively support pupils' progress. The small number of pupils from Traveller families and those who are learning English as an additional language are well supported.

37. The school has very good procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and punctual arrival at school. Attendance registers are computerised and are checked daily. Any unexplained absences are followed up the same day and the school works closely with the Educational Social Worker. There is a system of rewards for good attendance and parents and pupils are made aware of the importance the school places on regular attendance and punctuality. The school is aware that it needs to continue its efforts to promote better attendance.
38. The policy of including every child in what the school has to offer is effective and the new equal opportunities policy recently adopted by the governing body clearly defines the school's priority for ensuring that the school does not discriminate against any pupil on the grounds of disability, gender or race.
39. Assessment is satisfactory. The school is making a concerted effort to improve its systems. The school has almost completed a system for tracking pupils' progress from Reception through to Year 6. At present, a variety of systems for assessment are in place and there are shortcomings that lead to teachers having too little information upon which to base their decisions about where to pitch the work or how to group pupils of different abilities. The new system, which is ICT based, will enable teachers to see each pupil's progress over time, as measured by tests and assessments, in graph form. The school has tried to pinpoint underachievement by pupils over the past year and has successfully identified broad areas of weakness in attainment for year groups but has had less success at an individual level because of shortage of data and changes in teachers. At present, the use of assessment to guide teachers' planning is not secure, but the underlying factors have been effectively tackled and the school is well poised to improve in this respect.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school has worked hard at establishing a good partnership with parents and has been rewarded by the vast majority being supportive of the school and the work it does. The school's stance on behaviour over its first year met with most parents' approval. A high proportion of parents now feel that behaviour is good and the inspection findings support this view.
41. The school gives very good quality information to parents through the school brochure, the governors' annual report to parents and weekly newsletters. These ensure that parents know exactly what is happening in school. There are formal parent and teacher meetings every term where parents have the opportunity to discuss their children's attainment and progress and be involved in specific target setting. These meetings are very well attended and the school makes every effort to ensure that parents can attend by offering a variety of appointment times and providing a crèche. The school contacts parents who do not attend in order to make another appointment. Parents are fully involved in regular reviews of individual education plans at all appropriate opportunities.
42. There are very few parents who regularly help in the classroom but in other areas many parents willingly offer their support. Although there is no formal parent teacher association, the school works closely with parents to organise a range of fund-raising activities during the year that are very successful. Many parents also willingly help on school trips and with swimming. Parents have been particularly supportive of the school over recently introduced initiatives such as the wearing of school uniform, suitable footwear and healthy eating at break time.
43. The recently introduced homework diary for junior pupils provides parents with information on what their children are expected to do at home, including a date for handing in homework. It also gives parents who find it difficult to visit the school the opportunity to comment in writing if they have any issues to raise. Although it is early days, a number of parents are taking advantage of this way of communicating with teachers.
44. The headteacher and staff are readily available to talk to parents. The headteacher makes herself available before and after school and regularly spends time at the school gate so that she is aware of any issues or concerns that parents may have.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. Leadership and management are good. The school is well led by the headteacher, who provides a very clear vision for the school's development. She is well supported by the deputy head and staff with management responsibilities. The school's aims are well reflected in its everyday work, a strong sense of identity has been created and pupils have a sense of pride in their school. The school's concerted efforts to inform parents of its aims, expectations and approaches have led to a good level of confidence in the school. These are real achievements in the short time that the school has been open.
46. The staff work well together because they are all pulling in the same direction and know the part they play in taking the school forward. The teachers are set targets for improvement as a result of the good way in which the senior managers check what is happening in classrooms. Teachers get good, detailed feedback after their planning has been checked or lessons have been observed. Staff who are new to the school are well supported. The school makes very good use of ICT to support its work.
47. There has been a great deal to do, including establishing good standards of behaviour and a curriculum that covers the primary age range. In spite of considerable barriers to progress, such as the many changes in staff and the problems of a split site, a great deal has been achieved in a year and the school is in a good position to bring about further improvements. The school has a comprehensive plan for improvement that focuses closely on improving teaching and learning, and on raising standards. The school does what it says it will do within the timescales it sets for itself to meet its targets. These targets are drawn from the careful analysis of pupils' performance, and identifying areas of underachievement by different groups of pupils. An example is in developing consistent procedures for assessment in reading, writing, mathematics and science so that teachers have a clear idea of what they need to plan next to better meet pupils' needs. This has been a priority for the school and it set a target of devising an effective system for tracking individual pupils' progress by the end of the current term. With the help of the ICT technician, the school is well placed to introduce a very thorough, easily understood profile of progress within the time allowed.
48. The leadership and management by the special educational needs co-ordinator are very good. She knows the pupils and their parents well and discusses needs, support and progress regularly with staff. Records are well maintained and updated regularly so that she has a good oversight of pupils' achievements and progress. Support staff for pupils with special educational needs are valued members of the team and enhance pupils' learning because they are clear about what they are doing. They are used very effectively across the school and work closely with class teachers to support learning in all subjects, but mainly in literacy and numeracy. The governing body keeps a close check on the provision for pupils and the effectiveness of its spending in this area. There is a governor with special responsibility for special educational needs, who takes a strong interest in pupils' progress.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve teaching and pupils' rate of progress in writing, mathematics and science by:
 - ensuring that the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are implemented so that gaps in pupils' learning can be identified;
 - ensuring that teachers use the information from assessment to plan suitable work for different groups of pupils;
 - looking at ways in which pupils' skills in writing can be extended and practised in other subjects;
 - ensuring that teachers' marking gives consistent guidance to pupils on what needs to improve.
(Paragraphs 2, 6, 7, 8, 21, 24, 25, 28, 29, 39, 60, 63, 64, 67, 70, 71, 73, 77)
- Raise standards in history and geography by making sure that sufficient time is given to these subjects and that work is planned in sufficient depth to better support pupils' learning.
(Paragraphs 10, 27, 87, 91)
- Improve teaching for more able pupils by raising teachers' expectations of what these pupils can achieve and ensuring that work is suitably planned to meet their needs.
(Paragraphs 24, 25, 27, 63, 71, 73)

In addition to the issues above, the school should consider the following points when drawing up its action plan:

- Continue its efforts to improve pupils' attendance. (Paragraphs 17, 37)
- Ensure that all new staff have appropriate training in child protection. (Paragraph 34)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	18	25	6	0	0
Percentage	0	14	32	44	11	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	271
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	73
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	93
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	16	21	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	8	13
	Girls	14	15	15
	Total	23	23	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	62 (N/A)	62(N/A)	76(N/A)
	National	84(84)	86(86)	90(91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	11	8
	Girls	13	15	13
	Total	20	26	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	54(N/A)	70(N/A)	57(N/A)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	39	35	74

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	22	25
	Girls	19	18	23
	Total	39	40	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53(N/A)	54(N/A)	65(N/A)
	National	75(75)	73(71)	86(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	27	26
	Girls	20	19	22
	Total	43	46	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58(N/A)	62(N/A)	65(N/A)
	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	263	23	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	1	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20:1
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	317

FTE means full-time equivalent

Financial information

No information is available, as this is a new school.

Financial year	N/A
	£
Total income	N/A
Total expenditure	N/A
Expenditure per pupil	N/A
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to next year	N/A

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
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)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

271

Number of questionnaires returned

60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	55	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	33	55	5	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	52	7	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	48	8	2	5
The teaching is good.	37	50	5	2	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	45	8	5	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	42	10	3	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	47	2	2	2
The school works closely with parents.	35	43	13	5	3
The school is well led and managed.	23	63	5	5	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	43	7	3	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	47	8	8	7

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

49. Children are admitted to the Reception class at the start of the school year in which they are five years old. At the time of inspection, children in the reception class were attending full-time, and all but five children were under five years of age. Most children's level of attainment on entry as indicated by the school's assessments is much lower than expected for their age, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematics.
50. By the time children move to Year 1, although they have made good progress, their standards are well below the levels expected in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Most children make very good gains and attain many of the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. Children with special educational needs are well supported and this enhances their progress.
51. The Reception class curriculum is carefully planned to provide experiences that are relevant, imaginative and enjoyable, for example, creative work such as collage, painting and making play-dough models. The planning reflects all areas of learning and is appropriately linked to the advancement of children's skills, knowledge and understanding. It is extended to embrace the literacy and numeracy strategies, modified to suit children's level of understanding. A very spacious outdoor play area is well used to provide a suitable range of play opportunities to enhance children's progress in different areas. However, there is insufficient outdoor equipment or large toys to enable children to practise and extend their physical skills.
52. The quality of teaching is good. Both the class teacher and the nursery nurse work together and plan activities with clear intentions. Their understanding of how young children learn and what they need is good. The information gained from the baseline assessments is used well to plan most activities that match different levels of abilities. The teacher has generally good expectations of children's work. However, the daily assessments and recording of children's progress are not yet entirely secure and this affects expectations in some lessons. Indoor resources for the Foundation Stage are sufficient for most areas of learning. The extra adult support is effective and makes positive contributions to children's learning. The nursery nurse talks to the children and ask relevant questions to extend their vocabulary. Both staff work effectively as a team and support one another. Homework, in the form of borrowing books and learning to recognise letters and related sounds, is used particularly well to enhance children's progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. By the time they leave the Reception class, children achieve many of the early learning goals in this area. This indicates very good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching of the staff. Children are encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve and they quickly settle down and feel both happy and secure at school. They learn to co-operate and take turns, for example, when sharing refreshments or sitting in a circle and sharing their ideas and experiences. Most children have a positive approach to new learning and work both as part of a group and alone with increasing independence. They are beginning to form positive and respectful relationships, and communicate effectively with one another and with adults.
54. The staff act as good role models for children and explain clearly what is expected of them. Some simple classroom rules are shared with all, for example, putting hands up for contributions to discussions. Children listen well and understand set routines. They are taught the difference between right and wrong and are guided to behave sensibly at all times. Children show consideration and respect for property and each other. Emotional development is carefully considered and the teacher finds ways

to include the practice of talking about feelings. Children enjoy sharing their work with any available adult and react well to praise. Most children participate enthusiastically in activities led by adults and those they choose to do themselves. They are skilfully managed and purposefully occupied. Staff effectively handle minor disputes. Children's play and responses are supported and extended sensitively.

Communication, language and literacy

55. A significant number of children are at an early stage in language development and only a small minority are expected to reach the early learning goals by the end of the year. While some children willingly talk about the aspects of their work, many find speaking clearly and in sentences quite difficult. Both teacher and support staff show that they value children's efforts at communicating. Children are constantly encouraged to talk about their experiences and develop new vocabulary during discussions and other occasions, such as milk time or when working. The adults use talk to good effect and build children's confidence in speaking because they show interest in what children say. Some older children are gaining satisfactory control in developing early writing skills. They learn to form letters with increasing control. Some children have begun to write their own names unaided. Good progress is made when adults work in small groups or in one-to-one situations to give children individual attention. They provide suitable role-play writing activities and model writing for children effectively. The introduction of the modified literacy strategy is making a significant impact. For example, the teacher used the story of *Rosie's Walk* to support children's learning of positional vocabulary such as 'on', 'under', 'around' and 'through'. This was further reinforced when the teacher introduced an activity on 'Where to hide Ted?' and children had to describe the position and have a go themselves. In one lesson, children followed the story of *Kipper's Birthday* and prepared their own invitations to a party with teacher's help. Children are learning to enjoy stories by choosing their own books, and there is sufficient emphasis on recognising words through the use of repetitive texts. Most children are at an early stage of understanding and retelling a story or recognising any words. The imaginative role-play activities, such as the suitably set up corner related to the Diwali festival, help children initiate their own free-play. Children have good opportunities to be guided in their role-play in order to develop the related language and new vocabulary.

Mathematical development

56. Children's progress is good, but most are not yet on course to attain all the early learning goals by the end of the year. A few children count reliably to ten and learn to sequence the numbers 1 to 5. Many others find one-to-one counting quite difficult. Higher attaining children confidently match, sort and count everyday objects. In the whole class sessions, the teacher effectively supports counting up to ten and the correct order of numbers, for example, through using numbered cards of birthday candles on cake. Although a few children are able to count to ten or beyond, most do not yet understand 'one less' or 'one more than' the given number. The teaching in this area is good with some very good features. Good use is made of number songs such as, 'One, two buckle my shoe' or 'One little, two little fireworks' to practise sequencing numbers. The teacher has appropriate expectations and plans well to extend or challenge children; for example, a game of 'Mr Potato Head' is used to encourage children to talk about where the parts fit in and to recognise symmetry. Most children do not yet write numerals unaided or solve problems involving addition. Adult involvement in children's activities is effective overall. They ask good questions to support and extend children's understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

57. Most children enter the Reception class with very limited general knowledge, but they are getting good experiences for exploring and investigating. For example, children successfully decorate cakes in small groups. They were supported in their use of senses as they learnt to describe the smell and the taste of, for example, Diwali sweets. They investigate properties of malleable materials such as play-dough. Building models out of reclaimed materials encourages children to develop skills in asking questions or to find out how things work. Children were observed making little models of fireworks and decorations using a variety of materials. They use paint and mix different colours, but most do not yet name basic

colours correctly. Most children confidently name the main parts of the body. They look at how they are similar to their friends and how they have changed since they were babies. They demonstrate the computer skills expected for their age. Some children show increasing control in the use of a mouse, to move items on the screen. Children are often taken on walks around the school and explore the immediate surroundings with great interest. They recently went on a 'listening walk' and drew pictures of the noises they heard.

Physical development

58. Many children are on course to meet most of the early learning goals in their physical development. The outdoor provision to enhance children's physical skills is rather limited. The teacher plans for children to develop an awareness of space and control of their bodies in lessons in the school hall. Planning indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory. From the planning it is evident that the teacher has a sensitive awareness of children's safety. The class regularly attend gymnastic and movement lessons. Children learn to use space well and know the routine of 'warming up' and 'cooling down' periods. They are encouraged to feel changes in heart beat and breathing during these activities. In lessons, most children can follow simple instructions with ease, but have difficulty in following more complex and longer instructions. In their use of construction toys, a significant number of children demonstrate reasonable hand and eye co-ordination. They are developing confidence in the use of different tools such as scissors and brushes, and joining materials such as glue and sellotape. Adults provide calm and sensitive support. This was noted when children iced their cakes and decorated these very carefully. They encourage children to dress independently, manage buckles and buttons, and put shoes on the correct feet.

Creative development

59. Most children are not likely meet the national expectations by the end of the Reception year but the teacher provides good opportunities for developing their creativity. Children are introduced to the use of a variety of percussion instruments. Children recognise and explore how sounds can be changed. Teaching of creative skills in this area is good. In a lesson they learnt to name sounds they heard on Bonfire Night, for example 'crackling', 'banging' and 'tingling'. They have a repertoire of songs, which they sing enthusiastically and with enjoyment. This was noted in a singing session with the music specialist. Children experiment with paint and use their observations and imagination to create pleasing results. Some of their printing patterns show developing hand control in painting. Children confidently use different tools and materials to finish their artwork, for example their collage of faces and fingerprint patterns of their names. They are given opportunities to explore shape, colour and texture, and work with a range of materials such as textiles, tissue paper and card. Children talk about these with interest and show obvious enjoyment in all creative work.

ENGLISH

60. More pupils are reaching the level expected for their age than last year's results indicated and there is steady improvement; however, standards are well below average in writing and speaking, and below average in reading and listening by the ages of seven and eleven years. Most of the pupils are making satisfactory progress in reading and writing but the more able pupils should be doing better in writing. There are also times when the progress of some of the lower attaining pupils is not as secure as it might be. In each case, this slower progress than expected is mainly because work is not planned at the right level because teachers do not have reliable information about pupils' previous learning and attainment. In spelling, punctuation and handwriting, the junior teachers are having to fill gaps in pupils' basic skills. The very small number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because teaching takes account of their needs. Teaching is satisfactory but there is room for improvement.
61. Pupils start school with mainly poor levels of language and although they often make good progress in extending their vocabulary and the complexity of sentences they use, their well below average skills in

speaking affect their capacity to respond to questions, explain what they mean or make the connection between ideas. Many instances were seen during the inspection of pupils' obvious frustration because they knew what they wanted to say but could not find the words to express it. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, when the teacher asked "What gives you the impression that this character wanted to help?" most pupils in the class found the correct section of text dealing with the incident but found it hard to go beyond saying what the character did. Teachers are good, as in this lesson, at giving pupils some time to marshal their thoughts and prompting pupils with questions that encourage answers in more extended sentences and specific vocabulary.

62. Pupils' reading is better than their writing but is still below average in Year 2 and Year 6. The basic skills in reading are taught thoroughly so that pupils are confident in trying to work out words by sounding out letters. They have more difficulty with words that cannot be made by sounding out and some lower attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 struggle to work out unknown words from the sense of the sentence and rely on the pictures for clues. Lower attaining and average ability pupils in Year 6 read a range of articles from newspapers but have difficulty in deciding whether the articles are based on fact or opinion. The pupils' writing has been identified as the school's priority. The school has placed emphasis on getting the teaching of basic skills right and the teaching of spelling patterns is effectively planned in the infants and juniors, and pupils remember what they have learned. A more able pupil in Year 2, for example, wrote "'How dare you stare?' roared the bear", after a session on rhyming words. The Year 3 pupils, however, cannot spell many of the common words that they are expected to for their age; this is the case for all other years in the juniors. In addition, pupils miss out the most basic punctuation when they write in first draft. Many do not form letters correctly and this prevents them from achieving a joined style of handwriting. The older pupils have many gaps in their learning and do not routinely check their work to find mistakes.
63. The teachers have a good grasp of the national strategy for teaching literacy and they make it clear to pupils what they are going to learn in each lesson. Teaching is satisfactory but is hindered to some extent by the lack of information about pupils' previous attainment. This leads to teachers, particularly in the juniors, spending valuable time on establishing where the gaps are in pupils' knowledge and skills. As teachers are not sure where to pitch the work for different groups, there is sometimes too little challenge for the more able pupils in reading and writing activities. In addition, the work is sometimes too hard for lower attainers, particularly in writing. While a good pace is often evident in some lessons, on other occasions some parts of lessons are too slow to maintain pupils' interest. This is mainly in the introductory part of the lesson, where teachers sometimes talk for too long. In better lessons, the teacher breaks up the introductory part of the lesson with a range of activities in which pupils can take part. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils worked in pairs with whiteboards, changing sentences from the active to the passive voice, and made good progress because of their discussion and involvement. By the end of a ten-minute session, nearly all of the pupils understood how to do this because of the practical activity. There are some good examples of teacher's marking bringing about improvement in pupils' work. In a Year 1 pupil's book, for example, the teacher had picked up that a capital letter was not being used for 'I' and reminded the pupil to check for this; in all subsequent work the instruction was followed. In other cases, teachers' marking is not used effectively and so pupils continue to make the same mistakes in spelling and punctuation. Pupils' progress is slowed by these shortcomings in teaching.
64. The pupils have some opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects, as when Year 5 and 6 pupils write accounts or diaries in connection with their work in history, but in general too few opportunities are taken for pupils to extend and practise skills in other subjects. The school gives extra time for extended writing that takes time from other subjects. It has not yet fully explored how pupils' writing can be developed through other subjects. Pupils word process their work very competently and know how to vary the layout and font and incorporate pictures to attract the reader.
65. The co-ordinator for the subject is giving a good lead and knows what needs to be done through checking pupils' work. The senior managers have looked at teaching and given good feedback to teachers on both their planning and the teaching and learning. As a result, teachers plan better

opportunities for pupils to work together and improve their speaking and listening skills and teachers now make it clear to pupils what they are going to learn in each lesson. Assessment has been a priority and the school has worked hard to develop new procedures and systems that will enable better tracking of individual and groups of pupils' progress. These are almost completed, in line with the target the school set.

MATHEMATICS

66. The standards of work seen in mathematics are well below national levels in Years 2 and 6. This mirrors the 2002 national test results. Given that pupils start in Year 1 with standards that are well below average, and that almost half the pupils in Year 6 have difficulties with learning, they are making satisfactory progress.
67. The turbulence resulting from the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools, combined with the very high turnover of staff, affected pupils' achievement last year and even now their progress is inconsistent. Teaching is satisfactory but there is room for improvement in some key areas so that all pupils make the best possible progress. For example, sometimes teaching does not take enough account of the gaps in pupils' previous learning and this results in them sometimes being required to complete work that is too difficult for them. In addition, many pupils do not possess the language skills to explain how they solve mathematical problems and do not always retain important information. In some lessons, teachers use the final sharing part of the session well to consider any problems encountered and carry out activities to consolidate pupils' learning and help them make the best possible progress, but this is not always the case. However, pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and are willing to try and work. Their progress since the beginning of the term is satisfactory.
68. The mathematics co-ordinator has carefully analysed data from tests taken by pupils in Years 2 to 6, to help identify strengths and weaknesses in the learning of each year group. The areas in most urgent need of attention, such as recognising coins and finding totals, are included in the autumn term planning. For instance, scrutiny of work shows that Year 2 pupils find the correct coins to make amounts to 40 pence. In a Years 1 and 2 lesson, the work focused on developing pupils' understanding of sequences, another area of concern, and they practised counting on and back in twos and tens. By the time they are seven years old, they are beginning to solve simple money problems, recognise two-dimensional shapes, use standard and non-standards units of measure and understand the place value of digits, but a significant proportion to levels below what is expected. Pupils know the addition and subtraction facts to ten and higher attaining pupils apply this knowledge to numbers to 20.
69. There is a strong focus on improving Year 6 pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables. Pupils learn these for homework and some of the extra mental mathematics session is spent practising and improving recall. Pupils' written calculations show that they are making progress and make fewer errors when applying the grid method of multiplication. However, they have not yet fully grasped the relationship between multiplication and division and many are not yet thinking mathematically when solving mental mathematics or written problems. For example, when multiplying mentally two two-digit numbers, such as 67×49 , they do not as a matter of course apply the strategy of multiplying by closely related facts and adjusting. By the age of eleven, pupils use their understanding of place value to multiply and divide by 10 and 100, with higher attaining pupils applying this more successfully to decimal numbers. Pupils understand simple fractions and most accurately calculate fractions of simple shapes or whole numbers, but for a significant proportion this understanding does not extend beyond $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, or $\frac{3}{4}$. Higher attainers apply their knowledge of fractions to calculating percentages. Almost all can construct bar graphs and line graphs, but lower attainers are not so confident with interpreting the data.
70. Teaching is satisfactory but there is considerable variation between classes and teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. In the very good lessons, teachers use a range of different methods and activities to motivate pupils and hold their interest. The lessons move at a brisk pace and resources, such as individual white boards, are used very well to involve all pupils at all stages. Pupils' learning is carefully structured into small manageable steps to help them develop an understanding of how numbers work. In a very good Year 3 lesson on fractions, the tasks moved from practical demonstration of cutting a cake into equal parts through increasingly more difficult tasks to shading in given fractions on a grid showing six equal divisions. Monitoring of pupils' work was very good and teachers were very quick to identify those pupils needing support and to check pupils' work so that learning was taking place throughout. Work in these very good lessons was well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils.

71. Lessons follow the structure set out in the National Numeracy Strategy and classes also have an additional ten-minute mental mathematics session each day. Teaching is not always effective in some of the mental mathematics sessions, because the pace is too slow and pupils are set too few problems. For example, in a Year 5 lesson about doubling numbers, the speed of questioning suited only the slowest pupils in the class and the teacher did not explore the different strategies pupils used to solve the problems. Expectations of the more able pupils are sometimes too low. Teachers do not make enough use of resources to directly involve all pupils and this makes assessment of individual pupils' knowledge and understanding difficult. Teachers manage classes well. They have a good relationship with their pupils, who respond well and have positive attitudes to the subject. This contributes to pupils' achievement. A notable feature of most lessons is the good use made of classroom support assistants to help pupils with special educational needs and less able pupils. The assistants are well briefed and are fully aware of what needs to be done. Teaching focuses on what pupils need to learn and addresses target outlines in their individual educational plans. This helps them to make sound progress. Whilst most marking celebrates pupils' efforts, it does not always help them to further develop their understanding.
72. The subject leadership is good. The monitoring arrangements for teaching and learning are good. Careful checking of what is working well and where pupils' progress needs to be better gives the school a clear overview of the subject. Although weaknesses in pupils' learning are identified through careful analysis of test data, it is not used to set pupils personal targets which reflect their needs. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their data handling skills in ICT lessons, but they do not have enough opportunities to use their numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum.

SCIENCE

73. Standards by the end of Year 6 are below average but this is an improvement from last year's test results. Current inspection evidence shows that the majority of pupils are now making satisfactory progress. This is also true for the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs and is a result of the good support they receive in lessons. Talking to pupils, and a scrutiny of their previous work, show that standards by the end of Year 2 are well below the levels expected for pupils of a similar age. This is often due to the way science is taught as part of a topic, and work for both Years 1 and 2 pupils follows the same range within the mixed age classes. Work sometimes lacks an appropriate level of challenge for the more able Year 2 pupils.
74. A scrutiny of the current work of all junior classes shows that they are working at the appropriate levels of the National Curriculum and are now making satisfactory progress. Current planning is now much more securely based on national guidance and addresses all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Lessons are now better planned with a clear idea of what it is that pupils are going to learn. This is shared with pupils at the start of lessons so that they are aware of the focus of their learning. For example, in a Year 4 lesson on forces, pupils were given the opportunity to discuss their ideas and opinions with partners before the teacher then lead an effective discussion, which enabled all groups to participate fully. Good support for pupils with special educational needs ensures they play a full part because the teacher is careful to match the level of questioning to their previous learning. Proportions of pupils with special educational needs are high in all age groups across the school, but the good, often very good, levels of support enable them to make progress at least as satisfactory as that of other pupils. Often the way in which they are supported in recording their work enables them to take an effective part in the lessons.
75. Year 6 pupils know how to separate solids and liquids after being challenged to devise their own experiment. They can use simple identification keys to name groups of insects and leaves, and know how energy is transferred in a food chain. Work in Years 3 and 4 has developed pupils' knowledge of materials satisfactorily and they know that some materials are suited for particular purposes according to their properties. The school has identified the development of investigation skills as a priority in science and this features in many of the lessons seen. For example, Year 3 pupils were seen devising a test of which tights would stretch the farthest and Year 5 pupils found out about sounds and how they

are made. Most pupils can say that vibrations caused sounds but very few know how we hear those sounds. Much of the work seen is focused on developing the knowledge of pupils but is not always matched by a corresponding development of their understanding.

76. This is also evident in the current work in the infants. Pupils can name correctly the main external features of the body and correctly sequence a set of four diagrams about growing up. They know that exercise is good for you and that it affects their bodies. Much of their work is based on simple recording, often in the form of pictures. They can make a simple list of foods they like or dislike and say which are good for them. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 are following the same work and more able pupils are not given the opportunities to record their ideas and opinions about what they have found out in sufficient detail to extend their knowledge and understanding.
77. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Good use is made of support staff and resources to encourage and then maintain the enthusiasm of pupils in the tasks set for them. This results in most pupils showing interest and concentration and they work at a good pace. There is a good emphasis on collaborative learning in many classes, especially in junior classes. Talking to pupils shows that they prefer this method of working because of the support it gives them. It encourages them to work together and co-operate in the use of resources, thus developing well their social skills. Examples of this occur in many lessons, for example in the Year 4 lesson on forces, when pupils with special educational needs were well supported by other members of the class. Less successful teaching shows lower expectations of pupils, particularly higher attainers, and a slower pace to the lesson, leading to a lack of interest and lower levels of concentration. Average and more able pupils have too few opportunities to decide how to record their findings. The lack of appropriate challenge for groups of more able pupils is recognised by the school as an area of development.
78. Current leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory given the high turnover of staff recently. The present co-ordinator has been in post for one year. Teachers' planning has been checked and future plans include collecting samples of pupils' work to check on attainment and progress. However, current assessment procedures have not been in place for long enough to allow teachers to use the information they collect to plan the next stage of learning for the different groups of pupils. For example, there are as yet no targets for improvement set either for individuals or for groups of pupils. There are no samples of pupils' work that can be referenced to the levels of the National Curriculum, which can be used to support teachers' assessments of their pupils' achievement or progress at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Teachers are not yet fully using assessment so they are more secure in knowing what it is that pupils already know and what they need to do next in order to improve. The development of these aspects is an area of improvement that has been highlighted by the school.

ART AND DESIGN

79. The pupils' work in art broadly meets the expectations for their ages by the seven and eleven years. They make satisfactory progress in extending their skills in composition, using colour in drawing and painting and exploring different techniques in a range of media. They have a sound knowledge of a range of artists' work but find it hard to remember artists' names and have a limited vocabulary to explain the characteristics of different styles.
80. Year 1 pupils' portraits show an appreciation of the proportion of facial features when they draw portraits. Pupils in Year 2 know that white or black need to be added to a colour to make different tones. Their work based on Paul Klee's *Senecio* shows careful mixing of a range of tones with which they created patterns to make up a portrait. When Year 1 and Year 2 pupils create autumn scenes, some smudge the edges of shapes drawn with pastel to create a hazy effect that captures the atmosphere well. In Year 3, pupils use what they know about tone to create effective studies of sunflowers and this work shows a good developing sense of composition and control of different types of line. This work shows a very good, individual interpretation of the subject; some of the compositions contain great detail, whereas others rely on sinuous lines to create interest and rhythm in the picture.

81. Sketchbooks have been introduced in the junior classes and are often well used to practise techniques and try out ideas. In Year 6, for example, pupils have explored how to create different qualities of line to convey different feelings and have practised shading areas of drawings to create depth. There is some very good work by the Years 5 and 6 pupils based on Matisse's work. The pupils' compositions, created on a spiral theme, capture Matisse's vibrant use of colour very well.
82. No lessons were seen but from the evidence of pupils' work and progress and teachers' planning, it is evident that teaching is satisfactory. The teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their art work and pupils use drawing programs very competently. Year 2 pupils have drawn portraits using ICT, for example, and Year 5 pupils have created some good work in the style of Kandinsky. Pupils have good opportunities to visit museums and galleries. The infant pupils, for example, are visiting a local gallery this term and will then create sculpture from natural materials at an outdoor sculpture park. The subject is satisfactorily led by a new co-ordinator who has not yet had the opportunity to sample pupils' work in depth but has checked that the school's scheme of work is being implemented in each year.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

83. Standards are broadly in line with those expected nationally in Year 2 and Year 6. The majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress in the development of skills in making things as they move through the school. Appropriate emphasis is given to the design process and the recording of pupils' initial designs and evaluations.
84. The school now plans more systematically for the subject through the adoption of a scheme of work that follows national guidance. This supports teachers who are able to teach skills of cutting, shaping and making effectively. For example, a scrutiny of previous work shows that pupils in the infants have made masks from card and paper, used the lever principle to make animals with moving limbs from card, and made a book of characters with concertina paper bodies based on their literacy stories. In the lesson seen, Year 1 pupils were skilfully and successfully led through the process of making a bookmark, using a simple running stitch on a piece of binca. Through the careful and well-directed demonstration of the teacher, and the good support of a parent and teaching assistant, all pupils were able to practise and develop their skills successfully over the period of the lesson. Year 2 pupils have used these skills in making a hand puppet from different materials, using felt and coloured cloths. One pupil showed his finished puppet with obvious pride and pleasure.
85. Similar skills in cutting and shaping materials are evident in the juniors. Year 3 pupils look at a range of different containers prior to making a purse or wallet of their own. They willingly contribute their own ideas to a discussion and are able to draw diagrams of their original designs with a high degree of success. Year 6 pupils were observed recording their evaluations of the slippers they had made and deciding on the features that had been successful and those they might change. A scrutiny of previous work shows that junior pupils are able to design and make a range of products successfully. Year 5 pupils have made an animal booklet for younger pupils, using different pop-up techniques. Previous Year 3 work has involved designing and making a sandwich for a day out. Talking to pupils shows that they are aware of the different types of materials they use and how well they fit their requirements.
86. Teaching is satisfactory and teachers show an appropriate knowledge of the subject. Practical demonstrations are good and teachers successfully lead pupils through discussions on the design and evaluation of their products. Good use is made of support staff to help pupils with special educational needs so that they are able to make effective contributions to discussions. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and the co-ordinator has expanded resources recently. At present there are plans in the school improvement plan to develop opportunities to assess the attainment and progress of pupils in design and technology. The school is already aware of the need to develop this aspect of its provision.

GEOGRAPHY

87. Standards in geography are below the expected levels for both seven and eleven year olds. The teaching is satisfactory but there are gaps in pupils' knowledge that have not yet been filled by the new scheme of work. The over-use of worksheets limits pupils' independent effort in recording with understanding. Most pupils have made insufficient gains in acquiring geographical skills, knowledge and understanding because too little time is given to the subject.
- Pupils' literacy skills are weak and this hinders reading for information and recording.
 - Teaching of geography does not sufficiently extend pupils' skills of plotting routes on maps or working on plans. Older pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop skills of fieldwork.
 - Teachers take insufficient account of different abilities and needs. Pupils are often given the same work to complete.
 - There is some assessment in the subject, but this is not yet used consistently and the work does not always build on what pupils already know and understand; for example, pupils do not know how to use maps of different scales, and in one lesson found learning about contours quite difficult. They were not quite ready for this topic and this led to superficial learning and achievement.
 - The subject co-ordinator is new. There has been little opportunity to monitor teaching and learning through focused lesson observations or to examine pupils' work regularly to check standards;
 - Currently, the resources of books, globes, updated atlases, maps and photos, are quite limited.
88. However, there are strengths in the subject, which form a secure basis for further development. For example:
- Visits to local places of interest through which pupils experience and learn geography are given appropriate emphasis. These help bring the subject to life and make good contributions to pupils' personal and social development, for example, the Brandon Marsh trip.
 - There is a suitable action plan to raise the subject's profile, with plans to review the geography policy and the schemes of work and to improve resources.
 - The subject is securely represented in planning to ensure that pupils are now taught geography each term to build regularly on their learning.
89. Most seven year olds acquire geographical vocabulary and identify key features noted on their walk to school, for example, a bridge, a garage, park, playground. Pupils in Year 2 identify key features of places and recognise, for example, that it would be very different to live in Castries to living in Bedworth. The discussion with Year 6 pupils indicated that they have developing knowledge and understanding of the use of keys and symbols and many can plot co-ordinates successfully.
90. In the lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory. Most teachers demonstrate sound geographical knowledge and understanding. The lessons are planned well and based on clear objectives. In a lesson about the school environment, a Year 4 teacher used appropriate methods and effective questioning. Praise and encouragement are used well in most lessons and they effectively support pupils' attitudes to learning. The teaching makes sound contributions to literacy skills. Effective questioning and encouragement to use appropriate terminology improve pupils' speaking and listening skills and extend their vocabulary. However, pupils' writing skills are not sufficiently extended through recorded work in geography. In the three lessons observed, pupils were well enthused and eager to answer questions. They collaborated well and worked with enthusiasm.

HISTORY

91. It was possible to observe only two lessons in history during the inspection. Additional evidence for judgements on the standards of pupils' work is based on the analysis of their books and work on display, interviews with staff and pupils, and teachers' planning. Pupils' historical knowledge and understanding are not as expected by age seven and eleven. The progress made by pupils is too slow, as in the topics

recently covered which have not enabled pupils to acquire an appropriate depth of understanding. The school has recently adopted the national guidance in the subject and organised suitable coverage across the school, but this has not yet had an impact on pupils' achievement. Where pupils with special educational needs are suitably supported, they make satisfactory progress overall. However, most pupils have made limited progress over time for following reasons:

- Only a small amount of work is completed over the time throughout the school and this indicates lack of depth in the study of different topics, such as the Ancient Egypt or the Romans.
- There is insufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils, as most work is either copied or completed on photocopied worksheets that do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to devise own ways of recording what they have learnt. This indicates that pupils of different ages and ability in the same class often do the same work.
- The monitoring role of the subject co-ordinator is not extended to include timely checks on standards in teaching and learning.
- There are some formalised procedures in assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school, but this information is not used well, as the quality of teachers' planning is not well informed by pupils' prior attainment.

92. Most Year 2 pupils demonstrate a developing understanding of the past and a sense of chronology by their ability to sequence events and objects. They learn about old and new toys and the facts about the Gunpowder Plot. Most pupils lack confidence and skill in the correct use of words and phrases that relate to the passing of time. Discussions with older pupils indicate that most have some knowledge of different periods of British history, such as Victorian times, although only a few place these accurately on a time-line. They also study World War II, and are beginning to think more clearly about everyday lives of ordinary people and compare and contrast what they discover with their own lives in the present day. Many pupils' recorded work is hampered by their lack of fluency in writing and ability to apply the subject-specific vocabulary in their writing. Most pupils are not sufficiently skilled in using and interpreting a wide range of historical sources and evidence. Many do not confidently ask questions about why things happened in the past in order to develop their historical enquiry.
93. Teaching of history makes some contributions to the development of pupils' speaking and listening. The development of writing and spelling is enhanced, where pupils are encouraged to record what they know. The teaching also contributes adequately to the development of pupils' knowledge of numbers to work on time-lines.
94. The co-ordinator has clear direction for the subject. She has audited and organised available resources such as books and artefacts and recognises the need to develop the range and quality of resources, particularly the artefacts related to different periods in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

95. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected nationally for pupils of a similar age. The pupils make very good progress in using ICT. The school has made good use of its funds to provide computer resources for all age groups and makes very good use of the part-time technician to support teaching and learning in ICT. The subject has a high profile across the school through the strong leadership and management of the co-ordinator and other senior teachers. All teachers have positive attitudes to ICT and are skilled and confident users. This is likely to be further improved when planned training is completed in the near future.
96. All groups of pupils are confident users of computers. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on creating the front page of a newspaper, pupils used the correct vocabulary to talk about what they were trying to do. They can import graphics, resize and re-position them on the page and change the style, size and colour of the different fonts they want to use. They do so through a mixture of using a mouse and a series of keyboard short cuts using particular function keys. This is because the skills they will learn have been

clearly explained and demonstrated by the teacher and the technician at the start of the lesson, and then their learning is well supported throughout the sessions. More able pupils are set to work with other groups of pupils so that all pupils are fully involved in the lesson. This, as in all the lessons seen, is also helped greatly by the ways in which all pupils share resources and take turns fairly so that all the different groups are able to practise their skills. In a Year 5 lesson on developing a multi-media presentation for younger pupils, very good progress was made over the time of the lesson because pupils were enthused by the task set, and maintained good levels of interest and concentration. Scrutiny of previous work in the juniors shows that pupils develop their skills in all aspects of the subject well. Year 3 pupils can collect information for a database, enter it in the computer and then make a simple analysis to print out data in the form of graphs. Their analysis becomes more complicated in Year 5 and by the end of Year 6 they are using spreadsheets for calculations using 'what if' situations. A similar development of word processing skills is evident. In Year 4, pupils can combine text and graphics, rotating and resizing them to fit their purpose. By Year 6, most pupils are able to edit text and graphics through a range of techniques, such as using a spell checker and justifying blocks of text.

97. Much of the basis for the development of these skills takes place in the good work started in the infant classes. In the Year 1 lesson seen, the teacher had prepared the learning of the lesson, making simple name labels, on the journey across to the computer suite by looking for different labels around the school. Pupils were already focused on what they are going to be doing and the teacher made good use of her own knowledge to explain the task clearly. She made good use of the pupils' previous knowledge and understanding so that they were able to practise their skills effectively. By the end of the session all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, had written their own name labels with correct punctuation of capital letters using their mouse and keyboard skills. Scrutiny of previous infant work shows they can save and print their own work with some assistance and write simple sentences, correctly punctuated, to match pictures or graphics. Most can use the mouse effectively to draw freehand and know the use of certain function keys on the keyboard, such as 'enter', 'space bar', and 'shift'.
98. The teaching is good. All staff are confident in their approach to using ICT in many areas of the curriculum. The Year 4 lesson on designing a litter poster was part of their work in geography. Year 1 pupils have drawn their favourite characters from their reading books and Year 2 science work was supported by graphs of the different hair colours of the class. The spreadsheet and database work in Years 4, 5 and 6 supports data handling work in mathematics, and older pupils use CD-ROMs for research purposes in history and geography. Many of the bright and colourful displays around the school are considerably enhanced by the use of ICT so that they are clear and well presented.
99. The headteacher and deputy, who have contributed well to the high profile of the subject across the school, lead the subject very well. They have drawn up a new planning system for the subject that plans the use of ICT across all subjects of the curriculum in a more systematic and measured way. Resources are very good and are being used positively to have a significant impact on the attainment and progress of all groups of pupils across the school. The ICT technician is also making a strong contribution to the schools' provision through his support of teachers and the programs he has written that are specifically targeted to particular groups of pupils. These are particularly helpful in supporting the progress of pupils with special educational needs in mathematics.

MUSIC

100. Standards in singing and playing are below expectations for pupils' age by Year 6. However, the standards achieved by seven year olds in singing are in line with expectations for their age. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection and there was insufficient further evidence available for analysis to determine standards in other aspects of the music curriculum or the overall quality of teaching and learning.
101. A visiting music specialist plans and teaches the singing sessions for Years 1 and 2. The provision benefits pupils who learn a good repertoire of songs. They are highly motivated and join in

enthusiastically. Pupils sing with a pleasant bright tone quality and match their voices well to the melody. They sing rhythmically and keep time with the piano accompaniment. The repertoire of Year 6 pupils includes a range of simple rounds. Whilst they maintain the independent parts with reasonable accuracy, they have difficulty in sustaining the melody and tend to chant the words instead of sing them. Their singing in assembly lacks conviction and the tone quality is rather thin.

102. Planning indicates that pupils cover all elements of the curriculum. They have regular, planned opportunities to sing, perform, compose and listen to music. The two lessons observed were appropriately focused and built on pupils' earlier learning. In the Years 1 and 2 lesson, the teacher chose an interesting range of listening extracts which broadened pupils' experience. The teacher managed the pupils well and they listened attentively. She recognised that their spontaneous response to the music through movement provided valuable information about their knowledge and skills so allowed this to continue. The Year 6 lesson included practical music-making activities to increase pupils' enjoyment of music and helped them to develop their skills. Teachers and support staff are committed to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in musical activities and worked well with a focus group. This enabled pupils to make similar progress in their learning to that of other pupils in their class. Weaker features of teaching include too little guidance on how pupils might improve their playing and singing skills, and lack of questioning to draw out from pupils why they think as they do about the music they hear and perform. In both lessons there was too little opportunity for some pupils to be involved in some practical activities. Consequently pupils did not make enough progress in these lessons.
103. Initiatives such as performances from visiting musical ensembles and the involvement of the steel pan group in the Steel Pan Festival broaden their musical experiences and introduce them to the music of other cultures. Both younger and older pupils have the opportunity to join a choir. Performances by the choir and by the music and drama group contribute well to most pupils' positive attitude to the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with what is expected. Opportunities for pupils in Year 6 to experience friendly matches and competitive sport with local schools are a developing feature of physical education. There is provision for both boys and girls to experience football and netball. Pupils in Year 4 receive swimming lessons and many develop very good water skills. By the time they leave the school at eleven, most pupils swim at least 25 metres and practise water safety.
105. Pupils throughout the school acquire satisfactory understanding of fitness and health. In Year 2 they continue to make sound gains in the development of dance skills. Pupils work in small groups and successfully devise their own rhythmic dance to music. In a lesson observed, pupils danced to Bhangra music from India. Most pupils moved creatively to music and were excited by this opportunity, although a few found it difficult to follow the beat and the steps. Pupils explore, improvise and combine movements. Younger pupils use sticks and bells enthusiastically to provide the beat, and can explain what they are doing. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils to assess own and each other's performances. Year 6 pupils were observed in outdoor games, developing knowledge and basic skills of attack and defence. They extend their learning to carefully observe others' performance in order to evaluate and improve further in connecting skills and techniques in passing and receiving a ball. They learnt to pass the ball sideways, forwards and backwards.
106. The quality of teaching and learning is mostly satisfactory but some is not good enough. Teachers explain activities clearly and give reminders of safety. Most pupils listen carefully, follow instructions correctly and work safely. Teachers use secure subject knowledge to carefully plan and focus on specific skills. Most teachers create an effective pace in lessons and have appropriate expectations of behaviour. Through this, pupils develop their skills and extend their range of performance. Good explanations, and individual as well as group demonstrations, create an effective learning environment. Pupils strive to improve their performance, through taking advice and examples given in lessons, and

show appropriate concerns for quality and precision. Most pupils display positive attitudes towards physical education and show obvious enjoyment in all lessons. They are active and enthusiastic. They co-operate well and show respect for others and equipment. Most pupils observe good supporting behaviour. Most teachers use their own and pupils' demonstrations effectively to enable others to improve their performance. However, not all teachers make effective interventions to give pupils opportunities to evaluate the quality of their work. One unsatisfactory lesson noted a lack of pace in the lesson and effective strategies to organise and develop the lesson in well managed stages.

107. The school has used the national guidance to produce its own schemes of work. The co-ordinator is aware of the future direction in the subject and has identified areas for further development to raise standards in all aspects of physical education. The role to formally monitor and evaluate teaching and learning is not developed yet. The resources are good, well organised and centrally based for ease of use. The school has a large field for outdoor games. Extra-curricular activities generate considerable pupil interest and support pupils' progress. Teachers carefully plan and provide a good mix of co-operative and competitive work.