

INSPECTION REPORT

SIR ALEXANDER FLEMING PRIMARY SCHOOL

Telford, Shropshire

LEA area: Telford and Wrekin

Unique reference number: 132086

Headteacher: Colin Fleetwood

Reporting inspector: Brian Aldridge
17454

Dates of inspection: 14th October to 17th October 2002

Inspection number: 252068

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	109 Southgate Sutton Hill Telford Shropshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Rupert Coldicutt
Date of previous inspection:	N/A – new school

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17454	Brian Aldridge	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT)	What should the school do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed
14178	Pat Willman	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents
20911	Judy Dawson	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Mathematics Music Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
17857	David Walters	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Design and technology Physical education	
18059	Rajinder Harrison	Team inspector	English as an additional language English Art and design	
23453	Carole Cressey	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Geography History	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Situated in Telford, the Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School educates 403 pupils (187 boys and 184 girls) in Years 1 to 6. Sixty-four children attend the nursery class part-time and 26 children are taught in two reception classes, making up the school's Foundation Stage. The school is larger than other primary schools and was formed in January 2001 from the amalgamation of an infant and junior school which shared the same site as the present school. This was a difficult process that attracted opposition from the local community and parents. This school is placed at the centre of the local community that is the focus of an urban regeneration project. Many of the school's families experience a great deal of social and financial distress. Children enter the nursery attaining well below the expected levels all areas of their development particularly in their communication, language and literacy skills. There are 16 pupils who are taught English as an additional language, the majority of whom speak Punjabi as their home language. Three pupils are supported in their language development. Of the 89 pupils (22.1 per cent) with special educational needs, ten have a statement. Both of these proportions are above average. Needs include moderate learning, emotional, behavioural and social and physical difficulties. A very high proportion of the pupils, 27 per cent, change schools each year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The headteacher is an excellent leader of a very good school, which has gained the admiration and support of parents and the local community. Pupils make very good progress because teaching is good and members of staff, governors and, not least, pupils work very hard to create an atmosphere where everyone is valued and cared for in a highly effective manner. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve very well
- The quality of teaching is consistently good.
- The leadership and management are very good.
- The care and nurture of pupils, including that for pupils who need special attention, is exceptional.

What could be improved

- Provision in the Foundation Stage.
- Learning opportunities for speaking.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school opened in January 2001 and has not been inspected before. The excellence of the leadership and the commitment and hard work shown by all members of the school community indicate that the school's capacity to improve is very good.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Children enter the nursery class attaining well below the expected levels in all areas of their learning, particularly in language and literacy skills. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage but progress could be better in some areas of learning. In the development of their personal and social skills and knowledge and understanding of the world, children make good progress and attainment in these areas is higher than in others.

Standards in Year 2 are improving. In the national tests at the end of last academic year standards in reading and mathematics were well below average and in writing they were below average. In this year's Year 2 standards in English and mathematics are below average. Standards in all of the other subjects are at the expected levels. In Year 6 standards in English and mathematics are below average. In science standards are above average and in all other subjects pupils reach the expected levels. This is a year group which has an even higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than the school's normal intake which is higher than the national average. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the high quality support they receive. Pupils who learn English as an additional language learn well and make the same rates of progress as other pupils. Brighter pupils are well served and make very good progress. Pupils in the current Years 1 to 6 learn well in lessons and make very good progress during their time in school. The school achieved its demanding targets in English but not in mathematics where there was a slight dip in the school's trend.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive; pupils like coming to school and are keen and happy to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well; most are kind and considerate to each other.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and personal development is good. Inspectors saw many examples of older pupils caring for younger children, hearing them read and playing with them in the playground. The school develops very caring attitudes in its pupils.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory but improving.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. There are differences between the year groups. In the Foundation Stage (the nursery and reception classes) the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching In Years 1 to 6 is good and at times very good with, occasionally, excellent teaching. Pupils' learning matches the quality of teaching in their classes. Of particular note is the high quality of teachers' planning which clearly sets out challenging activities for all groups of pupils whatever their learning needs or background. As a result all groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, respond and learn well. The work of learning support assistants, the preparation of resources and the management of behaviour are all very good. Homework is handled very well; it encourages pupils to learn at home and it supports their work in school. The skills of reading, writing and number are taught well. Because pupils are interested in their lessons and want to please their teachers they work very hard, showing real commitment to their tasks. Pupils with special educational needs learn very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Learning opportunities in Years 1 to 6 are good; in the Foundation Stage they are unsatisfactory. The learning opportunities in information and communication technology, practical activities in science and the extra-curricular activities are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good, with pupils achieving as well as those pupils who speak English as their home language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall; the school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop a balanced and caring outlook on life. While respecting pupils' home backgrounds, the school staff demonstrate with care and sensitivity what it is to be an active member of the school and wider community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for; they are protected and cherished and their personal accomplishments and successes are celebrated across the school. The school's systems for measuring and tracking progress are very good and ensure that pupils make good progress.

Personal, social and health education are addressed very well and the school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities whatever their background or learning needs. There are many good opportunities provided for parents to work in and with the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is an excellent leader who is ably supported by senior teachers and coordinators. He is an assured and highly respected manager.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have made a good start to their work and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, senior managers and governors check the quality of the school's work very well.
The strategic use of resources	The school plans and spends its budget very well.

The accommodation is excellent and staffing is very good. Resources are very good throughout the school with the exception of the Foundation Stage where they should be improved. The school applies the principles of best value very well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to school and their behaviour is good • Children receive the right amount of work, are expected to work hard and are helped to become mature • Teaching is good, children make good progress and they feel well informed about their children's progress • The school works closely with parents and they feel comfortable about approaching the school • The school is well led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no significant issues raised by parents

Parents think very highly of their school. They think the school is doing well and takes good care of their children. Parents hold the headteacher in the highest esteem. Inspectors agree with parents' views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. National test data and inspectors observations indicate that, despite higher than average proportions of pupils with special educational needs and higher than average pupil mobility, this is an academically successful school. Children enter the nursery with well below average standards in most areas and progress satisfactorily until they enter Year 1 in the main school. Though compared to all schools the standards pupils reached in the 2002 Year 2 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics were either below or well below average, compared to similar schools their performance in reading and writing was average and in mathematics was below average. According to the results of the 2002 national tests, standards rise again by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6. Standards were average in English, below average in mathematics and above average in science. Compared to similar schools the pupils' performance in English and science was well above average and it was above average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in all three subjects was well above the average of similar schools. English and science results were higher than in 2001 but in mathematics results declined. Overall, there was a marked increase in the number of pupils in Year 6 achieving the expected levels.
2. The higher than average proportions of pupils with special educational needs and those who change school are associated with several additional difficulties for the school:
 - pupils who enter the school during Years 1 to 6 have more special educational needs than the already high levels within the school;
 - assessing, measuring and tracking progress is difficult if pupils leave and rejoin the school frequently, which is sometimes the case in this school.The current Year 6 has a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including a large group of pupils with a statement. This means that the current year group will probably not achieve as well as last year's Year 6, although the school has still set itself challenging targets.
3. Since the school opened in January 2001, it has developed very good systems to analyse pupils' progress and it uses this information to adapt the curriculum and modify teaching strategies. The school's analysis predicted the low results in 2001 and the rise in 2002. In order to improve pupils' writing skills, an area which had been identified as needing improvement through the analysis of test results, the school adopted many useful teaching styles and extra provision. These attempts worked well and have resulted in higher standards of writing in all year groups. Mathematics will be the next focus of this concentrated attention. Improvements in pupils' performance in national tests are the result of extra classes in English, mathematics and science and as a result more pupils are attaining the levels expected for their age.
4. Inspectors found that children enter the Foundation Stage¹ attaining well below the expected levels and in their language and literacy skills their knowledge and understanding are particularly poor. They make satisfactory progress in all of their areas of learning with the exception of their social development and their knowledge and understanding of the world, in which they achieve well and make good progress. Literacy and numeracy skills and their speaking skills are not as well developed as they should be. Although individual lessons are well planned and thoughtful, some

¹ The Foundation Stage includes the nursery class and the reception classes.

opportunities are missed to help children when they are working by themselves. Progress in the Foundation Stage is hampered by a lack of team planning between the nursery class and the reception classes, for instance in the use of assessment records. The school is aware of this lack of teamwork and a programme of improvement is underway.

5. Inspectors observations of standards broadly concur with the last set of test results, though Year 6 may be lower this year as a consequence of a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. By Year 2 pupils are achieving below average standards in English and mathematics and average standards in science. By Year 6 pupils achieve below average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science. In all other subjects, in Years 2 and 6, including information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education, pupils achieve at the expected levels. Standards in science are higher than English and mathematics for a number of reasons:
 - the quality of leadership of the subject is excellent;
 - the quality of teaching is consistently very good and teachers have very good subject knowledge, and
 - children receive a better start in gaining knowledge of the world in the Foundation Stage.
6. Brighter pupils have their needs met very well throughout Years 1 to 6. They are given challenging work to complete, often combining a range of subjects, such as science, mathematics and ICT. Teachers ensure that extension work is always available in all of their lessons. The use of sets to narrow teachers' plans also helps teachers set work which is stimulating and rigorous for particular groups of pupils. This also applies to pupils who learn English as an additional language. This group of pupils makes very good progress. They often achieve standards as high as the brightest pupils in the school who speak English as their home language.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. The generous staffing levels mean that pupils are given a great deal of assistance in most lessons. As a result, their understanding of tasks, their concentration and their progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans is enhanced. Those pupils who have a full statement of special educational needs are provided with a teaching assistant and also make very good progress. The special needs teacher has good evidence that special needs pupils whose education starts at the school make better progress than pupils who arrive at the school later.
8. Pupils' progress in the skills used in all subjects is generally very good. In their number work, reading, writing and ICT skills, pupils make very good progress. Pupils use their number skills in science and, for example, when forming spreadsheets, calculating how much litter is dropped in their classes. Pupils use computers as second nature in all year groups. From their earliest days in the school, pupils in the reception classes use the class smartboards to draw portraits. This leads on to older pupils going to computers and the smartboards whenever there is a need. However, pupils' progress in speaking is not as well developed as their other skills. This is because teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to speak formally and informally in classes. Additionally, teachers accept one or two words answers from pupils rather than extend their language skills by asking them to speak in sentences.
9. With the exception of progress in the Foundation Stage and in pupils' speaking skills pupils achieve very well. They do so in Years 1 to 6 because:
 - teaching is consistently good;

- pupils know they are cared for and they want to learn;
- the curriculum is rich with interesting learning opportunities, and
- assessment procedures ensure teachers take action to meet pupils needs in a variety of ways.

Given that in a very short space of time staff have had to combine two distinct and, in parts, very different styles of operating, the fact that these systems work well and are consistent across most of the school is a major achievement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, have very good attitudes to school. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is, with very few exceptions, consistently good. They respond very well to the strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural values promoted by the school. As a result the relationships they have with each other, with their teachers and with other members of staff are very good and the majority develop into sensible, caring and mature individuals. This is the foundation of the happy, harmonious and supportive community atmosphere that pervades the school. It is a very significant strength which has a major impact on the very good progress that most pupils make. The level of attendance, however, is just below that found in most primary schools. Many pupils, however, love coming to school and attend regularly.
11. The children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their acquisition of personal and social skills. They enjoy their time at school and generally have good relationships with their teachers, with each other and with other adults who work with them. Most arrive at school in good time and settle happily into their activities. They listen to instructions and respond appropriately. Most understand the routines in the classroom and tidy up sensibly when asked. In both the nursery and reception classes, many of the children co-operate in their games and share resources happily. They mostly get on well together and are beginning to develop positive attitudes to school.
12. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 participate in all aspects of school life with great enthusiasm and interest. This makes a significant contribution to the individual success achieved by the pupils during their time in school. The majority of parents who expressed an opinion prior to and during the inspection agree that their children like school and pupils' themselves confirmed this view. Many participate in the very good range of school clubs. The members of the Eco Club, for example, are making a tremendous contribution to the planning and planting of the beautiful pond area, gaining a very good awareness of environmental issues in the process. Most pupils are enthusiastic and well-motivated learners who listen carefully to their teachers and, because teachers value all their ideas, they contribute confidently to discussions in lessons. In a Year 5 geography lesson, for example, the free ranging discussion of the problems of waste disposal showed a good awareness of the immediate and future problems concerning this issue. The majority of pupils work hard in lessons, becoming involved in and sometimes excited by what they are learning. They enjoy their literacy, numeracy and ICT lessons, contributing thoughtful ideas to discussion sessions and responding well to the challenges presented. The awards that pupils earn for good work are valued. A pupil emerging from the headteacher's office could not wait to show off his stickers and the special piece of work he had done to achieve them. Pupils particularly enjoy the practical elements in their science experiments and using their creative skills in art and design and technology. They like looking at the very good displays around the school

and are keen to talk about them, offering suggestions as to how they could have been better.

13. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is good and in assemblies is often excellent, which confirms the view expressed by the majority of parents prior to and during the inspection. During wet playtimes, because of the excellent range of games and activities available, pupils' behaviour is very good overall. In all lessons, most pupils with special educational needs behave well. All pupils play and work happily and constructively together and clearly understand how they are expected to behave. Because of very good systems and their consistent application, pupils are very well motivated to behave well and disapprove of those who do not. They move around the school in a calm, orderly and purposeful manner, holding doors open for each other and for adults. Pupils are friendly and sociable individuals. They treat adults and each other with respect and natural courtesy because this is the way they are treated by all staff. They are proud of their school building and environment and consequently take care of it, putting their litter into the bins provided and tidying up the playground and classroom equipment carefully and sensibly. During the last school year four boys were excluded six times for a total of 36 days. These exclusions were the result of persistently poor and violent behaviour. There have been no exclusions this term.
14. Because of the very strong and supportive relationships at all levels in the school, pupils' personal development is good. As a result of the consistent nurturing and valuing of each individual, by the time they reach Year 6 most pupils are, for their age, mature, self-confident and well-motivated, equipped with a sense of values to guide them through the next stage of their education. The school is a happy and mutually supportive community in which each individual feels special. One small boy standing alone in the playground explained that he was waiting for his friend and pointed to the approaching headteacher; "He's my friend". Pupils have the confidence to ask and answer questions, to express their own ideas and to contribute to discussions without any fear of ridicule. Pupils' response to opportunities to talk about their feelings and beliefs in their religious education and personal, social and health education lessons is good. They listen carefully to each other without interrupting and show concern and compassion for the difficulties of others. Pupils have been involved in fund raising for local and national charities and have some insight into the lives of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils co-operate well in lessons, sharing ideas and improving their work as a result. They respect the school and playground rules and follow instructions willingly. Although playtimes are boisterous and exuberant, no deliberate unkindness was observed. Pupils have few concerns about bullying and are confident that the school handles any such occurrences very quickly and effectively. They clearly understand the need to tell someone if they are unhappy. Pupils show good levels of initiative in the way in which they do their jobs around the school. The School Council members are proud to represent their classmates. They consider that they were chosen because they are sensible and, as one Year 1 representative put it, "We talk a lot!" Many of the older pupils enjoy watching out for the younger ones at playtimes, playing games with them and showing concern if they are upset. Pupils are involved in many community activities and represent their school with pride, developing confident and mature social skills. They recognise the needs and achievements of each other and celebrate success. Many pupils have high expectations of themselves, they want to do well and are prepared to work hard to achieve this.
15. In all lessons, most pupils with special educational needs behave well. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons. With the help of their teachers and learning support staff their self-confidence and their ability to work on their own develops very well. Good examples of this were seen in Years 3 and 5 science

lessons. When working in small groups, these pupils form good relationships with support staff and fellow pupils, which help them make good gains in learning

16. In recent years the level of attendance in school has been below the national average. Although the majority of pupils attend regularly, there are a significant number who do not and are missing important elements in their learning. This has an adverse impact on the standards they achieve. The school is committed to improving attendance and has adopted excellent systems to achieve this. Early evidence indicates that this is beginning to have a positive effect. Pupils are mostly punctual and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT

17. The quality of teaching is good overall. There are many key skills and attitudes which all teachers share and a few common elements which need to be improved. However, there are differences between the Foundation Stage (the nursery and the reception classes) and the other year groups in the school. In the Foundation Stage the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In Years 1 to 6 the quality of teaching is good, at times very good and occasionally excellent. There were no observations of unsatisfactory teaching.
18. In the Foundation Stage teaching is satisfactory. The quality of planning in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory because teachers do not plan together. In the Foundation Stage team of three teachers, individual lessons are planned well with clear objectives set for each task but because there are few links between the work set for the nursery children and those set for reception aged children, learning is not continuous. There is also a lack of linked recording and assessment between the nursery and reception classes and, although teachers know their pupils well, assessment is not used to check on how well children are doing. This also causes expectations of what children can do to be too low, with the exception of knowledge and understanding of the world and personal development. Relative success in the first of these areas of learning helps build a firm foundation to support scientific learning later in the school. Teachers in the Foundation Stage manage children's behaviour well with the result that children are enthusiastic and keen to learn. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory overall and basic skills are taught in a sound manner but often teachers tend to over-direct children without picking up on learning opportunities to develop children's communication skills. The resources in the nursery and reception classes are used as well as they can be but the unsuitability of some of them also hinders children's progress.
19. In Years 1 to 6 teaching is remarkably consistent and is good overall. Over a third of the lessons seen in Years 1 to 6 were taught very well and almost all were taught well. Because teaching is so consistent in Years 1 to 6 pupils' learning mirrors this quality of teaching, and as a consequence pupils' progress builds systematically. The quality of teaching affects the quality and rate of pupils' learning in the following ways.

20.

Teaching strengths which result in effective learning
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- | | |
|---|--|
| • Teachers have good subject knowledge | → Pupils learn facts and ideas well and, although they have difficulty in talking about what they know, their understanding is assured. |
| • The teaching of reading, writing, number and computing skills is good. | → Pupils use their basic skills in a range of subjects, not just English and mathematics. Pupils use computers naturally and in a range of subjects. |
| • Lesson planning is very good and teachers use good assessment methods to set the next stage of work. | → Pupils know what they are to learn in each lesson and because teachers recap the learning aims during lessons, pupils measure their new learning against what their teachers have planned for them. |
| • Teachers challenge pupils well, whatever their learning strengths and needs. This happens in classrooms and in the homework teachers set. | → Pupils are curious and very hard working. Science teaching in general and in Year 5 particularly inspires pupils to show very high levels of interest. Brighter pupils learn well. Boys and girls have work planned which meets their needs. |
| • Teachers use an interesting range of methods. | → Teachers are skilled at planning links between subjects which helps pupils learn about the real world. |
| • Teachers manage behaviour very well, they are kind but firm. | → Lessons and therefore learning are not interrupted by unacceptable behaviour. |
| • Lessons are brisk and teachers often set challenging time limits for the completion of work. | → Pupils work hard and are productive. They know what to do and in lessons they strive to complete their tasks. |
| • Learning support assistants help pupils very well. They are well briefed by teachers and show very good levels of skills. | → Whether pupils have special educational needs, learn English as an additional language or are bright and quick learners, they are helped to understand more and remember what they have learned by their support assistants. |

Teaching weaknesses which result in ineffective learning

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|---|--|
| • There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking skills | → Although pupils understand what they are learning they find it difficult to explain their ideas. |
|---|--|

21. The quality of special educational needs teaching is very good. It has a very good impact on the progress of pupils because they are kept busy in a purposeful and relevant way so that they are well motivated. Pupils' work is based on accurate assessment of their special needs, which leads to an appropriate programme of study. There are some very good relationships in withdrawal groups where pupils share in each other's success enthusiastically. Support staff keep good notes for the teachers to plan the next phase of the pupils' programme. The whole teaching and support staff of the school accepts its responsibility towards special educational needs and plans lessons accordingly. This is a major factor in the successful development of pupils' progress.

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

22. The learning opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 6 are good. There is a broad curriculum and all subjects of the National Curriculum and the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education are planned for effectively, ensuring that there is suitable progression from year to year. Provision for ICT, practical activities in science and extra-curricular activities are very good. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. While lessons are planned satisfactorily the Foundation Stage team does not plan learning opportunities together, which means that there are discontinuities in children's learning.
23. The planning for each subject of the National Curriculum is based on government guidance and ensures that pupils build on their learning from year to year. The scheme of work for religious education, at present under review, is based on the Agreed Syllabus and government guidance. The headteacher and senior management place a high priority on creating a cohesive curriculum for the whole school to ensure that pupils have continuity and access to good quality learning opportunities. Much has been achieved in the 18 months of the school's life. Parents and pupils are very appreciative of the curricular opportunities provided and pupils respond with enthusiasm. Personal, social and health education has a high priority and the provision for this aspect of the pupils' education is very good. There is no formal curriculum but the school responds to the pupils' social needs as well as providing appropriate sex education, drugs awareness and healthy living.
24. The school has effective measures to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. It is an extremely inclusive school. What it provides fully meets requirements of the new Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. The support provided by teachers and support staff is of a very high quality and effectively deployed. Individual education programmes, including those for pupils who have a statement of special educational needs, have clear targets. There is a very good match of work to the needs of the pupils in all individual plans, which are reviewed regularly. The pupils identified as being gifted and talented are well catered for and the curriculum is challenging. As a result, pupils achieve well, many achieving above average results in national and internal tests.
25. Both literacy and numeracy are promoted effectively throughout the curriculum. Pupils use geographical surveys and scientific data for their mathematics' lessons, for example. However, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through, for example, drama, debate and speaking to a range of audiences. The planning for the use of ICT across the whole curriculum is

very good and full use is made of the very good resources such as sensors, microscopes and smartboards as well as the Internet.

26. From the start this new, dynamic school has encouraged the involvement of the community in the pupils' learning. The environmental project, for example, has involve a "Litter Pick" with Madeley Parish Council, participation in the Severn-Trent poetry competition and a competition to design a website for the Telford and Wrekin recycling and waste management website. There are appropriate links with the local secondary schools and plans to develop these further. The school now needs to raise the quality the curricular provision for the Foundation Stage to match the good provision in the rest of the school.
27. The schools' provision for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and there is very good provision for moral and social development.
28. Pupils are encouraged to explore values and beliefs in their religious education and personal, social and health education lessons. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils learning about Moses and the rules he was given discussed the question; "Does God want us to kill people" in the light of the current political events and terrorism. Older pupils discussed "freedom" and what it means to them, relating their experiences to Hanukah and the persecution of the Jews. The climate in which the pupils learn is based on respect for others and the right of individuals to express their opinions. The respect all teachers show for their pupils sets a very good example. Pupils' comments and questions are valued and pupils of all abilities and cultures are treated with equal respect. The cohesive curriculum enables pupils to make connections between aspects of their learning and deepen their understanding of the relationship between what they learn and life outside school.
29. Pupils' moral and social education has been a priority since the foundation of the combined school. A clear moral code and expectations of appropriate social behaviour were established from the beginning and are applied consistently. There are clear and consistent systems of rewards for effort and good behaviour and parents are fully involved in programmes to support pupils with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. Within the curriculum, in personal, social and health education lessons, in assemblies and extra-curricular activities pupils are encouraged to have regard for each other's rights and responsibilities. The school responds to any unacceptable behaviour sensitively, often illustrating appropriate actions in assemblies or personal, social and health education lessons. For example, "Jumping to Conclusions" was the theme for the week to encourage pupils to listen to each other. Each pupil knows what is expected of him or her and has the opportunity to influence the life of the school by electing a class member of the School Council. Pupils are encouraged to take care of the environment by, for example, recycling materials and caring for their school. Everyone takes great pride in their lovely school and pupils, parents and all adults who work in school show a strong sense of community. The school is a caring and happy place to be where everyone is expected to take responsibility for their actions.
30. The curriculum encourages pupils to explore their own cultural values and the local culture. Pupils are involved in community projects. They visit local museums and art galleries and the school makes good use of their locality – noted for its place in the birth of modern industry - as well as the geographical features of the locality. Over the year clubs provide a good range of extra-cultural activities such as art, choir, dance, book club and French. The teachers are aware of the need to provide a wide range of cultural experiences for the pupils. For example, an unexpected withdrawal of musical instrumental tuition generated a swift response from the headteacher. The thriving

choir performs challenging music and pupils' artwork is displayed very well, showing a commitment to high achievement. Pupils learn about other cultures within all aspects of the curriculum. The religious education curriculum explores several different religions and cultures and pupils are encouraged to compare, contrast and empathise with them. Pupils from ethnic minorities in school take a pride in sharing their cultures with their peers and the teachers encourage them to contribute to the lessons. A good range of books, artefacts and videos support education for diversity. The school is committed to extending and developing the range of visitors to school and the cultural experiences of the pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS

31. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are very well cared for at school. The welfare of each pupil is the first priority for all who work in the school and this has created a warm and caring family community in which pupils thrive. Because pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored very well, the school provides a very good level of educational and personal support and guidance for each individual. The day-to-day care of the children in the Foundation Stage is good. However, the systems to promote and track their progress are unsatisfactory and the educational support and guidance for these children is not as good as in the rest of the school. The strong relationships between pupils, their teachers and other members of staff are a major factor in the high quality and continuity of the care provided for the pupils.
32. The school has very good procedures and established practices to govern health and safety and child protection. Regular risk assessments are carried out and staff have a good awareness of the importance of safe practice in their work. The provision for first aid is very good and emergency evacuation is practised regularly. Two members of staff are trained in child protection procedures, and the dedication and commitment of all staff ensures that there is a high awareness of this duty of care. Teachers ensure that pupils understand how to use resources safely and they receive appropriate information about sex, drugs and the importance of good hygiene and diet through the personal, social and health education programme and their science lessons. A range of visitors comes to school to talk to pupils about issues of personal safety. Staff treat pupils with compassion and sympathy, providing counselling when needed to support them through difficult situations. Supervision during playtimes and lunchtimes is very good. The lunchtime supervisors are well organised and treat the pupils with kindness and good humour.
33. Because of the very good relationships that teachers have with the pupils, the formal and informal procedures for monitoring personal development are very good. As a result, pupils receive a very good level of individual personal support. The school has set a target of 95 per cent attendance for this year and has recently introduced new procedures to follow up absence and encourage pupils to attend regularly. Early evidence suggests that attendance is improving. The school is very well supported by the education welfare officer in its determination to raise attendance. The computerised system in each class for recording morning and afternoon attendance is quick and efficient and fully complies with legal requirements. A particular strength in monitoring and promoting good behaviour in the school is the consistency and fairness with which staff apply the procedures. All staff, including the mid-day supervisors, follow the school's procedures and pupils know and mostly abide by the simple and sensible rules. Neither pupils nor parents express any concerns about bullying and trust the staff to handle any unkind behaviour effectively. The rewards for kind and

caring behaviour are sought after and valued and pupils enjoy the whole school recognition of their achievement.

34. There are very good systems for assessing pupils' special educational needs and monitoring their progress. As soon as a problem is identified and individual programme is written and progress towards the targets is assessed. New targets are set as a result of the reviews. The provisions specified in statements of special educational needs are met in full. Links with agencies, such as social services, speech therapists and other services are very good and their expertise valued.
35. The school has very good procedures for measuring pupils' achievements and monitoring their progress. Regular tests in English, mathematics and science that include both statutory and optional assessments and other standardised tests are entered into the school's tracking system. Pupils' achievements from the age of five are recorded, based on data from the local education authority. The school database, accessible to the teachers, is used to track pupils' progress and to analyse any significant differences between boys and girls and pupils who have joined the school since it has opened. This data is used to sort pupils into ability groups for English and mathematics and to identify pupils with special educational needs and the gifted and talented pupils. Pupils are set individual targets for English but not in mathematics and other aspects of the curriculum. To do so would make pupils more aware of their own progress. The school has plans to extend the individual target setting this year; it forms part of the school's plans for development. Regular and frequent assessment procedures are used in the core subjects; in other subjects the approach is less systematic but equally effective. As the school uses government guidance for curriculum planning, progression is built into the schemes of work and teachers, in their year teams, discuss pupils' achievements to ensure they have captured pupils' progress.
36. The analysis of pupils' performance in the tests is used to identify any weaknesses in the provision. For example, pupils did not achieve well in the mental arithmetic tests. This has prompted the school to focus on this aspect of mathematics. Additional support has been provided for pupils who have not made the progress they should in English and there are three classes for mathematics for Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans that are specifically geared to meet the needs of each individual by providing appropriate and achievable targets that are reviewed regularly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

37. Parents have very positive views about the work of the school. Most support the values promoted by the school and are very pleased with the care taken of their children and the range of educational and personal opportunities provided. Parents are provided with good information about the school and its activities and many are involved in school life and in their children's learning. As a result, the school has effective links with most parents and their involvement both at home and at school has a positive impact on the work of the school.
38. The quality of information provided for parents about the school and about their children's progress is good. It is practical, comprehensive and informative. Both the prospectus and the governors' annual report for parents contain much useful information about the school and its achievements. There are good induction procedures for parents of nursery children and the school provides opportunities at the

beginning and end of each day for parents and teachers to pass on any small matters of concern. The quality of the children's annual reports is good overall. The text tells parents what their children have achieved and most reports include specific targets related to English, mathematics and science. Years 2 and 6 also include the results of the standard assessment tests but other reports for other year groups do not always give parents a clear idea of the level of attainment of their child. Consultation evenings are arranged in the autumn and summer terms and any parent who wishes for more information during the year can make an appointment for that purpose. Information about what the children are learning is displayed in each class and regular newsletters keep parents up to date with activities in the school. The Family Literacy Course which the school facilitates, provides an excellent opportunity for parents to learn how to help their children at home in an enjoyable and friendly atmosphere.

39. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved in all aspects of the special needs process and reviews. In conjunction with the class teacher, they are active in helping their children with work at home. They and their children contribute to the targets in the individual education programmes. This has a good impact on their children's self esteem and progress. There are a few instances of parents not taking full advantage of the opportunities to help their children.
40. The school is fully committed to involving parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school. There is a policy on homework provision and many parents willingly try to help and encourage their children at home. Many, however, lack the skills or the inclination to do this. Several parents help regularly in classrooms with reading and practical activities and volunteer to accompany the children on visits. The small group of very enthusiastic parents who attend the Family Literacy Sessions learn skills that benefit themselves and their children. The Friends' Association organises a range of activities which, although not primarily social in nature, raise funds to provide extra benefits for the children. For example, each child has received a school book bag purchased with these funds. Parents have been formally consulted about healthy tuck and the communication through the parent governors provides a good representative view of any concerns that parents may have. The headteacher is readily available and willing to listen to parents' views and concerns and parents are always welcome in the school. Most parents have signed the home/school agreement although not all take their responsibilities towards the school and their children's learning seriously.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

41. The headteacher is an excellent leader. In the space of a few months he has forged a single highly committed school from the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools which once shared the same site. Against considerable pressure from the local community, initially concerned about the loss of its schools, the headteacher has led governors, staff, parents and pupils to regard their new school as the integral centre of the community. Parents, governors and representatives of the local community report that the pride and enthusiasm for the new school and learning, stems from the work of the headteacher and his united and hard-working staff. The headteacher's highly developed skills of leadership and management are a significant part of the explanation for the well-developed provision of the school and the high ambitions the school community has for its pupils. These ambitions are reflected in the work of the senior management team and the governors. In particular the Key Stage 1 and 2 leaders, science co-ordinator and special educational needs co-ordinator offer excellent support to their colleagues. In a period of 18 months the headteacher's excellent leadership has developed a very good school.

42. The school has a very strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils and spends its money efficiently and effectively in fulfilling that commitment. Consequently, pupils make very good progress in schoolwork and personal development. The school benefits from a well-informed governor, who takes seriously the responsibility for oversight of special educational needs matters. High quality support staff members are deployed to good effect. They receive training in the particular needs of the pupils they work with each half term. Often this is provided from expertise within the school, as well as outside agencies. All teachers and support staff have a positive effect on pupils learning and social development that has made special needs provision a strength of the school.
43. Curriculum leaders show good quality leadership and management. They are given opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and planning in their subjects. They analyse the results of assessments and advise their colleagues about how to improve pupils' progress. When new initiatives are developed they evaluate the quality of work in a helpful way. Through this work the headteacher and subject leaders gain a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision. For example, in the school's Foundation Stage, where leadership is weak, the current plans are appropriate and timely and should secure better quality provision for the youngest children in the school. Some improvements have already been made to this key stage. Subject leaders and governors have formed active partnerships to review the school's work and this is paying dividends. As governors become better informed, using the high quality information from the headteacher and coordinators but also seeing for themselves how well the school is doing, so they ask more pertinent questions about the future of the school.
44. The headteacher, governors and subject leaders make a very good job of managing the school's finances. As yet the new spending patterns have not formed and the school is taking proper action to maintain suitable funds to be able to meet its commitments to the provision of the necessary services and new materials. For example, funds are available to raise the quality of the resources in the Foundation Stage. The headteacher and governors secure funds from a number of sources, which helps to meet the school's needs. When deciding the best way to spend these funds the headteacher and governors look very carefully to ensure that money is spent wisely, at times working with other schools to fund new projects. Of particular note is the purchasing of ICT equipment. This was managed in an exemplary manner and resulted in very cost effective spending and a highly equipped school. The school makes excellent use of its ICT facilities.
45. The building is very well suited to the learning opportunities provided. There are shortfalls in the Foundation Stage; for example, lack of designated areas for sand and water play but the school has plans to rectify this omission. The library, situated in the centre of the school, is large and well stocked. Other parts of the school are light and airy and comprise interesting and usefully shaped rooms. The whole building is very well maintained to a high standard of cleanliness. The teaching and support staff are plentiful and work extremely well together for the benefit of the pupils. The development of areas such as the eco-garden adds substantially to the school's resources. The headteacher and governors are ambitious for the school and its resources and the headteacher has set the school community worthwhile challenges to improve the high quality provision in order to meet a further range of pupils' needs.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

46. In order to improve the quality of education the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) *Improve the Foundation Stage by:
- Raising the quality of teaching to the high quality seen in other parts of the school;
 - Ensuring planning provides good quality learning opportunities which promote progress and challenge children;
 - Providing good quality learning resources that stimulate children's imagination.

Paragraphs 4, 17-18, 22, 26, 30, 43-45, 47-58.

- (2) *Raise attainment in speaking skills by providing more opportunities for pupils to practise speaking skills across the school.

Paragraphs 4, 8, 20, 25, 59, 62- 63, 66, 76, 84, 102, 110

In addition, the governors should consider the following minor issue for inclusion in the action plan:

*Continue to improve the rate of attendance.

Paragraphs 10, 16, 33

*** Issues already identified by governors and staff and in the process of development.**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	22	36	16	0	0	0
Percentage	1%	29%	48%	21%	0%	0%	0%

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	32	271
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		160

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	89

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	16

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	52
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	45

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	6
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	26	30	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	17
	Girls	27	28	25
	Total	40	41	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (76)	73 (82)	75 (87)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	17	15
	Girls	28	25	25
	Total	41	42	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (82))	75 (91)	87 (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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	21	30	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	15	21
	Girls	21	17	28
	Total	38	32	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (54)	63 (61)	96 (89)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	N/A	N/A	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	323	6	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background	5		
Asian or Asian British - Indian	14		
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background			
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African	1		
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese			
Any other ethnic group			
No ethnic group recorded			

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)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	306.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	32
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	822,074
Total expenditure	823,677
Expenditure per pupil	2,046
Balance brought forward from previous year	47,464
Balance carried forward to next year	45,861

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	403
Number of questionnaires returned	185

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	32	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	54	41	3	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	42	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	46	5	1	11
The teaching is good.	58	37	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	37	10	5	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	29	4	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	32	1	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	40	42	8	4	6
The school is well led and managed.	58	33	4	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	39	2	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	36	10	1	14

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

47. The school's provision for children in the Foundation Stage is in the nursery and two reception classes. On entry to the nursery the children's skills knowledge and understanding are well below those expected for their ages. Communication, language and literacy skills are particularly low and this is confirmed by the school's own assessments of what children can do and understand on admission to the school. The school provides an appropriate range of experiences to promote the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.
48. Teaching is satisfactory overall and as a result the majority of children make satisfactory progress. However, there is insufficiently good teaching to ensure that children achieve as well as they can. The curriculum often lacks interest and challenge to meet the needs of young children. As a result few children attain the goals in the six areas of learning by the end of the reception year. The teaching of some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world and personal and social development skills are good and this has a positive effect on the progress children make in these areas when they move into Year 1.
49. Lessons are suitably planned but activities are often too adult directed and staff miss opportunities to extend children's learning through working with them in well planned activities of high quality which children have chosen for themselves. This has a limiting effect on the progress children make particularly in developing their language skills. Baseline assessment is shared with parents and is used to identify children's strengths and weaknesses. Records are kept on children's progress towards the early learning goals. However, these records are not used as effectively as they could be to provide more challenging activities for children as they move into the reception class and ensure that children make the progress they are capable of. Tasks are often not well matched to the different attainment levels and children who learn at a slower rate are engaged in the same tasks as those who are more able. This results in children not having very much success in their tasks and progress is very limited. The role of the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage is under developed and liaison between the nursery and reception classes is unsatisfactory. Staff do not plan together and this means that children's skills, knowledge and understanding are not consistently built on.

Personal, social and emotional development

50. This is a strong feature of the teaching in the nursery and reception classes and by the end of the reception year most children have made good progress in this area of learning and are close to achieving the early learning goals.
51. Staff enjoy good relationships with the children and as a result children enjoy coming to school and the majority are very eager and enthusiastic learners. In the nursery they respond well to the rules and routines of school life. Children are learning to share, take turns and co-operate, such as when playing number games or working in the imaginative play area or using the computer. In both classes children are encouraged to plan and choose their own activities and children often work with perseverance and concentration even when tasks are not very demanding. Emphasis is placed on helping children to develop an understanding of acceptable behaviour and of what is right and

wrong and most children behave well in the nursery and reception class. Relationships are positive and children are encouraged to be polite and kind to each other and reflect on their feelings, actions and experiences.

Communication, language and literacy

52. Skills in communication, language and literacy are particularly depressed when children enter the school and are well below those expected by the end of the reception year and few children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning. Teaching is satisfactory but is not as effective as it could be in developing children's language for thinking and explaining their ideas. There is often insufficient rigour in ensuring that children make appropriate responses. One word answers and gestures are too readily accepted and this limits the progress children make in developing their literacy skills. A range of role-play situations are available in nursery and reception, such as a home corner, shop and café but staff do not engage in these situations often enough to help children explore new ideas and develop new vocabulary. Clearly labelled displays, alphabet and sound friezes and individual name cards in both nursery and reception help promote early reading and writing skills. Children learn to recognise their own names and some older children in the nursery make attempts at writing their first names using recognisable letters. Games and activities systematically introduce children to letter names and initial sounds but their rate of progress in learning letter sounds is not fast enough. Although children are encouraged to make marks on paper, there are insufficient opportunities for older and more able children to write their own simple sentences using recognisable letters, sounds and words. In the reception class, while most children have a reading book, they do not use their knowledge of sounds to help them to read new words. There is an appropriate choice of books but reading areas are lacking in comfort and this limits children's enjoyment of books.

Mathematical development

53. The children make satisfactory progress in mathematical development but few children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of reception year. In nursery and reception classes, formal activities, games and daily routines are used appropriately to develop mathematical understanding. For example, in the nursery children are helped to count the number of milk cartons needed and snacks required. They explore the language of measurement comparing the size of flowers they make in craft activities. Elements of the numeracy strategy are implemented in the reception classes and children respond well to the mental and oral part of the lessons. In these lessons children are learning to count forwards and backwards with increasing confidence. Number rhymes such as 'five speckled frogs' and 'ten green bottles' develop children's ideas of one more and one less. Children consider size, shape and position when playing with two and three-dimensional shapes, small world toys or emptying and filling containers in the sand and water play. However, there are missed opportunities for children to extend their knowledge and understanding of number, space and measurement through better more stimulating resources and more focussed play activities. Teachers are sometimes insecure about how to introduce more complex ideas of number and as a result children become confused.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

54. Few children achieve the early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the reception year. However, as a result of confident teaching, some good planning and the use of high quality resources, children make good progress in some aspects of ICT and science based activities. Children are

enthusiastic and competent users of ICT, confidently programming a floor robot to 'go on a bear hunt'. All children use computer programs to support their understanding of sounds and numbers. Regular baking activities provide children with opportunities to observe the changes which occur when ingredients are mixed together or bread is toasted. Children have good recollection of the importance of healthy snacks and apply their knowledge when decorating their own biscuits. They learn about the passage of time through celebrating birthdays and festivals, talking about the days of the week and the changing seasons and weather. Construction toys and recycled materials are available to encourage children to design and make their own models. However, these activities are not always sufficiently challenging for the older children and there are missed opportunities for adults to interact and extend children's ideas. Children's poor skills in using language to explain ideas limits children's progress overall.

Physical development

55. The children make satisfactory progress in their physical development but due to their poor co-ordination and control on entry to the nursery few children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of reception year.
56. In the nursery a good range of large and small equipment is available on a daily basis to help children develop their physical skills. However, activities are not always sufficiently well planned and focussed on developing and improving children's skills. In the reception classes, children have structured lessons to promote their physical development. In addition, they use the nursery provision to extend their skills further. A significant majority of children enter the reception class with poor control and co-ordination over their movements. They still find it difficult to throw and catch balls or to run, jump and hop with any amount of confidence. Many of the opportunities provided are recreational rather than planned on improving children's physical skills.
57. Children experience an appropriate range of activities to develop their skills in handling tools, construction toys and malleable materials but there is often a lack of focussed attention on improving these skills and activities for older children lack sufficient challenge.

Creative development

58. The children make satisfactory progress in their creative development but few children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of reception year. A range of role-play situations is provided in the nursery and reception classes and children enjoy taking on the roles of family members, customers, waiters and cooks in the café and home corner. However, these activities are not always well resourced and do not stimulate children's imagination sufficiently well. Adults miss opportunities to interact with children in these situations and there is a lack of purpose and focus on developing and extending children's language. Structured music lessons and a range of musical instruments, songs and rhymes throughout the Foundation Stage, help to develop children's understanding of sound and rhythm and pattern. There are suitable activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour. Children work with play dough, clay and junk materials to create two and three-dimensional pictures and models. However, these activities are often adult led and children have few opportunities to choose and explore materials for themselves. Sand and water are available for children to explore on a regular basis but the activities are often of a low quality and do not enhance children's learning. Children continue to produce similar quality work over a period of time and often there is little difference between the activities in the nursery and those in the reception class.

ENGLISH

59. Standards in English are just below national expectations for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and this sometimes inhibits their progress in other subjects. Overall progress, however, is very good and pupils are keen to learn because teachers work very hard to make the work interesting and relevant. The very good improvement in results is achieved by careful analysis of pupils' prior attainment, planning strategies that focus on individual needs and regular additional support for identified groups of children during literacy lessons and at other times. Whilst pupils' listening skills are good, and many try very hard to follow instructions and information, insufficient time is given to develop their speaking skills and standards are generally below expectations. For a significant number of lower attaining pupils, including many with special educational needs, standards are well below national expectations, especially in their speaking skills.
60. This year's Year 6 group of pupils has a much higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The school recognises this and every effort is being made to provide additional literacy support to these pupils. Standards are generally just below average, and for a significant minority, those pupils with special educational needs, standards are well below national expectations. The school has yet to implement individual pupil target setting and tracking procedures but these are beginning to be considered to identify areas for development more accurately, from as early as possible. Due attention is being given to raising the standards of writing in English lessons and progress for the majority of pupils is very good. A major limiting factor is the restricted levels of vocabulary pupils acquire from their experiences outside school. Only the most able readers have the confidence to apply a wide range of vocabulary to their creative writing. Planned opportunities devoted to developing pupils' speaking skills are limited, and this restricts the progress they make not only in English, but also in other subjects. This is identified as a key area for improvement in order to give pupils time to practise their speaking and thinking skills when they discuss issues and topics in history or science, for example.
61. There is a comprehensive support and guidance programme for each child whose literacy development is not as rapid as it should be. Additional support is provided by very good teaching assistants and also by older pupils who are given some responsibility to help younger pupils make gains in their reading. For example, older pupils come into school early and spend ten to fifteen minutes 'mentoring' their young pupils. Such care and kindness towards others is exemplary, and both partners benefit from these valuable arrangements. Pupils of all abilities appreciate the importance of reading and talking about books, and most clearly show an avid interest in being read to and being heard reading. Such well thought through strategies enable pupils to achieve as well as they do.
62. Pupils' listening skills are generally good. Listening is particularly good when pupils fully understand or work out what is being communicated, for example, when they listen to lively, exciting stories or factual information they relate to. Pupils in Year 1 sat totally engrossed and open-mouthed as they listened to the story of the 'Enormous Watermelon'. But when information becomes difficult to interpret or follow, or when presentations from teachers are too long, pupils' concentration lapses, and they become less attentive. For example, in the same lesson in Year 1, pupils did not understand what information the teacher was asking for when she asked them to suggest which nursery rhymes particular characters figured in. Most had very limited

knowledge of popular rhymes and some of the fun of the book was lost on them. Similarly, in a lesson in Year 3, pupils talked over each other's responses, when the work on shape poems became too long and challenging. Here, the presentation was too long and at a level more complex than most pupils could relate to. As a result, progress was rather slow for many. The teachers had to consolidate this work the following day, returning to the task in a more structured way, and this produced better results. From this example, it is evident that teachers analyse pupils' responses and make every effort to match planning to pupils' needs effectively. Pupils in Year 6, working on describing features that showed characters to be 'evil' or 'comic', for example, enjoyed exploring new vocabulary they discovered in the shared text. They understood and used words including 'controlling, demonic, calculating, intimidating', effectively to describe the characters they were studying. From the work they produced, it was clear they had fun creating these images in their writing, and were proud of their new learning.

63. Pupils' skills in speaking fluently are below average by the end of Year 6. How well pupils speak is directly related to how carefully they listen and hear, and how much time is given to encourage them to practise 'talking'. In lessons, teachers regularly ask pupils questions and encourage them to express ideas and views, for example, about the books and poems they read, or the feelings they have when sad or happy. Regular planned opportunities for pupils to speak in a wide range of situations, however, are insufficient throughout the school. Often pupils' single word answers or short responses are accepted by teachers who are often anxious to move the lesson on to avoid long pauses when some pupils might lose interest or concentration. While pupils are encouraged to listen, they do not always practise 'speaking' in structured activities regularly enough to make satisfactory progress. Generally, pupils are eager to learn. They enjoy stories and love to discover new knowledge and information, becoming especially engrossed when teaching is good. For example, in the history lesson in Year 4, pupils talked quite excitedly about the artefacts they were investigating from their work on Sutton Hoo. In this very good lesson, the teacher invited pupils to answer and ask questions, expected them to speak in good sentences and gave them time to talk to each other about their work. As he circulated around the groups, he was able to help individuals who were hesitant in arguing their points or giving sound reasons for their findings. This level of sensitive intervention enabled pupils to speak confidently, and they accepted correction willingly. Pupils do perform at assemblies and concerts but there are limited opportunities for pupils to take part in regular debate, drama and role-play.
64. Overall standards in reading throughout the school are below national expectations. There are able readers in each year group but there are also a good number of pupils whose technical ability to read is at least sound but who demonstrate a lack of understanding of what they have read. Good attention is given to develop comprehension skills, with directed exercises in literacy and other lessons, for example history, religious education and science. The guided reading sessions in literacy lessons give all pupils regular, but insufficient, opportunities to read and be heard reading. However, time for individual reading practice is good and pupils who need additional support read every day to an adult. Teaching assistants, teachers and pupil mentors spend at least sufficient time on this aspect of literacy. But, unfortunately, reading activities outside school limit the progress of many pupils. The school has an excellent library resource which enhances this area of learning.
65. In the Year 1 and 2 classes, time is given to listen to children read and support staff and teachers work together to help pupils acquire appropriate strategies to sound out and build words, and explore fiction and non-fiction books. Big books are used effectively to

engage pupils' interest and develop their awareness of punctuation and speech. These texts are generally available as class sets and pupils often re-visit familiar texts to build up a sound knowledge of the new words they learn. Daily time is given to personal reading and there is a culture presented that reading is 'fun'. In Years 1 and 2, sufficient emphasis is placed on the learning of letter sounds and time is given to develop this in literacy sessions. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of phonics, although the lowest attaining pupils struggle to retain this information from day to day. Where necessary, words are sent home for pupils to practise, and pupils are keen to take books home whenever possible. Whilst some parents, siblings and other members of the family are happy to hear their children read, a significant number do not, and this cannot be relied upon as an effective means to support their progress in reading.

66. In the Year 3 to 6 classes, pupils continue to read in guided reading sessions. Teachers use these opportunities to continue to expand pupils' reading experiences; both through fiction and non-fiction texts and poetry, introducing these in the formal literacy sessions, and through extended basic skills lessons. Pupils in Year 6 continue to enjoy being read to, and even insisted on the 'book at bedtime' regime on their residential trip! Clearly, the enjoyment of literature is nurtured effectively but unfortunately many pupils do not reach the levels of expertise where reading is effortless. The highest attaining pupils in Year 6 do progress to independent 'free choice' books and read, for example, 'The Hobbit' and 'Harry Potter'. However, too few read for pleasure outside school. Key skills of skimming and scanning texts for information are taught well, and examples were seen of pupils retrieving information independently. But for a significant number the ability to infer is limited and pupils in Year 6, other than the most able, struggled to work independently with any confidence, for example, when asked to identify words that depicted the personality of specific characters they were studying. Similarly, a number of average and below average readers were unable to suggest, with any confidence, what might happen next in the book they were reading. This relates directly to their overall lack of confidence in speaking and sharing ideas. Teachers and assistants record specific details about the difficulties experienced by lower attaining readers in developing their skills.
67. Standards in writing are below national expectations by the end of Year 2, from a well below average attainment on entry to Year 1. Standards improve considerably by the end of Year 6, and from the work seen during the inspection standards are broadly in line, although for a significant minority of pupils, they are below expectations. From the generally low level at the start of Year 1, progress is very good and the formal skills are taught well throughout the school. Progress is further enhanced by the time given to practise the skills pupils learn across other areas of the curriculum. For example, written work in history or science reflects well the accurate use of punctuation, spelling, and strategies for report writing that are covered by the literacy strategy. The time devoted to practise handwriting is also reflected well in the quality of pupils' written presentations, which are generally neat, although spelling and some elements of punctuation, namely apostrophes and speech marks cause some confusion. Teachers' marking is sound, and sometimes good where teachers have taken the time to explain how the work produced could be further improved, in addition to what makes it good or better. Pupils are regularly reminded of teachers' expectations of the quality of written work when tasks are set, and because pupils want to do well, they generally respond very positively to these requests. If not fully satisfied, teachers sometimes return work for re-doing, and pupils recognise this to be fair. Because pupils are generally eager to put pen to paper, feeling more secure with this activity than with speaking and discussion work, they do not always take appropriate time to plan out their work as carefully as they should, often skimming over important details. A significant number rush to spell words without using dictionaries or asking for help.

68. Handwriting is generally well formed where pupils take care over their work, but there are a significantly high number of pupils who are still 'drawing' letters in Year 2, and this extends to a significant minority, at the upper end of the school, still mixing capitals with lower case letters. Standards in spelling and punctuation are a weakness for average and below average attaining pupils. Pupils learn to use punctuation in Years 1 and 2, and know that capital letters are used, for example, for the names of people, places and special celebrations. Pupils enjoy writing and some of their story telling is imaginative. The quality of the written work is sometimes restricted by pupils' limited range of vocabulary.
69. By the end of Year 6, the higher attaining pupils produce creative writing of a satisfactory standard, for example, 'I felt the cold creepy atmosphere...in the dark frightening cave!' and 'gigantic, jagged holes ... we darted and sprinted...'. These pupils produce a good range of writing, writing both factual accounts and creatively. They also learn to exemplify terminology, including 'couch potatoes' and apply their imagination to think about how life was for people at the time of the Tudors or describe quite vividly some of the mythological characters they discover through their studies of Greek mythology. Clearly, Gorgon, Perseus and Medusa had captured their imaginations dramatically! However, for a significant number of pupils in the junior classes, who have limited reading and speaking skills, overall achievement is below expectations. In all classes, very effective use is made of ICT in the drafting process, and pupils are given regular guidance in how to improve the work they produce.
70. The literacy strategy has been introduced successfully throughout the school and is beginning to have a positive impact on standards of reading and writing. Pupils respond well to the structured planning which gives them time to work independently as well as in large groups. Throughout the school, groups are set by ability. This helps teachers plan work better suited to the needs of the pupils they teach and teachers try to ensure pupils understand what the purpose of each lesson is. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they ensure all supporting staff are fully involved in the planning for individual and small groups of pupils who need additional help. Provision of extra support classes for target groups of pupils, prior to the National Curriculum Tests, has a very positive impact on raising standards. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers plan work that is well matched to pupils' needs, and modify planning as the lesson progresses, to engage as many pupils as possible in question/answer sessions and discussion. In these good lessons, the pace of teaching is not too challenging to overwhelm pupils, and learning, therefore, is very good. Teachers manage pupils extremely well, and, when appropriate, support individuals sensitively to ensure they understand what is required. Resources are used effectively to engage pupils' interest. Where appropriate, recorded material, television and visiting speakers are used extend pupils' experiences effectively. Relationships are generally very good, and pupils are keen to work hard and to do well. Where teaching assistants are available, they are used to help individual pupils or small groups very effectively.
71. The subject co-ordinators are working very hard to develop the teaching of literacy across the school. The sharing of good practice has been very effective, and most teachers are very clear about what needs to be done to raise standards. Results of assessments are analysed in great detail, and the information is used to group pupils in ability sets. Progress is reviewed at the end of each term in order to re-group sets and consider additional support pupils might benefit from. Individual tracking and target setting is the next step for monitoring each pupil's achievement more closely.

MATHEMATICS

72. In the 2002 national tests and tasks for Year 2 pupils' attainment was well below the national average. However, the overall results match those of pupils from similar schools when compared with the 2001 results. This is because almost a third of the pupils achieved the higher Level 3. Pupils start Year 1 with poor mathematical skills and make good progress in the infants because the teachers are skilful in ensuring that the work matches the needs of all pupils and they are determined that their pupils will achieve as much as they are capable of. There is a significant number of pupils with special educational needs who make very good progress. Standards in Year 2 are just below average.
73. The good progress continues in the juniors and in 2002 pupils' results were above those of pupils in similar schools although below the national average. These results are a significant achievement as over a fifth of the pupils had special educational needs and a similar number joined the school since it opened only eighteen months ago. The pupils achieve particularly well in data handling, especially when using ICT to interrogate spreadsheets and record and analyse data collected from experiments or surveys. For example, Year 5 pupils collected information of the waste collected over time and completed a statistical analysis of the results. There is a weakness in the pupils' achievements in mental arithmetic throughout the school. The teachers have identified this and the subject leaders are focusing on this aspect of the lesson when monitoring the teaching and learning in the classroom. Pupils do not find it easy to explain their calculations or to describe the methods they are using and some do not listen to the questions carefully enough to answer them accurately although their recorded work shows that they know how to calculate. There are more pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 this year and pupils' achievements remain below average for their age.
74. Every teacher was observed teaching mathematics during the inspection and the teaching is never less than good throughout the infants and the juniors. About a third of the teaching is very good. Significant strengths in the teaching include:
- Very good relationships between the teachers and their pupils. The pupils are eager to please their teachers and the teachers delight in their pupils' achievements
 - The teachers have a good understanding of the needs of all their pupils so pupils of all abilities including the gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs. All pupils make good or very good progress in their lessons
 - The teachers all have a good mathematical knowledge and the national numeracy strategy is taught effectively
 - Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively and provide high levels of support
 - Resources, particularly ICT are used well and enhance pupils' learning
 - Teachers adapt and change their lessons or methods and sort pupils into ability groups based on the outcomes of the lessons or the result of tests
 - Homework is used very well. It complements and extends the work in the classroom. Pupils are expected to learn multiplication tables, for example.
- There are no significant weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics, but in one or two lessons there is a need for more rigorous mental arithmetic sessions to improve pupils' skills in line with the school's targets.
75. The subject leaders have a very good understanding to the strengths of the mathematics provision and pupils' achievements and have identified areas for development. For example, a focus for the year is to develop group and individual targets for the pupils so that they, as well as their teachers, know what they need to do

to achieve well. The weaknesses in mental arithmetic were swiftly identified and acted upon. Aspects of mathematics are regularly discussed so that all teachers have a good understanding of the levels the pupils are achieving. The lesson planning is consistent throughout the school and ensures that there is appropriate progression from year to year and consistency between the parallel classes. The ability grouping for Year 2 and 6 enables teachers to match the work closely to the needs of the pupils. The teachers keep the oldest pupils for two years to provide security and consistency although pupils move between the ability groups as their needs change. Teachers should now consider reducing the number of commercial or teacher generated worksheets and encouraging the pupils to devise their own methods of setting out their work. This would enable pupils to see their progress more clearly and to work towards their targets more effectively.

SCIENCE

76. Standards are close to the average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. Pupils therefore achieve very well during their time in school. When comparisons are made with similar schools, using measures such as the proportion of pupils who achieve the higher level, it becomes clear that this is an exceptional performance by the pupils. There are many reasons for such an outcome:
- Management of the subject is excellent.
 - Significant improvements have been made in teaching and in the quality of what is taught in lessons.
 - Standards are high because teachers have very good subject knowledge and they manage classes effectively.
 - There is very good focus on investigative activities so that pupils learn by finding out for themselves.
 - Teachers analyse the results of national tests and use the information to indicate the areas of learning needing improvement.
 - Speaking skills and mathematics are used extensively in science and contribute significantly to high standards in the subject.
77. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and, in most cases, achieve levels similar to their fellow pupils. Those pupils whose first language is not English are not disadvantaged and make progress at the same rate as other pupils. Results in national tests show that there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Inspection evidence supports this view. There is very good support from classroom assistants for pupils with special educational needs. It helps those pupils to participate fully in the investigations.
78. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress in understanding and applying the term 'prediction' and communicating their ideas through drawings. In Year 1 they are taught about magnetism, using correct vocabulary such as 'attract'. Simple evaluations are a regular feature of pupils' experience so that they become accustomed to seeking explanations and using criteria. Evaluation of a fruit salad in terms such as 'small', 'large' and 'round', adding the names of the fruits is a good example of an appropriate evaluation activity. Improvements in vocabulary and writing are beginning to have a good impact on levels of attainment in science. Teachers plan lessons that build on what pupils know already and are successfully broadening their vocabulary. The quality of teaching is good overall. Pupils behave well and are intrigued by some of the practical sessions. Teachers are good at enabling pupils to talk about what they have learnt and this helps pupils to reflect at the close of lessons. This is in contrast to other subjects when not enough formal reporting is attempted.

79. By the time pupils are in Year 6, their achievements in using specific vocabulary and investigating problems are very good. They have a good understanding of the need to base scientific ideas on collecting evidence. Increasingly, they present such evidence in electronic form and are becoming more accomplished at using an electron microscope. There is a high proportion of very good teaching in Years 3 to 6, with one excellent lesson. This has been achieved through effective monitoring of teaching and a more consistent understanding of how basic skills of mathematics and language can be used in lessons. Teachers organise and manage their lessons so that pupils know why they are doing a particular activity. Lessons usually begin with a brief recall of previous work and establishing the new lesson. Consequently pupils are brought into the lesson immediately, which aids their learning. In all classes, relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. This helps develop pupils' confidence to ask questions and try ideas without fear of ridicule from other pupils. By Years 5 and 6, pupils are beginning to ask their own scientific questions, having had their curiosity raised by the very good teaching. This is a significant element in explaining why so many more pupils are achieving the higher level in national tests.
80. The leadership of the subject is excellent. The science curriculum links with other subjects, with lesson plans building on what pupils know already. Year 2 created some attractive paper collages based on their work on echoes. Work on ecology, using the school's wildlife and pond areas, adds another dimension to what the school offers its pupils. Pupils' work is marked regularly and some of the annotated work for assessing pupils' progress is very good. There is a clear sense of direction for the subject and an effective team of teachers and support assistants who have a desire for the subject to succeed. Science is a strength of the school

ART AND DESIGN

81. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly in line with those normally expected for pupils at these ages. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. Pupils clearly enjoy the practical activities that effectively support their personal, social and cultural development. The school quite rightly placed greater emphasis on the development of core subjects but now plans to focus more attention on developing pupils' learning in art and design. Very few lessons were observed during the inspection but there was sufficient evidence from work displayed, pupils' sketchbooks and teachers' planning to make judgements.
82. Pupils enter Year 1 with below expected levels of experience with selecting and using art and design materials. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 1 on sequencing instructions, some struggled to hold and use scissors and crayons appropriately. However, pupils are very quick to settle to explore and develop their observational skills when drawing, for example, portraits of each other, still life sketches and paintings of plants and flowers. Pupils apply a satisfactory range of materials effectively in weaving and three-dimensional work. Progress in drawing is evident in the work of pupils in Year 2. Here, for example, pupils have looked closely at pictures of hedgehogs, and applied effective 'stippled' markings to represent spikes. They have also looked at African and Aboriginal art to create bold, striking patterns using water-colours and large and fine brushes. They have sound understanding of colour mixing and application of texture and enjoy the results they achieve.
83. Observational drawing skills are a feature of all year groups. For example, pupils in Year 6 have moved on to drawing or sketching line figures of people in active poses.

Here, by looking at a series of movements, following the style of Da Vinci, either by watching each other or from photographs taken on the residential visit, pupils sequence motion reasonably accurately. Although rather daunted by the task, the majority understand the process and go on to create sketches that represent some good movement. Pupils also study formal and informal portrait groups by famous painters and talk critically about the impact of various poses and styles. Pupils in Year 4, for example, have looked at the work of Seurat and created collages, depicting sea and landscapes effectively. Pupils' cultural development is promoted through studies of paintings and other art forms from other cultures that are displayed around the school buildings. These studies have led to some good quality work, for example, in bold designs in the style of Aboriginal cave paintings, and weaving using a range of fabrics and beads, following African designs.

84. Relationships are warm and friendly and teachers find the engagement of pupils in practical tasks useful in developing their creative design skills, and helping them to take time to concentrate. The subject helps pupils develop confidence and a sense of pride in their work. Pupils are sometimes reticent to discuss their work and contribute to class discussions, feeling unsure about the quality of the work they produce, or how they might improve it.
85. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although fabric and craftwork is often good. This reflects the overall standards pupils achieve. Opportunities are sometimes missed to encourage pupils to talk about what they have done well and what they might try next time to improve. Pupils are expected to work hard and are given good individual support from teachers and support staff. For example, in the lesson in Year 6, the teacher worked very patiently to help pupils look closely at their photographs and demonstrated how they might draw the next movement in the sequence, when using oars in a canoe, for example. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop creative skills and benefit from the social interactions the lessons provide. Pupils' artwork is displayed to a high standard throughout the school.
86. The co-ordinator acknowledges the subject has not been a priority for development. The policy is being developed, with a good focus on maximising the school's very good ICT resources, for example, to develop pupils' animation skills using a range of art and design media and technology. Resources and artefacts are of a good quality.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87. Standards are typical of those expected in Years 2 and 6. A good curriculum has been prepared and is being implemented fully. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is beginning to have a positive impact on improving standards. Skills such as sewing are taught well in Year 6. As a result of action taken so far, the school is in a good position to improve pupils' attainment further.
88. Work in Years 1 and 2 is based on pupils' immediate experience, such as designing parks and play areas. This is appropriate and provides good opportunities for pupils to use their number skills, for example, coordinates to describe the position of play equipment in their park designs. Consequently, pupils have a better idea of the principles involved in designing facilities that other people will use. Teaching is very good overall and has a good influence on pupils' rate of progress. Pupils are excited by their current work, based on making a toy with moving parts. They make useful suggestions to one another as to how movement might be achieved. Consequently, there are good opportunities for pupils' personal development and initiative to improve.

Pupils concentrate well and there is a good balance of discussion, evaluation and making in lessons.

89. There is little evidence so far illustrating the range of skills expected involving tools, fixing methods and finishing techniques in Years 3 to 6. This is because the curriculum plan has not yet worked through each year group. Teaching is good overall, with all pupils making good progress, learning techniques which will be helpful in designing and making their pair of slippers. Through good demonstration by the teacher, pupils are taught how to fix buttons and sequins on fabric. This they do conscientiously and are proud of the end result. There is good work on packaging in connection with the schools' interest in environmental matters. This has a good impact on pupils' understanding of producing something that suits the purpose while considering how to dispose of, or recycle, the product.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

90. Due to the schools timetabling arrangements and the timing of the inspection it was not possible to observe any history lessons in Years 1 and 2 and no history or geography lessons in Year 6. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers planning and discussions with teachers and pupils.
91. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6 the majority of pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their ages in both subjects. Most pupils make very good progress and achieve well and indications are that standards are rising across the school and are poised to move above those expected nationally. This is due to consistently good teaching and an interesting and well-planned curriculum, which engages pupils' interests in people, places, events and happenings through the ages and across the world. Topics in both subjects are taught in depth and pupils have very good opportunities to use geographical and historical skills as well as building up a very good knowledge base. Wherever possible subjects are linked and this deepens pupils understanding and adds interest. For example, work on ancient Greece involved pupils studying aspects of modern Greece, locating the country on world maps and studying ancient and modern Greece's contribution to the world. A well planned visit to Shrewsbury very effectively linked with art and history as pupils drew detailed drawings of Tudor homes, developing their observational drawing skills and deepening their understanding of life in Tudor England.
92. As pupils move through the school they are encouraged to think of themselves as historians as they consider the authenticity of evidence and use a range of artefacts, photographs, the Internet and books to gain knowledge and understanding of past times and characters. The pupils' factual knowledge and ability to recall dates, places, events and periods of history in order is good. Younger pupils study the contribution of significant people such as Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale. In the juniors the pupils study the Anglo Saxons, Vikings, Egyptians, Romans and Tudors, developing their understanding of the more distant past and its impact on the present. Year 4 pupils were encouraged to think as archaeologists as they used the Internet to explore the finds at the Anglo Saxon burial site at Sutton Hoo. By Year 6, pupils are using evidence well to make deductions and form opinions. They have an in-depth understanding of the politics of the Tudor dynasty and are able to discuss the significance of events, such as the Battle of Bosworth, the impact of Henry the Eighth's need for a male heir and the richness and value of the evidence gained from the discovery of the 'Mary Rose'.

93. In geography, by the age of seven, the pupils know that maps and plans represent a locality. Year 1 pupils recorded Red Riding Hood's fateful journey to visit her grandmother. A study of 'the Isle of Struay' provides Year 2 pupils with good opportunities to compare their own surroundings and to develop the appropriate geographical vocabulary connected to islands. 'Barnaby Bear' provides all pupils in Years 1 and 2 with knowledge of different destinations. By Year 6, the pupils have acquired a sound geographical base about near to home and far away. In a Year 3 lesson, very enthusiastic and challenging teaching ensured pupils used a wide range of geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. They used aerial photographs on the Internet to identify land uses and features of their own locality. Pupils were engrossed in their tasks and worked extremely well together as they used accurate geographical terminology and created their own key to explain the maps. Older pupils develop further their geographical enquiry skills as they discuss issues of recycling and conservation. A wide range of high quality initiatives enhance pupils understanding of their role and responsibilities to the environment. Pupils study the rainforests and have been active in world projects, such as helping to protect elephants in India. Nearer home pupils have been successful in gaining grants from recognised high profile conservation groups to improve their own school environment.
94. Teaching of history and geography is never less than good and in the lessons seen five out of six were very good. Pupils have very good opportunities to organise their own work and record their findings in their own words using a range of styles such as posters, newspaper reports, diaries and letters. These techniques add interest to pupils' work and reinforce the skills they are learning in literacy. Tasks are particularly well planned and matched to the differing levels of attainment. This ensures that pupils have challenging tasks, which move learning on at a good pace and ensure high standards. In the very best lessons higher attaining pupils are expected to add detail to their work, to make links with other periods in history and to realise that there can be different accounts and views of the same historical events. Teaching is enthusiastic and staff have secure subject knowledge and a very good understanding of the subject. They use a variety of artefacts, archaeological finds, maps, photographs, the Internet, visits, visitors and quality books to bring the subject alive for the pupils. A wide range of independent activities challenge pupils' thinking and this has a positive effect on the quality of learning. Teachers are careful to build on previous learning and to reinforce what pupils already know. Lessons usually leave pupils enthusiastic about the next lesson and eager to make new discoveries and engage in new learning.
95. Both subjects are very well managed and make an important contribution to the aims of the school. The schemes in place effectively ensure there is progress and continuity across the school, taking into account the needs of the different attainment levels within each class. This helps teachers to provide pupils with good opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding skills. The co-ordinators are experienced and well qualified to lead the subjects. Their enthusiasm for history and geography has a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning and makes a significant contribution to the progress pupils make and their very obvious enjoyment of the subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

96. Standards are in line with expected levels for pupils in Years 2 and 6 and learning in lessons is good and pupils achieve well. This is due to a number of factors:
- the very high quality resources available to pupils and teachers
 - the consistently good teaching in lessons
 - pupils' enthusiasm for the subject

- the links teachers make between ICT and other subjects
 - the high level of use of ICT skills in other subjects.
97. In Year 2 pupils have had access to the very good range of resources for most of their time in the infant classes. Teachers plan interesting work, which is taken from nationally available advice, and tailor the lessons to meet pupils' needs. For example, in Year 1 pupils used a simple word processor to move text and illustration around the screen. The teacher provided words and sentences so that pupils could concentrate on the task at hand rather than spend time thinking about how to spell words and construct sentences. In this way the skills of using ICT were promoted. Pupils produce graphs, pictures and word work using computers. They give instructions to a small floor robot and understand how to control its movements. Pupils have a good understanding of the Internet and talk of using hyperlinks to move from one section of a site to another.
98. By Year 6 pupils make good progress but, because they have had access to high quality equipment for a small proportion of their school life, do not manage to attain standards that are above average. Learning in lessons is good; it mirrors teaching and there are lots of promising signs that pupils' enthusiasm for the subject, their teachers' subject knowledge and skills, all help to promote high standards in lessons. Year 3 pupils receive and send emails and attach documents for their friends to open. In Year 4 pupils try to match Seurat's work by using a paint program to illustrate a scene using very tiny points of colour. Year 5 pupils use a spreadsheet to collate the results of a litter survey, calculating the type and amount of litter collected each day. Pupils have a good working knowledge of the software and apply formulae to the cells of their worksheet. In Year 6 pupils constructed presentations, competently and patiently building their displays using hyperlinks, sounds and visual effects. This work was based on pupils' science learning and was of good quality. Pupils have a good working knowledge of the Internet and use it for research purposes and year groups make good use of digital cameras to record their work.
99. Teaching is good in all year groups. All teachers use the smart boards to good effect in all subjects. Some teachers are very proficient and use a presentation program to produce very high quality resources for their classes. A play script site on the Internet was used in a Year 5 lesson which helped pupils practise their speaking skills. In a Year 6 literacy lesson the class teacher had recorded the preceding day's work and called it up to remind pupils of what had been achieved. In all of the ICT lessons, whatever the subject matter, whether science, art or mathematics, teachers made very good use of the smart boards to capture pupils' interest, prolong concentration and thus improve learning. Teachers have good levels of subject knowledge and are constantly seeking to improve their skills. A key feature of learning is pupils' willingness to use ICT equipment and push the development of their skills
100. The subject is jointly led and managed and both teachers show good leadership qualities. They have produced helpful documentation to support other teachers and they monitor the work of their colleagues well. The headteacher and governors support the coordinators very well. There is a very good action plan which helps to support the development of the subject.

MUSIC

101. Pupils throughout the school reach the standards expected for their age. Few music lessons were observed during the inspection but, because of the good or very good teaching, pupils enjoyed their music making and made good progress. The school

uses a commercial scheme of work with additional elements taken from the government guidance for the subject. This ensures that pupils have an appropriate curriculum from year to year and build on their musical knowledge and skills. A few pupils have had access to woodwind tuition but this is temporally unavailable. The new subject leader has plans to extend the extra-curricular activities to add recorders and percussion to the already thriving choir.

102. Some very good teaching was observed during the inspection. A particularly impressive lesson that combined two classes of Year 3 pupils was very well planned to contain a range of elements. Pupils needed to listen carefully and imitate a rhythm on the tambour, passing it from pupil to pupil. Pupils then performed four-beat rhythms that included rests, reading from a grid of symbols and the class split to perform in two parts. There were pupils with significant special educational needs in the group and the provision for these pupils was excellent. They joined in the first part of the lesson and then withdrew with two teaching assistants to compose their own music. They returned before the end of the lesson and performed to the rest of the group before joining in the songs at the end of the lesson. They did this very well and were justifiably proud of their work. The teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and managed this large group very well. The lead teacher's consistent use of technical vocabulary and her high expectations ensured that pupils made very good progress in this lesson. In another very good lesson younger pupils thoroughly enjoyed their music making as they added percussion to a song and composed using set patterns. The teacher discussed the differences between a range of stringed instruments. The excellent relationships between the teacher and her pupils and her enthusiasm ensured very good learning and attitudes.
103. The school has an appropriate range of musical instruments and plans to include ICT as part of the subject's development. The scheme is supported with recorded music that enables pupils to learn about music from their own and other cultures. More could be done to improve pupils' access to a range of music by providing recordings of specific instruments or composers and music from different cultures in assemblies.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in all aspects of physical education. Photographic evidence shows the school has a wide programme of activities in lessons and after school. Improving skills and enjoyment of physical activities are part of the core values of the school. As well as lessons, pupils have access to small equipment, such as skipping ropes and skittles at break-time. Lunchtime supervisors are undertaking training to give them a play leader role. The school is well placed to improve standards.
105. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some very good features that promote improvement in standards effectively. Teachers make good use of a programme of work to ensure that the skills they teach get progressively harder from one year to the next. They ensure that pupils warm up and cool down and impress on pupils the need to work safely. All staff has had good training in this aspect of their responsibilities. Pupils with physical difficulties are given the help they need in order to achieve as well as other pupils.
106. Due to very good management by the teacher, Year 2 pupils have good opportunities to build up their confidence when working on equipment. Good deployment of the classroom support assistant, combined with good teaching of the main focus group,

enabled a small group to perform independently on the low frame. Pupils moved confidently, some achieving a full forward circle movement. Such a controlled movement, involving taking their body weight, shows very good progress and attainment above the expectation for their age. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher gave good demonstrations of hockey passing and dribbling skills. Pupils responded well and made satisfactory progress by the end of the lesson. The control and direction of their passing improved. Teachers give clear instructions and make good use of pupils to provide demonstrations of good performance.

107. Parents contribute to their children's learning effectively by providing a good standard of kit for lessons. Pupils make good responses in lessons and enjoy the awards for athletics and swimming. They participate regularly in competitions against other schools. The school benefits greatly from the commitment by staff of their time to add an extra dimension to the work of the school through extra-curricular sport. This is a prominent part of the school's curricular provision. Consequently the subject is having a significant impact on the social and cultural development of many pupils.
108. The subject has a good coordinator, who has a clear view of how the subject needs to develop. Swimming is included in the curriculum for Years 5 and 6 and by the time they leave the school, 90 per cent of the pupils achieve the minimum expectation to swim 25 metres. The school has identified the need to develop a more formalised system of assessment, which helps teachers plan lessons that take account of pupils' prior attainment. Resources and facilities for the subject are very good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

109. The lessons that were observed during the inspection and an analysis of the pupils' books show that pupils throughout the school have a knowledge and understanding of religious education that is line with the expectations of the Shropshire Agreed Syllabus. Pupils learn about several major world faiths and throughout the juniors pupils begin to understand some of the similarities and differences between them. Older pupils are encouraged to reflect on generic issues such as freedom. In one lesson, for example, pupils listened to the story of Hanukah and listed the things they are free to do as well as the restrictions on their actions. They began to understand some of the implications of persecution by the end of the lesson. The oldest pupils are studying the creation stories and have a sound knowledge of the Christian/Jewish, Hindu and Islamic creation stories. They find similarities like the role of God[s], nature, especially trees and animals and man, as well as the concept of good and evil. This will be extended to include the Buddhist creation beliefs as well as "how science sees it". Younger pupils explore the concept of and different approaches to prayer. Most identify Christian prayers and that other religions have different traditions for praying.
110. The teaching is at least satisfactory and predominantly good. All teachers have an appropriate knowledge of the subject and understand that pupils need to explore their response to the things they are taught. The teachers are sensitive to the beliefs of all faiths and make sure that the pupils respect and value the beliefs of others. Lessons are well planned and have strong links with pupils' personal and social education as teachers encourage pupils to relate what they learn to their own lives. A strength of the teaching overall is the good relationships between teachers and their pupils. However, teachers often do not pay enough attention to the way pupils discuss issues and reply to questions, often accepting very brief comments with no explanations or extension. For example, when asked how they would feel if they lost their freedom, the reply "sad" or "frightened" was accepted. Although the lessons make a good contribution to the pupils'

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, they do little to extend literacy skills, particularly speech and communication.

111. The subject leader has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development for religious education and knows the needs of the pupils. The subject is a focus for development this year and he has plans to monitor the teaching and learning as well as updating the curriculum to include government advice for the subject. The school makes good use of the artefacts of a local resource centre and has plans to extend the range of school resources. Good use is made of videos to support learning and the pupils visit local Christian places of worship. Visitors from Christian and other religions, for example, a local Sikh, visit the school to talk to the pupils. There are plenty of pictures and books to support the learning about the major faiths and pupils experience other festivals like Chinese New Year and ancient Greek and Egyptian gods through their history and geography studies. ICT is used very effectively as pupils carry out their own research. In one class, for example, Sikh pupils are researching their religion in order to contribute to the class lessons. Minority religions are celebrated and respected in school and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and followers of minority religions or denominations, are fully included in all aspects of the subject.