

INSPECTION REPORT

BLOWERS GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dudley

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103771

Headteacher: Mr M R Vines

Lead inspector: Mr A Clark

Dates of inspection: 8 – 10 December 2003

Inspection number: 255542

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	274
School address:	Blowers Green Road Dudley
Postcode:	DY2 8UZ
Telephone number:	01384 818490
Fax number:	01384 818491
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Raggett
Date of previous inspection:	28 June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is an average sized primary school with 227 pupils between the ages of 5 and 11. There are a further 44 children aged 3 to 4 who attend the nursery part-time and 27 full time. There is a balance of boys and girls. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average at 32 per cent. The pupils are from many different ethnic backgrounds. Approximately half the pupils are of Asian, particularly Pakistani, heritage. A third are white British. There are several different home languages represented including Urdu, Punjabi and Gujarati. 122 pupils speak English as an additional language and 44 pupils are at an early stage of English acquisition. This is a much higher proportion than usually found. Approximately 12 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, including specific learning difficulties, social and emotional concerns and speech and immature communication skills. This is below average. Presently no pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Three pupils are in the care of the local education authority. Currently 17 pupils from asylum seeking families attend the school, most with little English. The school is part of the Dudley Education Action Zone and part of an African-Caribbean support initiative. The attainment of pupils when they start school is well below typical levels especially for communication and language skills.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21596	Mr A Clark	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs
9874	Mr M Milwain	Lay inspector	
14732	Mrs E Korn	Team inspector	Science Music Religious education Foundation stage
22718	Mrs S Abrol	Team inspector	English as an additional language
14806	Mr J Stevens		Mathematics Geography History
22113	Mrs A King	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. The multi-cultural nature of the school is celebrated and creates a stimulating ethos for learning. The headteacher leads very well and receives good support from senior staff and the governing body. The quality of teaching and learning are good and pupils from all ethnic backgrounds and of all abilities achieve well. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The achievement of pupils of all abilities, including those with English as an additional language, is good because of the good quality of teaching and learning.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils of different races and creeds work and play well together.
- The very good provision for music makes an important contribution to the life of the school.
- Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.
- Standards in some subjects are not high enough by Year 2.
- The school does not seek and act upon the views of pupils sufficiently.
- Opportunities are missed in the Foundation Stage¹ for children's learning out of doors.

Improvement since the last inspection

This is good. Pupils' achievement has improved. The teaching in the reception class is now good. Provision for science is better planned but standards are still too low. Boys' attainment and progress is better. There has been good improvement to the accommodation.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	C	C	B
mathematics	E*	C	E	E
science	E*	D	E	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

The pupils achieve well

By the time pupils leave school they have achieved well and the majority are working at standards expected for their age in English and mathematics in the current Year 6. This is particularly good in view of the high percentage of pupils who start school with little or no English and from many different ethnic backgrounds. Test results vary from year to year, but the trend is a positive one. Standards in mathematics are too low in Year 2 and were low in 2003. Standards in science are well below average by Year 2 and Year 6. This largely relates to pupils' understanding of the language involved and challenge to the more able in science. Achievement in ICT is good. Pupils attain

¹ usually Foundation Stage

expected standards in religious education by Year 6. Above expected standards were seen in art and design, history and music. The achievement of a minority of pupils is affected by poor attendance.

Pupils' personal qualities, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. The pupils have good attitudes to work and enjoy lessons. The pupils have a very good appreciation of each other's cultural backgrounds and work and play very well in racial harmony and tolerance. Some parents do not appreciate the importance of punctuality and good attendance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good.

The teaching is well planned and interesting. Pupils are motivated and work hard. English and mathematics are taught well. Support for pupils with English as an additional language is well targeted. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.

The curriculum is good, being relevant and interesting to pupils. Good use is made of connections with the various religious and cultural opportunities in the area. Teachers make good use of ICT. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are not yet in place. A good range of extra curricular opportunities, including sport, is offered despite the long-term lack of playing fields. The accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good.

The care of the pupils is good. The welfare of asylum seekers and other displaced groups is very well managed and monitored.

A good partnership with parents exists. The learning link worker and home-school liaison staff make a good contribution to the learning of pupils with English as an additional language.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is very good and management and governance are good. Subject development is well managed. The governing body knows the school well and fulfils its statutory requirements. Financial management is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents and pupils' views of the school are good. The parents have positive views of the school and value the care taken of their children. A few parents feel behaviour is not good enough but inspectors found no evidence of this and there have been no exclusions. The pupils are very satisfied with the school. They enjoy their friendships and lessons.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Improve parental awareness of regular attendance and good punctuality especially for young pupils.
- Improve opportunities for more able pupils in science in order to raise standards.
- Improve pupils' understanding of a mathematical vocabulary by Year 2.
- Ensure opportunities for improving the speaking and listening skills are planned for and taken.
- Develop systems for closer consultation with pupils.
- Improve the planning for outdoor learning in the Foundation Stage.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.5	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	12.8	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	13.0	16.3 (16.5)

There were 42 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.8	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.0	26.8 (26.7)
Science	25.5	28.6 (28.3)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall value added by the school to pupils standards is above the national average.
- Pupils with very little English when they start school achieve well.
- Most able pupils are not independent enough in their investigations in science.
- Pupils do not sufficiently understand the language of mathematics by Year 2.

Commentary

- 1 Children of all abilities, including those with English as an additional language, achieve well in the Foundation Stage. On entry, the children often have weaknesses in their ability to communicate and in playing and socialising with each other. They also lack imagination in their play. A high percentage of children speak little or no English. The school provides a wide range of well-planned opportunities to address this. However, despite the good gains children make, the very low levels of attainment on starting school means a significant proportion of children do not reach the goals expected for their age in all areas of learning. In physical development, a lack of planned opportunities for outside play means pupils do not make enough progress.
- 2 Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are well below average by Year 2 in the national tests. The school lays down the basis for good future development and achievement from the Foundation Stage is better than the average for the local education authority. Basic skills, such as handwriting, spelling and constructing sentences, are skilfully taught and pupils make good gains. Imaginative writing is weak although opportunities to

develop this are planned and taught well. Pupils with English as an additional language make at least good progress because their needs are carefully targeted and support staff are used well. Many pupils of all nationalities speak in simple sentences and often find it difficult to talk pertinently to a task. Although teachers question pupils well there are not sufficient planned opportunities to promote speaking skills. This also applies to Years 3 to 6. Overall, there are few pupils who achieve above average standards. By Year 6, standards in English are similar to the national average and pupils progress well throughout Years 3 to 6. There has been good improvement to national test results since the last inspection. The concentration on basic skills remains and there are good opportunities for creative and imaginative writing. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels is average. Boys' attainment has risen through an improved curriculum and resources. Pupils with English as an additional language continue to be monitored and supported closely and they achieve well. The current Year 6 pupils are working at expected levels with a good proportion, from all nationalities attaining the higher level.

- 3 In mathematics, test results are more variable but the overall trend is positive. In 2003, they were well below average and below those at the time of the last inspection, but in 2002 they were average by Year 6. They tend to be well below average by Year 2. However, pupils of all abilities make at least sound and often good progress against their earlier learning. Boys and girls attainment is not significantly different overtime and this is a good improvement from the last inspection. By Year 2, the current pupils are working at below expected levels and the Year 6 in line with them. Good teaching and planning builds progressively on earlier learning but, by Year 2 many pupils do not have the language skills to understand the mathematics sufficiently to use and apply their learning.
- 4 In science, standards are too low despite strong leadership and good teaching overall. Few pupils attain high levels by Year 2 and 6 because the investigations in some lessons are too tightly structured and do not allow enough use of skills. Again the pupils' language development is also a hindering factor.
- 5 Although there is room for improvement in standards, the school is very successful at raising achievement despite changing and often difficult circumstances. An increasing number of pupils who are asylum seekers are now in the school. Several of these pupils are badly traumatised and have little experience of school. This is very sensitively handled and the coordinator for English as an additional language ensures intervention is skilfully targeted to promote the best learning. A significant proportion of pupils often spend extensive periods of time abroad and this has an impact on learning. The poor attendance of some pupils also affects the standards they achieve. The close work with bi-lingual support staff is helping parents understand the importance of good attendance on achievement.
- 6 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the very good provision. The structures to monitor and set targets for learning are thorough and the special educational needs coordinator works well with teachers and support staff. The school is careful not to make assumptions about pupils' ability because of limited English skills and this helps to focus the right support where it is most required.
- 7 Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is good and standards are average by Year 2 and 6 with a significant proportion of high attainment. In religious education standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, by Year 6, although they are below this by Year 2.

- 8 In art and design and history standards seen were above average in Year 6. There were good standards seen in several aspects of music such as singing. This is due to very effective teaching by the subject specialist. In design and technology, geography and physical education standards were similar to expected levels.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupil's have positive attitudes to learning and their school.
- Behaviour is good.
- Opportunities for the pupils to gain a deeper insight into spirituality and the cultural diversity of society are very good.
- The school is effective in building the pupil's confidence and esteem.
- Pupils' attendance is well below the national average. A number of pupils regularly arrive after the start of lessons.
- Not enough opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility and roles within the school.

Commentary

- 9 The pupils' development in personal and social skills is very effectively promoted by the ethos of the school. The headteacher takes a strong lead in establishing this through collective worship and his presence around school. The pupils know and understand that their contributions are valued and, because of this, their confidence and self-esteem are enhanced effectively. There is a 'can do' approach to learning and the staff are adept at reinforcing this. For example in Year 6, the pupils are aware of the motto 'Winners never quit and quitters never win'. Children in the nursery and reception classes are make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development. Through the school the pupils are encouraged to develop their skills, as their successes are praised regularly by the staff. The school environment is supportive to the pupil's needs and any incidents of bullying or harassment are dealt with properly. The pupils are well aware of the procedures, what they expect to happen if disputes between pupils develop and they are clear that their concerns will be taken seriously. Parents and carers feel behaviour is good, and a positive feature of the school. However, some concern was expressed about incidents of bullying, especially during lunchtime supervision. The findings of this inspection, having discussed these concerns with pupils, are that the school deals effectively with any disputes and incidents, which occur between pupils, and overall the pupils have good relationships and respect for each other.
- 10 The overall attendance rate for the school is well below the national average, and a significant number of pupils arrive after lessons have begun. As a result the learning and achievement of those pupils concerned is adversely affected. There has been good improvement to attendance rates since the last inspection however because of the monitoring and support work of the school. The school works hard to ensure that all parents are made aware of their responsibilities to ensure that children attend school regularly and on time. The governing body is particularly aware that the families of some pupils are not used to the importance attached to time.

- 11 The pupils have good attitudes to school; they apply themselves to their tasks well, share their experiences and discuss their work confidently. They respond well in lessons, and try their best to participate in discussions. When asked to work together they manage this successfully, co-operating and collaborating, although the youngest children in the school still find this more difficult. The pupils with SEN are well supported in their work, and their attitudes and values are well promoted as a result. The school has a very positive approach to including all pupils in the range of activities provided, which is very effective in developing good attitudes, responses and behaviour, in lessons and around the school.
- 12 The very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means the pupils have a secure understanding of the difference between right and wrong and the consequences of their actions on others. The 'Golden Rules', and the consequences if these are broken, are well reinforced in each class. The pupil's social development is satisfactory and relationships between all pupils are good. The older pupils are keen to be involved and support the younger children, but there is not enough development of this type of work. The pupils are keen to take on responsibility and roles within the school, for example being helpers in the reception class, but there are not enough of these opportunities. For example there is no school council, pupils have some but not many responsibilities at lunchtime. There is a scheme called 'play mates' when Year 5 pupils work with Year 1 and 2 pupils each lunchtime. The pupils have a very good understanding of their own cultures and the wide range within the school and beyond. Their spirituality is very well promoted, especially through the inspiring and sometimes excellent whole school assemblies.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	1.8
National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Exclusions

There have been no exclusions in the last year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
67	0	0
7	0	0
15	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
35	0	0
108	0	0
33	0	0
8	0	0

Black or Black British – any other Black background	5	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	12	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. The quality and use of assessment are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good.
- Individual education plans are used well in guiding the teaching of pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers establish very good relationships so pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils are keen and eager to learn. Many are inquisitive and enjoy a challenge.
- Individual learning targets could be sharper.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	9 (18%)	26 (53%)	13 (26%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is better than at the time of the last inspection. Teaching is particularly good in Years 3 to 6, where a higher proportion of the lessons seen were very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, and pupils' work and progress over time reflect consistently good teaching. Common and significant strengths are:

- Teamwork between teachers and support staff is very effective. Bilingual staff support pupils both in the classroom and in withdrawal groups well. By planning together and sharing assessment information, they ensure that all pupils have the right balance of challenge and support to enable them to progress through the same curriculum at their best rate.
- All teachers set a good tone for learning and promote confident and happy working relationships. As a result, pupils sustain interest and effort, and do their best to achieve the standard set.
- Teachers' good planning makes learning coherent, active and demanding.
- Teachers use assessment information well to match work, support and targets to each pupils' stage of development. In the best examples, marking gives precise guidance for improvement and pupils understand their targets.

- 14 These strengths are not fully consistent across the school. At times learning falters because lessons lack pace, or do not develop coherently, or because teachers talk too much and give pupils more guidance than they can use. In the best lessons, particularly in Years 5 and 6, the teacher sets very precise time limits on what pupils are expected to achieve and creates a positive sense of urgency. The pupils are not always clear enough about what they have to do to move onto the next level of learning. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs have individual learning plans which are well matched to the outcomes of assessment. This is missing in a few lessons, particularly in Years 1 and 2 and the pupils set the pace for the lesson and achievement is less. In some other classes the pupils are not always clear enough about what they have to do to move on to the next level of learning.
- 15 Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage. However, the planning lacks detail on questions and vocabulary to use with children in outdoor play and some other activities. This limits the contribution staff make, particularly to speaking and listening skills.
- 16 There is not enough planning for developing speaking and listening skills. This is reflected in lessons where, although teachers question pupils closely, they do not always expect pupils to give full enough answers in clear sentences.
- 17 Teachers establish very good relationships with pupils encouraging good attitudes and approaches to learning. By Year 2, pupils persist in their writing and are not afraid to write at length. They take care with presentation and try to be accurate. In this way, although standards are still low the pupils are ready for Years 3 to 6. This is particularly evident in a Year 1 class where the pace of working is consistently good. In Years 3 to 6 the pupils are eager to learn and to work quietly and cooperatively. They make good use of general reference material such as dictionaries and thesaurus. Pupils with special educational needs learn consistently well because of the good planning and teamwork. The teachers prepare challenging and appropriate work because good assessments and planning give them a clear understanding of pupils' diverse needs.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. The school provides a good curriculum for pupils aged five to eleven that is broad and balanced and which is meaningful to the pupils. The curriculum for children aged three to five is satisfactory. A good range of activities that effectively enrich the curriculum and the learning experiences of the pupils is offered. The quality of accommodation is satisfactory and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is not a first language are good and these groups of pupils benefit well from the curriculum being taught.
- The curriculum provides good equality of opportunity and all pupils are included well.
- Throughout the school, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- There have been some good innovations recently introduced into the curriculum.
- The number of teachers to support the learning of pupils aged five to eleven is good and the number of support staff throughout the school is good.
- The outdoor provision for Foundation Stage pupils has declined since the previous inspection and is now unsatisfactory.

Commentary

- 18 Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are incorporated and planned well, with attention to progression and continuity across the two classes, in order to ensure equality of opportunity for the older nursery children who will enter the reception class in January. Children are not given the opportunity to choose when they go outdoors. Insufficient use is made of the nursery's outdoor area as an environment for children to experience all the areas of learning and the reception pupils lack their own outdoor learning area and progress is not satisfactory as a result. Transition arrangements between the nursery and the reception class are good and the teaching style and curriculum delivery in the younger year 1 class ensures that the transition from reception to year 1 is also good. There is a satisfactory number of teachers for the needs of the curriculum and there are a good number of support staff, who make a good contribution to the learning indoors but who mainly supervise when outdoors.
- 19 The curriculum for pupils aged five to eleven is well planned, incorporating all the subjects of the National Curriculum and Religious Education, in a well balanced and relevant programme of learning experiences. Links between the subjects, to provide additional depth to the pupils' learning, are frequently planned and are particularly strong in music. The school now provides daily opportunities for collective worship. This provision is very good in the whole school assembly, where a forceful message is given to the pupils. This message permeates the religious education and the personal and social education of the week. Some class assemblies lack a reflective and spiritual element. The personal social and health education (PSHE) curriculum very effectively helps pupils to understand their own feelings and to recognise the difficulties of others.
- 20 The curriculum is planned, organised and delivered in a suitable manner for the learning needs and backgrounds of all the pupils and the mixed ages within the classes are well organised. The additional teachers, the specialist bi-lingual support staff and the classroom assistants, are well deployed. Consequently, all pupils are involved and well motivated and have good equality of opportunity to participate in the learning so that they achieve well. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are effectively implemented and ICT is used frequently to support learning in most subjects of the curriculum. There have been many good innovations to the curriculum to support pupils' learning and to promote a healthy life style. Pupils are well prepared for entry to their next stage of schooling.
- 21 The curriculum is planned well for pupils with special educational needs. There are good procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress and to plan for future learning.
- 22 The curriculum is enriched well with a residential experience and with visits and there is a good focus on the arts. Despite the lack of playing fields until this term, the school has provided good opportunities for competitive team games and other sporting events. Out of hours study support and homework clubs are provided.
- 23 Overall, the accommodation and the resources for learning are satisfactory. The computer suite is large and there is a good ratio of machines to pupils. Some classrooms are large, the library is well stocked to support the curriculum and a useful teaching area. Resources for teaching literacy and for supporting the pupils who are learning English as an additional language, are good. Resources for ICT are good and used well. Too much equipment and furniture is stored in the hall to make this a good environment for physical education lessons. There have been good improvements to overall teaching space through the building of two new classrooms which opened this term.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils receive good guidance and support in both their academic and personal development. Pupils whose mother tongue is not English are well supported.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school successfully integrates pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds.
- Pupils' personal development is well supported.
- The school does not regularly seek the views of pupils about the life of the school.

Commentary

- 24 The school admits pupils from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. These pupils receive good support in both their academic and personal development. The implementation of a well-developed PSHE programme ensures that pupils are well aware of the needs of others. As a result those pupils whose mother tongue is not English are well integrated into the everyday life of the school.
- 25 The relationship between pupils and staff is good and teachers are aware of each pupil's level of personal development. The good relationships in school ensure that this is a well-ordered and harmonious community, and pupils enjoy coming to school. The school has good assessment procedures in place, which are used to ensure that pupils receive good advice and guidance. The school makes effective use of additional support staff throughout the school and in particular to work with booster groups in years two and six.
- 26 In lessons as part of the PSHE programme, pupils are able to express their opinions on a wide range of subjects. There is however no formal method of obtaining pupils' views on the daily life of the school.
- 27 There are procedures for child protection in place and a member of the teaching staff is the named person for child protection. The school has good systems in place to ensure the welfare, health and safety of its' pupils and staff. These systems are implemented well by a caring staff. The headteacher and the caretaker together carry out regular health and safety inspections. Formally recorded risk assessments are carried out before any school visit takes place.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Relationship with parents are good. There are very good links with other local schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The work that the school does to involve parents in the life of the school.
- The school's strong links with Holly Hall secondary school and support services for pupils from different ethnic minorities.

Commentary

- 28 The results of the pre inspection questionnaire to parents, together with the comments made at the parents meeting, indicate that the majority of parents are very satisfied with the work that the school does. Parents are advised about the work of the school through newsletters but there is no regular formal process for obtaining parents views of the school. In addition to providing good classroom support the newly appointed learning link worker is building strong links with parents through a wide variety of activities.
- 29 There are three parents' evenings each year that give parents an opportunity to talk to the staff about their child's progress. Parents are also welcome to come into school at any other time to discuss any concerns they may have with the headteacher or a member of his staff. Annual reports on pupils' progress give parents a clear view of their child's achievements and give advice for future development. The bi-lingual staff provide very good advice and support for parents who are unsure

about the expectations of the school and need language support. The school prospectus, governor's annual report and newsletters keep parents informed of events in school.

- 30 The school maintains very good links with its' partner high school, and there are clear arrangements for the transfer of pupils from year six to year seven. Visits to Blowers Green by staff from the high school, and 'taster days' at the high school for pupils in year six, ensure that pupils move smoothly to secondary education. The secondary school's mathematics and computer college status enable it to provide valuable curriculum support for Blowers Green School. There are strong links with the local community through the school's home-school liaison officer and the bi-lingual staff who run mother tongue classes and mother and toddler groups. The work with the African-Caribbean support team has helped the progress in raising boy's achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors work well with the headteacher. They play a part in the school development plan and help to shape the vision and direction of the school. They understand well the strengths and weaknesses. They meet their statutory responsibilities.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good. He has a very clear vision to raise standards and work with the community.
- The deputy headteacher together with the key staff support the headteacher well. They work hard together to share the headteacher's enthusiasm and vision.
- There are strong management systems in place which ensure that all staff work together to improve standards.

Commentary

- 31 The governing body shares the headteacher's vision of the school. It helps with the school development plan where priorities are linked to performance management of the headteacher. Governors are ambitious for the school and have help from advisors to raise initiatives. A year ago they supported the headteacher in his vision for a new building with two classrooms which was completed two weeks before the inspection. A new playing field will be ready for use in January 2004 after the old one was sold by the local education authority 5 years ago. Governors work well together as a team and wish to involve the community in the learning process.
- 32 The headteacher provides very good leadership. He has a clarity of vision for the future which he shares with the governors and staff. He ensures that it is a very inclusive school. He has a commitment to ensure the pupils succeed and continually pursues the raising of standards. He sees the school working with the community.
- 33 There is an effective senior management team with delegated responsibilities. The team, together with the governors, are effective in putting together school development plans. The headteacher manages and motivates staff well. There are well organised teams. The information and communication strategy group lead the project forward. The headteacher delegates well. The deputy head supports the headteacher well. She helps him with the curriculum, Investors in People, induction of staff and is the tutor for newly qualified teachers and helps to train student teachers. The headteacher manages performance management of senior staff. They, in turn, manage the rest of the staff. The school makes a very positive

contribution for initial teacher training with up to eight students being trained in school in a year.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	855,530	Balance from previous year	31,219
Total expenditure	851,551	Balance carried forward to the next	35,198
Expenditure per pupil	3,161		

- 34 The governing body manages the school funds well. Good use is made with provision through the Education Action Zone. Principles of best value are well understood and applied. Efficient systems are in place to ensure that the school always gains good value for money. At the most recent audit of the delegated budget all recommendations have had a management response. For the audit of the school fund the administrator had maintained excellent records and ensured that systems in operation were effective. The school meets the needs of its pupils well and currently provides good value for money.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and the children achieve well. They often start school with very low standards in communication skills and personal and social development. A very high proportion of pupils have little English acquisition when they start nursery. Although they achieve well, many children are unlikely to reach the goals expected for their age by the time they start Year 1. Progress is unsatisfactory in aspects of physical development because of a lack of provision and weak planning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults provide good opportunities for children's personal, social and emotional development and as a consequence children achieve well.
- Children leave reception with standards below those expected nationally.

Commentary

34 Children are warmly welcomed into the nursery by all adults. They are divided into small groups with one specific supporting adult and they soon gain sufficient confidence to select their own activities and to manage their own personal hygiene. All adults have many effective strategies to convey their high expectations of behaviour and to include all. The children respond well. Nursery routines are well established through a consistent approach and because teachers listen to the children carefully, they build up the children's self esteem. Within all the activities and the numerous interactions adults develop in the children a growing awareness of turn taking and what is right or wrong. In the reception class, children are given increased opportunities to develop independence and self-confidence, such as by selecting their own reading book or becoming the class monitor of the day. They have some opportunity to select and use activities, but more choice, together with extended periods in which to develop their play, would be beneficial. Children work well with an adult as part of a group and most are starting to gain the confidence to form good relationships with the adults. Mainly children play alongside each other at a range of games. In activities with an adult, such as in a shopping setting they are confident to try new ideas and to maintain attention and concentration. Children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage in their personal, social and emotional development, but many will not achieve all the learning goals for this area of development by the end of the reception year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The provision for language, literacy and communication is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Through good teaching children achieve well but many leave the reception year with standards below those expected nationally.
- In both classes teachers develop an enjoyment of stories.

Commentary

- 35 Adults are constantly interacting with children in the nursery and reception providing them with a range of language and opportunities for speaking and listening. There is good support for children for whom English is not a first language, particularly by the bi-lingual assistants who help these children understand English through explanations in their home language. In both year groups, children listen to stories attentively and in the nursery, the teacher asks them questions to which they respond. These children are encouraged to identify with the illustrations by reflecting on their own experiences. They are given time to consider their answers and for children newly learning English, if their answer is not a direct response to the question, they still receive praise as well as support. Through this good teaching children develop the skill of interpreting illustrations and enjoyment of stories and they know how to handle a book. In the reception year there is an emphasis on traditional children's stories and much of the recording in children's books reflect this theme. Stories are read with great clarity and the text is frequently written in rhyme to develop reading skills. Class teachers place a similar, appropriate emphasis on teaching phonics and writing letters correctly to children in the reception year who are in both the nursery and the reception class to ensure that all have a similar opportunity and learn similar work. In the reception class, children are starting to read simple key words. At present no child is writing independently, apart from writing their name, although the highest achievers are writing recognisable letters.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enter the nursery with well below average levels in their mathematical skills. Children achieve well due to good teaching.
- Some children achieve the learning goals but overall standards are below those expected nationally by the end of the reception year.

Commentary

- 36 In the nursery children develop their counting skills well as adults use effectively well known number rhymes and real objects. Simultaneously this helps children to sort objects by colour and shape. Role play opportunities, where children can develop their learning further, are provided in the 'shop'. In reception the teaching of number skills is good and the manner in which the class teacher introduces mathematical language as a preliminary to addition and subtraction is very good. Many children achieve very well with their counting skills and by the reception year most children are counting confidently to ten. The highest achievers count far higher numbers and recognise numerals to twenty. In these aspects of their numerical development, these pupils are achieving the Early Learning Goals, but overall standards are below average and children are not achieving the full range of the Early Learning Goals.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

The provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are provided with a wide range of experiences in all aspects of this area of learning.

Commentary

- 37 In the nursery, children observe carefully and explore the properties of a range of materials such as dough, water and sand. Adults help them to observe closely the features such as texture and thickness of the dough as it is rolled and to identify animal shapes they cut out of it. Children work with puzzles and model trains with full concentration and observe as they make simple constructions with magnets by selecting their own bricks and pieces of construction kits. Children handle a mouse on a computer well for their age, as they use a sorting program. Adults support the learning well, helping children to observe such as the colour shape and smell of a range of fruit and vegetables, using clear language so that children know the names of the vegetables and discuss their observations. Currently, children are learning aspects of the Christian culture as they learn a range of traditional songs. In the reception year, in literacy lessons children work well in pairs, using a computer program satisfactorily. With support from a bi-lingual assistant they explore materials such as tinsel, by touching and observing it and they select colours to decorate their Christmas tree pictures. Little teaching was seen for this aspect of the curriculum in the reception year. However, the teacher's planning and a survey of children's books shows that children are given the opportunity to develop a sense of time and an understanding of various celebrations. Children have learned and drawn about several Bible stories from the Christian and Sikh religions and have made mince pies as part of their Christmas celebrations. They have looked at toys from the past and compared them with today's toys, and they have observed toys moving as they push and pull them.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's physical development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children show satisfactory precision with small tools and are provided with a good range of experiences in the nursery to develop these skills.
- Planning for outdoor play is not always effective enough.

Commentary

- 38 There are many good opportunities for nursery children to develop their accuracy with pencils and small equipment that requires precise movements. These include using scissors and paste spreaders to make pictures and tracing over lines. Adults give good guidance and nursery children are able to handle tools well so that in the reception class, most children hold a pencil correctly. In the nursery, the outdoor provision is mainly bikes and scooters and children's ability to control these pieces of equipment are appropriate for their age. In fine weather, children have an outdoor climbing frame. Staff supervise children as they play outside but they do not develop children's learning or their skills enough. The reception year pupils have regular access to the school hall to develop control of their whole body such as over obstacle courses. The planning for physical development lacks detail in both classes.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children show lower than expected standards, particularly in their imaginative play and overall children leave reception without achieving all of the learning goals.

Commentary

39 Children in the nursery choose from a range of creative experiences that include using coloured pencils, drawing at an easel, creating roadways, exploring musical instruments, finger painting and printing. Classroom assistants work with the children, extending their learning and encouraging them to complete their tasks. In their singing sessions, children are expected to learn songs that are rather too complex and consequently none of them know all the words. Actions are sometimes too teacher directed in these sessions, with not enough opportunity for children's own ideas and less than half the children participate in these movements. In the reception class, the planning shows that there is an emphasis on dancing and singing. In both classrooms there is opportunity for children to develop their imagination through role-play. In the reception class this is related to literature, entitled 'the Bears Cottage', but during the inspection no children were seen playing in this good facility. Children have previously used collage and paint and have decorated friezes and number lines. Despite the reception teacher's good involvement in the children's role play, in the context of shopping, during a maths lesson, the children's imaginative play is below age expectations and they do not achieve the early learning goals for this aspect of creative development.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and reach average standards by the time they leave.
- The high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language make very good gains in their learning.
- Teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good features in Years 3 to 6.
- Very good leadership and management have significantly improved provision and raised standards.
- Provision for developing skills in spoken English is relatively weak.

Commentary

40 Standards have improved well since the last inspection. They are below average by Year 2 and average at Year 6. The higher standards stem from better planning of the curriculum, more effective teaching and learning, and improved systems for tracking and promoting each pupil's progress. There has been increased bi lingual support. Leadership and management have been particularly effective in driving these improvements, and in building more rigorous systems to strengthen pupils' sense of how they can do better. There are better weekly

routines including homework, better resources, and better opportunities for reading and writing in other subjects which supports the drive for higher standards in literacy.

- 41 The impact of these improvements is most clearly seen in writing. The basic skills of handwriting, spelling, punctuation and sentence structure are taught consistently and rigorously. All pupils achieve well in these respects and good classroom displays often celebrate their work. Pupils with English as an additional language make particularly good early progress because teachers use assessment very well to build on earlier work. Teachers set high standards and encourage pupils to analyse quality texts of different kinds. As a result pupils increasingly understand how and why texts vary, and they learn to fit words and structures to a widening range of purposes. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 write equally effective factual and imaginative texts and have a good understanding of the difference between fact and fiction. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils write with disciplined and confident control of length, structure and variation. They switch easily from the informal language of autobiography to the formal, impersonal language of a report.
- 42 There is a good focus on early reading and writing skills for pupils with special educational needs. They are well supported both in the classroom and in withdrawal sessions because planning is matched closely to their needs both in groups and individually. There is regular and detailed assessment of their progress in basic skills.
- 43 Standards in reading are average by Year 6. Here pupils achieve well because good systems and effective teaching consistently support the development of basic skills. In Year 2, lower attainers tackle unfamiliar words by using a growing knowledge of the complex relationships between sounds and letters. However, there is an over concentration on exercises to develop basic skills without sufficient intervention or variety to consistently secure the best learning in the Year 2 class. More able pupils use a range of skills to read quite advanced story texts fluently and interpret the main qualities of a character. Their response to an information book is less assured. By Year 6, most pupils detect different layers of meaning in a story text. Higher attainers are quick to perceive how, in an unfamiliar story opening, the author's use of language changes the way the reader sees the character. Pupils use of reference books is also good and is enhanced by the good use of the library and reference searches on ICT.
- 44 Standards in speaking and listening are average by Year 6, and are lower across the school than in literacy. Weak skills in this area impede learning for many pupils, although good care and relationships across the school support the development of spoken language. Teachers are aware of the need for improvement. They promote positive attitudes by valuing pupils' efforts, and often provide good opportunities for pupils to talk in pairs or small groups to support each other's learning. However, progress in this area is assumed rather than orchestrated. Planning is unsystematic and the range of methods is limited. Also, there is a relative lack of procedures to assess skills in this area, even for pupils with special needs, and few targets are set to help spoken English keep pace with the demands of the curriculum.
- 45 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There is very good team work between teachers and teaching assistants and good understanding of literacy teaching. The teachers create a warm and harmonious ethos so pupils of all abilities, and those at an early stage of acquiring English, are involved. The teaching is often challenging and there is very good use of individual targets to promote pupils' learning. Sometimes the pace of teaching is too slow and pupils are not as motivated as a result. There is not always enough use of precise targets for average and more able pupils to improve their learning. This follows national trends and the school has recognised the need to improve this.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

- 46 Teachers make good use of history and religious education to provide rich opportunities to extend learning. Teachers encourage pupils to maintain good standards in basic skills such as handwriting and spelling in other subjects. There is good use of dictionaries and reference material to improve spelling and reading skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is some good and very good teaching.
- Initiatives to work with parents in Year 2 are taking place.
- Pupils achieve well from Years 3 to 6.
- There are good assessment procedures in place.
- There is good support for the pupils, especially those who have English as an additional language.
- Standards are not consistently high enough in Year 2.

Commentary

- 47 In 2003, national tests results for pupils in Year 2 were very low compared with national results and well below compared with similar schools. Pupils in Year 6 were also well below compared with national results and below compared with similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are still below in Year 2 but are now in line compared nationally in Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in the Years 3 to 6 and they achieve well. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported, as are those with special educational needs. There is no difference in the performance of boys and girls. The lessons are very inclusive.
- 48 Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan their lessons well and there is a commendable consistency of quality in the teaching across the school with some very good teaching observed. Most pupils enter the school with mathematical understanding well below average. Despite the support for pupils whose first language is not English, some pupils find the application of mathematical knowledge difficult because of language difficulties. This, plus the fact that a number of pupils join the school after the nursery and reception, is having an effect on standards. The school continues to work hard with these pupils.
- 49 Pupils in Year 1 can count to 20 and are able to add on ten. They can identify two dimensional shapes. By Year 2, they can add 2 and 3 digit numbers but in one lesson, some had difficulty in telling the time and adding in and taking away one hour. A majority of pupils in Years 3 and 4 can interpret data from pictograms. Analysis of work shows that pupils use the four operations to solve problems and investigate numbers and patterns. Standards continue to improve by Year 5, where pupils can work in fractions and decimals and can add up to 6 figure numbers. Pupils are challenged and in one lesson they investigated the perimeter of regular and irregular shapes and constructed a formula. By Year 6, most pupils know the properties of quadrilaterals and are able to draw conversion graphs, for example Fahrenheit to centigrade. They were observed using different strategies for adding and subtracting 4 figure numbers.

- 50 The quality of teachers' marking and comments is variable. They are often congratulatory and encouraging with some constructive and developmental remarks. Assessment is good with records kept and targets given to each pupil. There are tests to ascertain progress every half term. Homework is regularly set each week and this was observed on a number of occasions.
- 51 The subject leader is knowledgeable and committed. He has been co-ordinator for fifteen years and leads the team well. Information and communication technology is well used to support teaching and learning in mathematics and numeracy skills. The school has adopted the national numeracy strategy well since the last inspection which it was trailing at the time.

Mathematics across the curriculum

- 52 This is satisfactory although there are a limited number of curriculum areas where a link has been established with mathematics. However, it is used in particular with ICT and in science. Charts and graphs are used for recording temperatures in geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science are currently below national expectations at Year 2 and at Year 6.
- Teaching is predominantly good in years three to six and is particularly strong in years 4 and 6.
- There is an appropriate emphasis on investigative work, but this is frequently too tightly structured and this limits pupils' achievement, particularly of the potentially higher attaining pupils.
- There is insufficient use of ICT, particularly in the older classes.
- The provision for pupils in Year 2 has some unsatisfactory elements.

Commentary

- 53 At present, standards in Year 6 and Year 2 are slightly better than those identified at the end of 2003, and at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were well below the national average at Years 6 and 2. However, the average and higher attaining pupils in the present Year 6 are predicted to make less progress between the years three to six, than the accepted average thus forecasting that standards will fall to well below national expectations by the end of the year. No difference was seen during the inspection of achievement between boys or girls, or between the various ethnic groups within the school. The achievement of pupils varies across the school. For example, when studying electricity, pupils in Year 4 achieve very well whereas the achievement of pupils in Year 6, in their study of electricity, is just satisfactory.
- 54 In Year 2, pupils are studying the impact of putting water into the freezer. The higher achieving pupils predict that it will come out frozen and solid and they also know that as a liquid it does not hold its shape. They are not familiar with the impact of freezing or of melting other solids, as part of the process of understanding reversible and irreversible changes. Neither have they studied and compared the properties of a range of materials.
- 55 Pupils in Year 6 have studied micro organisms and how to separate mixtures of solids. They are starting to record their investigations in a scientific style of writing, using some technical vocabulary and all but the lower achieving pupils are drawing well labelled diagrams. In their present study of electricity, they can identify from a diagram if a bulb will light in a range of simple circuits and they investigate which materials conduct electricity. They showed in their lesson, that they had forgotten

their previous learning about materials that are conductors and insulators. Almost all pupils are able to make predictions and to record their observations in charts. They have very little experience of interpreting data or of transferring information from charts into bar graphs and line graphs, either manually or using the computer. Pupils' learning in Year 6 is well supported by that in Year 5, where many pupils are so eager to learn that they independently researched the reproductive organs of the flowering plant, prior to their lesson.

- 56 The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, but there are considerable differences in the two year groups. The work in pupils' books shows that teachers in Year 1 give pupils a good start to their science learning whereas the teaching in Year 2 lacks a consistent focus on developing the skills and knowledge required by the National Curriculum. Teaching is good overall between Years 3 to 6. Most teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and all clearly explain the work. However, there are common weaknesses in most teaching that restricts the attainment of the higher ability pupils and that can lead to superficial learning. These mainly relate to pupils working in too tightly structured situations and at the rate of the class with no involvement in planning their investigations. Also, there is no difference in the scientific content or the practical skills required of the pupils, irrespective of their ability. The exception is in Year 4, where teaching is good and learning is very good due to each pupil working at a level appropriate to their ability; bringing about pupils' involvement and excitement with their learning. This was achieved through the pupils being given opportunities to investigate their own predictions, to select their own resources, explain their own observations and to record them independently, in tables that they construct themselves.
- 57 The subject is well led and since the previous inspection there has been considerable investment in staff training and resources. National planning documents have been introduced. There are good assessment systems for all the knowledge elements of the curriculum. The main thrust of teaching and learning is through investigation and experiment and this has an overall positive impact on learning. However, the lessons are often too tightly structured to allow the more able pupils chance to explore their knowledge and understanding effectively and these keeps overall standards down. A new tracking system has been developed and when introduced, this should identify any pupils who are not achieving as well as they ought to.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils build well on their earlier learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good use of ICT in their learning.
- By Year 6 many pupils have a good understanding of the strengths and limitations of ICT.

Commentary

- 58 Standards are in line with expectations by Year 2 and Year 6. They are similar to the last inspection. There is a depth to the pupils understanding which is not commonly seen. For example, pupils see the capability of spreadsheets in managing and organising large amounts of data for business, but they also have a good understanding of the limitations through human error and recognise that a simple error in setting calculations could have serious consequences. They know this because the teachers' pose challenging questions throughout their work.
- 59 By both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' basic skills in utilising computers are developed well. This is because they regularly use computers both in the classroom and the ICT suite. They also use a wide range of recording equipment and other forms of ICT. Teachers set a good

example by using ICT in their teaching and often give the responsibility to pupils to manage the computer during the lesson. Hence, pupils store and retrieve work, log on and off and move between programs confidently by Year 2. The more able often support the less able, but have been trained not to do the task for them but to assist. The pupils use control and design programs well through design and technology and art and design tasks. For example, in Year 2 pupils move quickly into creating symmetrical patterns in outline and using a wide range of 'tools' to create the final effect for Joseph's coat of many colours. In Year 6, pupils have good enquiry skills on the internet and also design their own web pages making hyperlinks between different audio and visual sites of their own creation. Pupils make exciting use of word processing capabilities to create a regular school newsletter. Pupils explain their ideas well. Pupils with special educational needs make good use of programs designed to improve English and mathematical skills. Pupils with English as an additional language progress at least as well as their peers.

- 60 The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils work very hard in their lessons rising to the challenges posed by the teachers and the general high expectations. The use of computers is well planned and there is increasingly good use made of interactive white boards which are now based in several classrooms. Teachers build the teaching of ICT skills around learning in other subjects. For example, in physical education good use is made of digital cameras for pupils to consider the quality of their movements. The subject is well led by a very informed coordinator. Resources are good and there are very appropriate plans for further development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

- 61 This is sound. Lessons in the ICT suite are planned around links with other subjects. For example, there are good links with geography in creating an interactive brochure on European countries in Year 6 and use in art and design and English. Some opportunities are missed for use in science.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is frequently good and all lessons seen had a spiritual and reflective element.
- The curriculum is well led and well planned with good links to the assembly themes and to the personal and social education curriculum.

Commentary

- 62 Standards in relation to the Dudley Agreed Syllabus are below expectations in Year 2. This is a decline in standards since the previous inspection. These pupils, in the lesson seen, showed a satisfactory ability to empathise with the fate of sheep, as they listened to and discussed a story with their class teacher. However, they showed very little knowledge of the stories of Jesus that they had been learning about in this lesson and in previous lessons. In their recorded work on celebrations, the work on Christianity was of a lower standard than that on Islamic and Sikh practices. Discussion with Year 6 pupils shows that standards remain around those expected in the Dudley Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. These pupils have a good knowledge of Islam, a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and Sikhism, but a superficial understanding of Buddhism. Their knowledge of Judaism

is inaccurate. In two of the three lessons seen, teaching was good and in these lessons, teachers helped pupils to explore their emotions and to extend their learning of aspects of Christianity. In the satisfactory lesson, opportunities were lost to help pupils understand how faith groups act. In all the lessons, teachers introduced a reflective and a spiritual element into the learning. Teachers use the skills pupils had learned in their literacy lessons well, to help pupils with their religious education learning.

- 63 The curriculum is planned in considerable detail with clear learning objectives and good learning experiences that are supportive to teachers as they plan their lessons. There has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in teachers' marking and in the start of an assessment system. The monitoring of teachers planning and pupils' books is now conscientiously undertaken.

History and geography

- 64 In humanities, only one each of a history and geography lesson was observed in the Years 3 to 6 and 2 and only one history lesson in Years 1 and 2. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work and displays around the school but insufficient work was seen to form an overall judgement.
- 65 In the one lesson observed in geography pupils in Year 6 learnt about rivers with specific reference to the River Rhine from its source to the sea. By the end of the lesson, they knew the difference between erosion and deposition and the use and abuse of rivers.
- 66 Pupils in Year 4 can recall the differences between rich and poor in Tudor times with particular reference to their houses. They can also relate the differences between yeomen and husbandry farmers. Most pupils in Year 1 were able to put into the correct order some typed sentences referring to the Great Fire of London and with the correct picture corresponding to the sentences.
- 67 Inspectors looked at some samples of pupils' work. This was rather limited but showed that Years 5 and 6, in studying Ancient Greece, could compare the city states of Athens and Sparta and know the difference between slaves and freemen.
- 68 The co-ordinator has only recently taken up her position. She realises that the policies need updating and that more resources are required. She is unable to monitor any teaching and no formal assessments take place. Although some pupils visit Oak House and Dudley Castle, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to make further historical and geographical visits or visits to museums.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only one lesson was observed in **art and design** and one lesson in **design and technology**. In physical education only one lessons was observed in Years 1 to 2 and one in Years 3 to 6. Therefore no overall judgements can be made on provision. Evidence was gained from the observations, discussions with the subject coordinator and some pupils.

Art and design

- 69 Pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, at seven and eleven years of age are above the expected level for these age groups in art and design. The pupil's achievement in art and design is good.

- 70 In a Year 6 lesson in art and design, the pupils were learning to mix colours to create different tones and shades as a background for their work in printing, sketching and collage. The pupils are acquiring the appropriate skills and techniques in their artwork; their skills in sketching are good, particularly for the higher achieving pupils. This lesson was well-taught, with good planning and well-structured approach, but did not capitalise fully on the pupil's sketching abilities, for example using charcoal or other similar media to create a winter tree effect on the colour wash backgrounds. Technology is used effectively to support learning in art, to use colour techniques to create pictures and to find information about famous artists on the Internet.
- 71 The subject is led and managed well and there is a good range of available resources. However, assessment procedures are not yet in place.

Design and technology

- 72 Samples of the pupil's work in DT indicate they are learning to use different materials, implements and a variety of techniques to develop their skills in making models from their own designs. Younger pupils in Year 1 are learning to use sliding mechanisms using card, and also to attach moveable pieces of card to their designs using split pins. This lesson in Year 1, was well-organised and the pupils had positive attitudes towards their work, but the tasks set were directed by the class teacher and did not offer enough scope for the pupils to try out their own ideas. Older pupils in Year 6 have designed masks as part of their DT work, all pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work and improve on what they have done.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Singing is good throughout the school.
- Different cultures are represented well.
- The quality of teaching is consistently of a high standard.

Commentary

- 73 Standard in Year 6 are above average for singing and typical for their age in other aspects. Achievement is good for all abilities and pupils with English as an additional language. Singing standards in assemblies are good. From the reception year to Year 6, the very knowledgeable co-ordinator leads the teaching, with the class teachers acting as her support. Teaching is predominantly of a very good standard. All the lessons seen were very quickly paced so that no time was lost. Pupils were challenged appropriately and the special needs pupils were supported well, so that all were included. Because the class teacher is also in the lesson, all pupils have considerable support and they achieve very well. The curriculum is well planned and broad, and pupils are introduced systematically to all the elements of music, to singing, to composition and to musical notation. Pupils are encouraged to work in groups and this contributes well to their personal development. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of musical styles and traditions and music very effectively enhances pupils' cultural awareness. The music selected for pupils to listen to links well to their work in other subjects, effectively enhancing and enriching their learning.

Outstanding practice in music

An excellent music lesson where pupils achieved very well, was seen in Year 3. This was a very good example of team teaching with the class teacher supporting the music teacher by leading groups and helping individuals. The learning focus was beat, rhythm and tempo. Initially, pupils clapped the rhythm of an ostinato phrase and the beat of a well known

jingle. They then clapped these together to layer their work. As their skills developed, the music teacher introduced tempo. By the end of the lesson, supported by the teachers, the pupils clapped the three elements of the music simultaneously. The pace of the lesson was very fast and all the pupils concentrated well in order to fulfil the tasks set for them and they had a good sense of achievement at the end of the lesson. A five minute interlude was spent listening to Tudor music and discussing the musical style of the court and the images of fashion and entertainment that the music suggested.

Physical education

74 The standards seen in the two lessons observed in dance and gymnastic were similar to national expectations. Pupils showed reasonable coordination although the stamina of some pupils in Year 5 was limited. The pupils in Year 1 responded well to the rhythm of the music and actions improved in both lessons by good questioning by the teachers. Discipline and attitudes were sound. There is no evident difference in the achievement of pupils with English as an additional language. There was good use made of ICT to improve movement through the use of digital photography. Discussion with the subject coordinator and a review of curriculum plans indicates that pupils achieve the expected standard in swimming and several pupils are already at that level by Year 4. Despite the lack of playing fields the school has maintained a full games curriculum and has made use of specialist skills and community links with sporting institutions. The school has been successful in a range of inter school sporting activities including football, netball and rugby. A limitation to the physical education in the school hall is that space is limited by having to store dining room tables and chairs and the equipment for physical education in the hall. Pupils are taught to work safely, but there are still potential hazards.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal and social development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good use is made of visitors and staff expertise.
- Good use is made of links with the local secondary.
- The bi-lingual staff provide good emotional and behavioural support for pupils with English as an additional language.

Commentary

75 Personal and social development is planned for well. There is good liaison between different agencies including support for ethnic minorities, special educational needs and pupils' welfare to ensure individual needs are met well. There is an effective curriculum in place so that pupils learn about sex education and the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to express their feelings and emotions. An advanced skills teacher from the local secondary school is working with pupils with emotional difficulties on a programme to control anger and to express their emotions. Very good teaching was observed in a lesson exploring the difficulties experienced by refugee children. The pupils in Year 5 provided a good range of ideas on how to welcome and support the child and they had strong empathy with his feelings of isolation and difficulties in communicating. There are sound planned opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of citizenship. This is part of a project with other schools and provides a good opportunity for the children in this school to

act as role models for others. Overall, the very good ethos of care and inclusion promoted by the headteacher and staff provides a strong framework for every pupils' personal development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).