

INSPECTION REPORT

DAWLEY BROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kingswinford

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103781

Headteacher: Mrs A Hambrook

Lead inspector: Mr T Richardson

Dates of inspection: 6 – 8 October 2003

Inspection number: 255955

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	282
School address:	Dubarry Avenue Kingswinford West Midlands
Postcode:	DY6 9BP
Telephone number:	01384 818770
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Collier
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Dawley Brook is a large community primary school and nursery for boys and girls aged 3 to 11. There are 252 pupils on roll, with another 60 children (30 full time equivalent) attending the nursery part time for either mornings or afternoons. The school is popular; class sizes in Years 3 to 6 are large; there are slightly more girls than boys; pupils are almost exclusively of white British origin; and no pupils have English as an additional language. The school has a very low proportion of pupils with free school meals and the number of pupils with special educational needs (mainly learning difficulties, communication and Down's syndrome) is well below average. The pupils mainly come from favourable socio-economic backgrounds and very few pupils either leave or enter the school other than at the usual times of admission. The school is used extensively by community groups and has just started working with a secondary school to help pupils learn a modern foreign language. In addition, the school has gained awards for Health Promotion and Achievement, and has been recognised as an Investor In People.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16500	Mr T Richardson	Lead inspector	Science, information and communication technology, art and design, music, the Foundation Stage, special educational needs
13395	Mrs J Illingworth	Lay inspector	
16886	Mr R Moseley	Team inspector	English, design and technology, physical education
12367	Mr A Green	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Dawley Brook is a **very effective** school. Standards in most subjects are high and pupils show **good achievement**. This is because lessons are interesting and taught very well. The school is very well led and provides **very good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are high in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), and religious education.
- Pupils show good achievement in their academic development, speaking and reasoning skills, and in their development of independent learning skills.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good and there is very good teamwork between teachers and assistants.
- The headteacher and key staff provide very good leadership and very good support and guidance is provided for pupils.
- Behaviour and relationships in lessons are very good and pupils of all abilities and needs are included and supported well in lessons.
- There is a very good range of extra curricular activities that enriches the curriculum.
- Children have a very good start to their education in the foundation stage.
- More can be done to develop pupils' spirituality and to prepare pupils for the cultural diversity of our society.
- Standards could be higher in art and design.

The school has made **satisfactory** improvement since the last inspection and appropriately addressed the issues identified. Standards have been maintained, but development has been slower than other schools. Since the appointment of the new headteacher in 2002, development is accelerating and new initiatives are already beginning to show signs of success.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A - very high; 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.*

Good achievement is evident throughout the school. Children enter the Foundation Stage with average attainment. They achieve well and enter Year 1 with standards just above average, with most having attained the goals they are expected to reach by the end of their reception year. Pupils continue to show good achievement so that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are securely above average by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve well so that standards, by the end of Year 6 are well above average in English and science, and above average in mathematics. Year 6 pupils also have standards well above average in ICT, and above average in history, physical education and religious education. Standards in art are average and could be higher. **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good** overall, with very good moral and social

development and satisfactory provision for spiritual development and the preparation of pupils for the diversity of our multi-cultural society.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships with one another are very good. Pupils are punctual to lessons and their attendance rate is well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **very good quality of education**. The quality of **teaching and learning is very good**. Teachers are supported by skilled assistants and they work as very effective teams to help pupils with their learning. Teaching is often imaginative, stimulating and challenging and this motivates pupils to try hard and concentrate on improving their work. Most teachers plan their lessons well to build on what pupils already know and to make sure that pupils of all abilities are suitably challenged to give of their best. Teachers also emphasise the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT in all lessons and encourage pupils to work independently and find things out for themselves.

The curriculum is good. It is enriched with many clubs and activities that are taken up very enthusiastically by the pupils. Personal, social and health education is very good with many opportunities for pupils to learn how to react to various situations and become better citizens. Staff know pupils well as individuals and very good support, advice and guidance are given to pupils. There are very effective procedures for seeking pupils' views and taking account of them in school development. Links with parents are good, and they make a very good contribution to children's learning at home and at school. The school also has very good links with the wider community, and good use is made of school premises.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is successfully implementing initiatives to bring excitement to the curriculum and to raise standards. Very good support is provided by the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators, who are all working effectively together to improve the school.

The school is managed very well. School developments, the work of the pupils, and the quality of teaching and learning are routinely monitored and evaluated. The school's finances are managed very well.

The quality of governance is good. Governors give good support to the development of the school. They visit regularly, know what the school does well and support the headteacher very well in providing a clear direction for school improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents give positive support to the school and agree that their children are expected to work hard and do their best; are well taught; and make good progress. A minority of parents would like to be better informed about how well their children are doing, but inspectors judge this provision to be good. Inspectors also found that, the school's measures to eradicate bullying are effective and although some pupils mentioned 'name calling' as a concern, this is successfully being reduced. Most of the pupils state they learn new things in lessons; have to work hard; find other children friendly; and regard their teachers as fair.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Give greater emphasis to preparing pupils to appreciate the diversity of our multi-cultural society.
- Raise standards in art by making sure pupils build consistently on their skills in every class.
- Give more emphasis to promoting pupils' spiritual development.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are above average at the end of the foundation stage and at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards overall are well above average. In all year groups, boys and girls do equally well and show good achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils show good achievement in their academic development, and standards are now rising in most subjects.
- Pupils show good achievement in their speaking, listening and reasoning skills.
- Good achievement is evident in pupils' development of independent learning skills.
- Standards are well above average in English, science, and information and communication technology.
- Standards are above average in mathematics, physical education, history and religious education.
- Standards are now rising in most subjects.
- Standards could be higher in art and design.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Children enter the nursery class with average attainment and development. An increasing number of these children each year has some delay in their development of spoken language. By the time children enter Year 1, the majority have attained all the goals they are expected to reach by the end of their reception year, in all the areas of learning. This good achievement is the direct result of the very good provision that is made in the foundation stage and the consistent level of very good quality teaching. Teachers give a strong emphasis to children developing their vocabulary, listening and communication skills, and this helps them to achieve well in all the areas of learning.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.1 (16.4)	15.9 (16.0)
writing	15.7 (16.1)	14.8 (14.5)
mathematics	17.3 (18.5)	16.4 (16.6)

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Good achievement takes place for pupils in Years 1 and 2. This is because teachers continue to emphasise new vocabulary and encourage pupils to find things out for themselves. The 2003 national test results for pupils in Year 2 show that standards in reading, writing and science were above average, and standards in mathematics were well above average. Inspection shows that the current Year 2 are also expected to attain similar results. Pupils are also doing well in developing their speaking and listening skills and are confident to take part in class discussions.

In addition, standards are above average in ICT, history, physical education and religious education.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.5 (27.3)	27.0 (27.2)
mathematics	27.2 (28.1)	27.0 (27.0)
science	30.6 (30.6)	28.8 (28.6)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 show good achievement over time. This is because teachers expect pupils to use specialist vocabulary, extend their logic and reasoning skills and enjoy finding out new things in lessons. When the average point scores in the table are compared with national results, standards in English and science are well above average, and standards in mathematics are above average. When compared against schools with similar numbers of free school meals, English and science results are well above average again, with mathematics matching the average for these schools. Analysis of the work of the current Year 6 shows that pupils are likely to attain similar test results in 2004.
4. In other subjects, standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average in ICT, and above average in history, physical education and religious education. Insufficient evidence was obtained to make firm judgements on standards in geography, music and design and technology. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were seen to be confident in designing and making glove puppets, the curriculum plans for geography are of good quality, and pupils in the choir sang with confidence, enthusiasm and skill. Inspectors noted that the teachers with responsibility for co-ordinating developments in subjects are now implementing good quality plans for raising standards. Some of this work is already showing benefits, for example, the current work of the numeracy co-ordinator is helping other teachers gain confidence and is likely to improve further the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics. A particular feature in a number of lessons was the emphasis teachers place on developing pupils' reasoning skills and independence in their learning. These skills have a direct bearing on pupils' achievement and contribute well to the improvement in standards. Inspectors also noted that pupils with higher attainment and, for example, talents in sports and music, are suitably encouraged to extend their abilities and achieve well.
5. Pupils' work in art and design varies in quality between classes. Where pupils are being taught observation, drawing and painting skills, standards are higher than in other classes. As a result, there is insufficient consistency of experience for pupils to develop higher standards in their art work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school, attendance and punctuality are very good and make a positive contribution to their attainment. Pupils behave very well, and have very good relationships with one another and with adults. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral and social development and satisfactory provision for spiritual development, and preparing pupils for life in our multi-cultural society.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils’ very positive attitudes to learning mean that they work hard and achieve well.
- Pupils’ attendance and punctuality are very good.
- Very good behaviour and relationships create an environment that is conducive to learning and to pupils’ welfare.
- The school could do more to prepare pupils for life in our diverse society.
- There are some missed opportunities to promote pupils’ spiritual development.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.0	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

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

6. Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly and punctually, encouraged by good procedures for promoting attendance. They come to school expecting to learn and to work hard. Children of all ages and abilities are eager to participate actively in lessons. They like answering questions and hands shoot up all over the classroom when a teacher asks one. Pupils listen carefully to members of staff and follow instructions, while at the same time showing good independence and initiative, in asking questions of their own. Pupils have very good relationships with one another. In lessons they co-operate well when working in pairs and small groups, and are mutually supportive. They also have very constructive relationships with members of staff. They are very appreciative of the guidance that teachers give them on how to improve their work. The atmosphere in lessons is very harmonious and positive, and this promotes good achievement.

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	235	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0

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

7. The school has high expectations regarding behaviour and has put in place good procedures to see that they are fulfilled. All members of the school’s staff implement these procedures effectively in practice. This, together with the high standard of teaching, results in very good behaviour in lessons and no exclusions for any pupils. Prior to the inspection, a minority of parents expressed concerns about bullying and the consistency of lunchtime staff in applying school policies. A significant number of responses to the pupils’ questionnaires also suggested

that there were some concerns. Inspectors investigated these complaints very carefully. They found that, although there were some minor inconsistencies in the quality of supervision in the playground, there was no evidence to support the view that aggression and harassment were features of life in school. On the contrary, direct observations and discussions with pupils and staff showed that standards of behaviour are very good overall, relationships are very harmonious, and there is no physical bullying. However, there is still a culture for some 'name calling' among pupils, which sometimes provokes an aggressive response from its victims. The school is aware of this problem and is already working, with some success, to eradicate it.

8. Although personal development is good overall, there is no whole school policy on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and the quality of provision is uneven. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Religious education lessons and the programme for personal, social and health education give pupils sound opportunities to learn about values and beliefs, including those of non-Christian faiths. Assemblies include an act of collective worship, but do not always provide enough time for reflection. There are missed opportunities to promote spirituality in lessons and teachers are not yet routinely planning to develop spirituality through, for example, the consideration of infinity in mathematics.
9. There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. The school's code of conduct emphasises fairness and consideration for others. Teachers and support assistants, who act as very good role models, consistently promote pupils' understanding of right and wrong. They also provide many opportunities in lessons for pupils to work collaboratively and to develop their social skills. From their earliest years in school, children learn to share, to take turns and to help one another. They learn about co-operation, citizenship and democracy via the work of the active and influential school council. In keeping with their age, older pupils are able to take on significant responsibilities, such as library assistant and Year 6 prefect. They carry out these duties maturely and conscientiously.
10. Pupils get good opportunities to explore and appreciate their own cultural heritage, through visits to places of historical interest, for instance, or through membership of the school orchestra and choir. Provision for multi-cultural education is less well developed, and, as the school is predominantly of one culture, pupils are insufficiently prepared for the cultural diversity of modern Britain. Some of them recall visiting a Sikh temple and learning about Judaism in religious education lessons, but do not always see this knowledge as directly relevant to their own lives, even though they are geographically close to many ethnically diverse towns and cities.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education. There are strengths in the quality of teaching and learning and in the provision of activities to enrich the curriculum. Pupils benefit from their participation in sports and the arts.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching in the foundation stage, Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 to 6 is very good. As a result, children and pupils learn very well, and this contributes to their good achievement in school. The quality of assessment of pupils' work is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers and assistants work very well together in lessons.
- Teachers often deliver lessons that are imaginative, stimulating and challenging.
- Pupils are generally motivated to try hard and to concentrate on improving their work.
- Teachers usually plan their lessons to build on what pupils already know and understand.
- Pupils of all abilities are usually challenged to give of their best.
- Teachers help the pupils to develop the skills of reading, writing, numeracy and with computers, in all subjects.
- Pupils learn to work independently and find out things for themselves.
- One lesson could have been organised more effectively.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	18 (45%)	15 (38%)	4 (10%)	1 (3%)	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.

11. In all classes, inspectors noted very good teamwork between teachers and their assistants. In some cases, assistants were taking large groups of pupils by themselves, and doing this well. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 6, the assistant had half the class at a time in the multi-media suite. She had high expectations for the pupils to take risks and try out new procedures and, as a result, they quickly learnt how to add sound to their visual presentations. In other lessons, assistants worked efficiently to help any pupils who were stuck and supported the teacher by assessing how well the pupils were doing. Teachers and assistants often plan lessons together and, because the assistants know what the lesson will be about, are able to give a higher quality of support. For example, in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the teacher and the assistant worked in partnership and successfully made sure that the pupils of differing abilities in both year groups all had different work to do, and made sure they were all suitably challenged to achieve well.
12. The quality of teaching is improving. This is a result of the initiatives introduced by the new headteacher to make lessons and the curriculum more interesting for the pupils. The impact of this development is yet to be fully seen on the achievement of the pupils, but is already evident in the way pupils are becoming more independent in their learning, and wanting to find out more for themselves. A large number of the lessons seen were judged to be very good. This was often because teachers used imaginative methods that stimulated the pupils to work accurately and quickly. For example, in a mathematics lesson for Year 2, the teacher had two teams competing to count to and from 20 as well as counting in twos, all at the same time. This resulted in the pupils working with enthusiasm and enjoyment. In a science lesson for pupils in Year 4, the teacher took pupils outside to raise and lower a full sized parachute. This caused considerable excitement and led the pupils immediately to the realisation that air can resist movement.
13. Pupils are generally motivated to try hard and to concentrate on improving their work and an excellent example of this was observed in a design and technology lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

Example of outstanding practice

In a Year 1 and 2 design and technology lesson, the teacher used lively and expressive communication that inspired the pupils to think hard and be very keen to develop their ideas

The teacher gave an excellent introduction, using her voice, body language and expression very well so that the pupils watched and listened very attentively, and wanted to communicate back with her. She also used a variety of methods, such as asking the pupils to discuss ideas with one another, that enabled every pupil to think of a contribution and to feel pleased with their ideas. Pupils' contributions were warmly rewarded, and one pupil was delighted and proud to be able to explain to the class the meaning of 'design'. As a result, the pupils rapidly learnt about the design process and moved on to considering their choices of materials and fixings.

14. The quality of assessment is good, with particular strengths in English and mathematics. Teachers usually plan their lessons to build on what pupils already know and understand and

this leads to pupils being challenged to achieve well and give of their best. For example, in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 3, the teacher made his questions gradually harder so that all pupils enjoyed trying to solve the hardest ones. The teacher also knew the pupils very well and this led to very good relationships and good-humoured learning. In a literacy lesson for pupils in Year 5, the teacher set work for each group that was very well matched to their needs. As a result the pupils were all able to build on what they already knew about poetry and discover, for example, that not all poems need to rhyme. Teachers also make sure that assessment is used to identify pupils with higher attainment, and those with special educational needs. Tasks and activities are then planned for these pupils that are interesting and lead the pupils to want to give of their best.

15. The analysis of the work in pupils' books shows that teachers are good at helping the pupils develop basic skills in lessons other than English and mathematics. For example, history lessons are used as opportunities for developing writing and drama skills; mathematical skills are improved through the use of tables and graphs in science; and computers are used to support learning in every subject. Teachers have developed their own computer skills very well and now provide very good role models for the pupils, using interactive boards and projectors routinely in lessons. In addition, teachers also make sure that pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed in lessons. This process starts in the foundation stage, with the very good emphasis teachers give to speaking clearly and helping the children to learn new vocabulary, and continues throughout the school. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 6, the teacher used questions and answers very well so that all the pupils discussed the probability of verbal statements (such as 'we will have chips today') and this led them to understand numerical probability statements, as well as improving their logical reasoning skills.
16. In a number of lessons, pupils were encouraged to work independently and to find out things for themselves. For example, in a lesson in Year 4, pupils went off to the multi-media suite on their own and worked diligently and well to the tight deadlines set for completing their newspaper articles. Also, in a history lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher started the lesson off very well so that the pupils worked on their own to rehearse and develop their plays about the Gunpowder Plot. This led the pupils to increase, by themselves, the accuracy and historical knowledge of the key facts involved.
17. A music lesson could have been organised more effectively, as the distribution of instruments took a long time and the pupils were unproductive for too long.

The curriculum

The provision for a range of curriculum opportunities is good. The opportunities for the enrichment of the curriculum are good. The opportunities for extra-curricular activities are very good. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned and organised.
- Very good use is made of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum.
- The provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Children in the Foundation Stage are prepared very well for transition to Year 1
- Year 6 pupils are prepared well for secondary school education.
- The number of clubs and activities provided outside of the school day is very good.

- There is a good match of teachers and support staff to deliver the curriculum.
- Accommodation and resources are good.

Commentary

18. The curriculum is well planned and organised and is enriched by a very good range of additional activities. Very good use is made of visits and visitors. For example, pupils visit the Black Country Museum, Bobbington Village and school, the Wye Forest, the local park and take a canal trip to enrich their learning in science, history and geography. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in residential visits, which not only support subjects very well but also the personal and social development of pupils. Themed days and weeks, for example a Healthy Lifestyle Week, a Numeracy Week and a Book Week, are used well to bring subjects such as English, mathematics, science, religious education and history alive for the pupils. All these additional activities help to support the high standards and good achievement of pupils in many subjects. These judgements are similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
19. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' needs are identified well and teachers, along with the co-ordinator for special educational needs, prepare individual education plans that show what the pupils need to learn next. These plans are then used well by teachers to make sure that pupils are included well in lessons. Some pupils have support from teaching assistants. This is organised well, and is provided sensitively so that pupils can play a full part in their lessons. The co-ordinator for special educational needs also provides support sessions out of the classroom for individuals and groups and these are effective in helping the pupils to make progress.
20. The curriculum in the foundation stage is good. It is stimulating and sustains the children's interest well. It prepares them well for the transition to Year 1. Good links have been established with the local secondary schools to ensure a smooth transition from Year 6. Teachers from one of the local secondary schools regularly teach German to pupils in Years 5 and 6. Not only does this help with the transition from Year 6, but the teaching of a modern foreign language also enriches the curriculum.
21. A current focus for the school is to make the curriculum more creative and interesting for pupils. Subject co-ordinators are using the time they are allocated to lead and manage their subjects well. They are also ensuring that the implementation of the focus is being addressed very well. The very good attitudes and interest of pupils in lessons reflects that they find lessons interesting, stimulating and creative.
22. There is a good match of teachers and learning support staff to the curriculum and a good range of experience amongst the staff, which supports the good delivery of the curriculum and the good standards in many subjects. Staff give generously of their time to provide a very good range of sports and arts clubs for pupils, which include board games, cricket, choir, computer, football, gymnastics, netball, orchestra, recorders, running, tennis, writing and booster classes for English and mathematics. Parents also organise and run board games, dance, design and sports clubs. Although most of these activities are open to pupils in Years 3 to 6 a number are also open to pupils in Years 1 and 2. A high proportion of pupils take part in these activities with great enthusiasm, which not only develops their knowledge and skills in these activities but also their personal, social and moral skills. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when the range of extra curricular activities was judged to be good.

23. The accommodation is spacious and well maintained. Classrooms are large, especially in the foundation stage and Years 1 and 2 and extra rooms, for example a special educational needs room, a community room and a resource room, are used well for withdrawing pupils from class for group and individual work. The multi-media and computer suite is well appointed and regularly used, which results in above average standards in information and communication technology (ICT). The large grounds include a wild area and small allotment, which supports work in science well. Two hard playground areas and a spacious field, support outdoor activities well and the high standards in physical education. Resources are good and have a positive impact on lessons.

Care, guidance and support

The school looks after its pupils well. It has good procedures for ensuring their care, welfare, health and safety. The school has good procedures for involving the pupils effectively in its work and development. Pupils receive very good support, advice and guidance, and this benefits their academic achievement, personal development and general welfare.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has good systems for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- Pupils have very trusting relations with adults in the school.
- Very good relationships between pupils and members of staff result in pupils having very good access to effective support and guidance.
- There are good arrangements for the induction of new pupils.
- The school monitors pupils' achievements and personal development very effectively.
- The school makes good arrangements to seek and act on pupils' views.

Commentary

24. Provision for pupils' health, safety and welfare is good. The school has a good formal policy on child protection and effective procedures to implement it. Members of staff have received appropriate training and are aware of what to do in the event of an incident. Health and safety procedures, including provision for first aid and for risk assessments, are good overall, but inspectors noted that tests on portable electrical equipment are overdue. The level of supervision of pupils at breaks and lunchtime is good, and this helps to ensure their safety. Arrangements for the induction of the children into the nursery are good. Pupils receive good pastoral care throughout their time in school. Members of staff know children well as individuals and develop very good relationships with them, and these strengths enable them to provide pupils with very good personal guidance. The vast majority of pupils feel very well supported. Nearly all of them say that there is an adult in school to whom they can turn for help and advice. There were a few negative responses on this issue in the pupils' questionnaire, but inspectors did not find any evidence during the inspection to support this minority view.
25. Close monitoring of pupils' progress significantly enhances the quality of academic and pastoral support. Some of the monitoring is informal, but is nevertheless very effective because of teachers' very good knowledge of pupils. This ensures that they identify individuals who are having problems and see that they receive appropriate help. There are good formal arrangements to back up the school's informal provision. Class teachers keep full records of pupils' achievements and behaviour, and there are good systems for the exchange of information between members of staff. This is the case with information on pupils who misbehave out of class. Class teachers receive summaries of the lunchtime supervisors' log of behaviour, giving

the names of pupils and nature of their misbehaviour, and these are already showing a reduction in the number of incidents. The school has good procedures for assessing and monitoring academic achievement. These provide an effective foundation for arrangements to promote progress, such as the system of merit points for effort and improved attainment. Members of staff give pupils good guidance on their academic work, and as a result the latter have a good understanding of how they can improve. Pupils are aware of and value this support. In the questionnaire nearly nine out of ten pupils said that teachers regularly showed them how to make their work better.

26. The school makes good arrangements to seek and act on pupils' views. It has recently increased the role of the school council, so that pupils, through their elected representatives, now have a say in major issues, such as teaching and learning. Members of staff are also receptive to the views of individual pupils. A large majority of the responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire said that teachers listen to pupils' ideas.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with parents and with other schools. Links with the local community are very good. The work of the school with its partners to increase opportunities for learning and to raise standards is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents make a very good contribution to their children's learning and this makes a significant contribution to their achievement.
- The school's information for parents on the curriculum, school routines and events is good.
- The website is a valuable source of information on the work of the school and on education generally.
- The school has very good links with other providers of education.
- The format of annual reports on pupils' progress prevents teachers from writing about information and communication technology as a separate subject.

Commentary

27. Communications with parents are good. The school provides plenty of information on pupils' learning and progress. It holds termly consultation evenings, and sends home each term a newsletter on the curriculum. It also organises workshops that aim to increase parents' understanding of their children's learning. Overall, arrangements to inform parents of pupils' progress are good. The annual written reports are adequate and meet legal requirements, but give relatively little space to what pupils have learnt and can do in information and communication technology. The subject is included as a separate item in the summary in the reports, but is combined with the section on science in the detailed text. The quality of information on school routines and events is very good and is effective in keeping parents in touch with developments in school. The Dawley Brook website is a valuable addition to the usual methods of communication between school and home. It contains information on staffing, extra-curricular activities and the work of the Home and School Committee. It also includes links to local and national websites that can help parents to support their children's learning.
28. The majority of parents value the school's efforts to keep them well informed. However a number of parents feel that they do not receive enough information on their child's progress. One in six parents also say that they do not feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, problems or complaints. Inspectors examined these concerns carefully, but found little evidence to support them. Discussions with parents indicated that many of them are very pleased with opportunities that they get to meet teachers informally to talk about children's progress. It was also apparent that the school works hard to strengthen home-school links. For instance the headteacher has re-introduced briefing evenings on National Curriculum tests for parents of pupils in Years 2 and 6. The school has also revised the format for the annual reports on progress after consultations with parents.
29. Parents are keen for children to make good progress at school. Their involvement with pupils' learning is very good and makes a positive contribution to standards. The majority of parents hear younger children read at home, and several volunteers help with lessons and extra-curricular activities. Parents readily respond to requests to provide artefacts and materials for use in lessons. This has been the case with the project to create two murals in school. One parent has supervised the designs and painting, while many others have donated paints. The

work of the Home and School Association also enhances the school's resources for learning. It is active and successful in organising fund raising and social events.

30. The school has developed a very good partnership with the local community. It has very strong links with a number of organisations whose members visit the school to lead assemblies and to talk to pupils. This was evident during the inspection when the local librarian presented certificates to children who had read six or more books during the summer holidays. Several local groups use the school premises as the venue for their work. Some of them, such as the Brownies and the Scouts, give pupils the opportunity to take part in activities that enhance their personal and social development. The school has few direct links with industry, but local employers give good support to the Home and School Association's events. The Association's summer newsletter contained a long list of businesses that had given prizes to its summer carnival.
31. The school has a very good partnership with other providers of education. It liaises effectively with local secondary schools over the transfer of Year 6 to secondary education. Work experience provides another link from which both sides benefit, as when secondary school students help with lessons. There is very good liaison with local colleges and universities over teacher training. The school co-operates closely with the nursery unit over the induction of children into the reception class. This aids new pupils to make good personal and academic progress in their new environment.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The new headteacher is providing very good leadership and there is very effective management of the school. The governance of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new headteacher leads and manages the school very well.
- Other staff are also developing leadership qualities.
- The school has a new and strong sense of common purpose.
- Good systems are in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.
- The headteacher is succeeding in bringing a more lively and exciting approach to learning.
- Finances are controlled and used very well.

Commentary

32. The new headteacher has already created an atmosphere where all staff feel enabled to develop their own leadership roles more effectively. They are also playing a stronger role in influencing improvements and the educational direction of the school. The headteacher is very well supported by the deputy headteacher, who is also developing her leadership responsibilities very well. For example, she co-ordinates the whole curriculum and supports all staff well in their professional development. The subject leaders have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. For example, they produce and implement an improvement plan for their subject, which is attached to the school's main improvement plan. In addition, they produce a half-yearly interim plan. This ensures that they are constantly involved in reviewing their subjects, identifying its strengths and weaknesses and setting clear targets for improvements and developments. The Yearly School Improvement Plan is therefore of good quality, all feel involved in its production and it ensures improvement and a clear direction for the school. In addition, there is a clear emphasis on every pupil being included, and doing as well as they can.

This is strengthened by the very good systems for monitoring the progress each pupil makes. These are used very well to identify what is working well and where improvements can be made.

33. The headteacher has ensured that teaching and learning is regularly monitored and evaluated. Lessons are observed routinely, teacher's planning is examined and the work pupils do in their books is analysed. Monitoring is carried out by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher or the subject leaders. In addition, certain subjects are examined in even greater depth when they become a specific focus for the year. This system ensures that what is taught in lessons is documented, fully understood by all, and areas for improvement are identified and acted upon.
34. The headteacher, as well as being fully committed to maintaining and improving achievement, is also influencing and encouraging staff to bring a broader and more imaginative approach to teaching. In this she is beginning to be successful. Many lessons seen during the inspection demonstrated bright and lively ideas, which stimulated and challenged pupils of all abilities, linking the work with life outside school, making it real and purposeful and above all, ensuring that learning is fun.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	682,681	Balance from previous year	45,599
Total expenditure	669,196	Balance carried forward to the next	59,084
Expenditure per pupil	2,390		

35. The finances available to the school are used very well. All educational developments are carefully costed and linked closely to the items identified on the Yearly School Improvement Plan. Financial arrangements in the school are very clear and are kept in very good order by the headteacher, chair of the governing body and the school administrator. There is currently a small surplus, which is clearly identified for spending on re-locating the nursery and reception classes together and for additional resources for information and communication technology. Money is spent wisely and carefully, staff are deployed appropriately and supported well. This is ensuring that the school is managed very well and gives very good value for money.
36. The governance of the school is good. Governors are committed to the school and carry out their statutory duties well. There are a good number of new governors, including a new chair. They are developing their roles and responsibilities well. They are committed to the school's principles of inclusion, raising achievement and developing the curriculum in a more exciting and lively way, all of which are key elements of the headteacher's vision. The governors are keen to extend and improve their performance further. For example, many have taken every opportunity to participate in training with the local education authority. They visit the school regularly and always write a clear account of their observations, which informs others of what they have done and of the important developments that are needed.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision in the nursery and reception classes is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision adds value to the achievement of every child.
- The quality of teaching and learning, in all the areas of learning, is very good.
- Very good provision is made for developing children's speaking and listening skills.
- There is a high quality of teamwork among staff.
- The provision is led and managed very well.
- Building work is scheduled to begin very soon to locate the nursery and reception classes together.

Commentary

37. Children over the age of three attend the nursery class part time, for either five morning or five afternoon sessions per week. They transfer to the reception class at either the September or January in the school year in which they will be five years old. About a quarter of the children in the nursery transfer into the reception classes in other schools, and a similar proportion of children enter the school's reception class having attended other pre-school provisions. At the time of the inspection, there were 60 children attending the nursery (30 each morning and 30 each afternoon), and 24 children in the reception class. The attainment of the children on entry to the nursery is broadly average.
38. The achievement of the children is good because they are taught very well and the provision is led and managed very effectively. Teachers' records, children's work and observations show that, most of the children meet the expected level for their age in all the areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. The assessments made by teachers show that the children have not only moved forward in their learning, by the end of the reception year, but have also widened and deepened their understanding. In addition, children enter Year 1 with a clear awareness of how to behave in school and are able to listen well and contribute confidently to class discussions. Teachers and assistants work very well together and all adults share a common purpose for wanting every child to give of their best. Adults assess very carefully what the children can do, and what they should learn next. These findings are used very well to plan the activities that follow and are recorded very well so that teachers can see, at a glance, how well each child is doing. Teachers' records show that the high quality of the provision has been sustained since the last inspection. However, insufficient lessons were seen to evaluate all of the areas of learning in full detail.

Personal, social and emotional development

39. Children learn to co-operate with each other and to work productively together because teachers and assistants provide very good role models and teach the children how to play together very well. For example, the teacher took the youngest nursery children outside and taught a group how to enjoy playground games such as 'The Farmer's in his Den'. The older nursery children are happy to come into the class in the morning and enjoy knowing the routines of what to do, how to greet others and where to sit in class. These skills continue to develop. In the reception class, children were able to keep their concentration in their activities for up to 20 minutes, took turns and chose, amicably, the roles each would play in the 'Doll's Hospital Corner'. The reception children also showed good levels of independence in trying first to do things for themselves, helping one another if stuck, and allowing the adults to spend uninterrupted time with those children needing support.

Communication, Language and Literacy

40. Teachers and assistants are very skilled in helping the children to develop this area of learning. The children are listened to carefully, and adults show they value what children say. This makes the children confident to say more. Also, adults speak clearly, using plain English that is easily understood. They introduce new vocabulary so that children learn how to use it. In the reception class, the teacher expects children to talk at greater length and in more detail. The children are given time to do this in a calm atmosphere that allows them to think carefully and extend their thoughts and the sentences they say. Songs and rhymes such as 'Tommy Thumb' are also used very well to understand the differences in meaning between words such as 'is' and 'are'. Children develop their reading and writing skills well because the daily activities chosen by teachers have a strong emphasis on children learning, for example, to form letters correctly and write their own name. Daily routines also help children to recognise words around the class and in books. Children enjoy stories and teachers read these very well so that the children learn much more than just the content of the book. For example, the reception teacher asked children to look at the illustrations, listen for particular words and predict the outcome of the story. As a result, they listened intently to the story and were delighted to recognise words such as 'out, down and over' as well as predicting which word would come next in the story.

Mathematical Development

41. Teachers provide very good daily routines that bring the children a successful understanding of number. For example, when distributing milk cartons, the children place each one on a number line and report back on how many there are, how many children are in the group, and how many cartons may be spare. Children also sort, match and count a wide variety of items and also use materials such as play-dough to form numerals.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

42. During the inspection, the children enjoyed the visit of a local Health Visitor, and finding out about her work looking after babies. The following day, teachers discussed this visit very well with the children and had prepared activities to build on this information such as, bathing dolls appropriately and learning the names of 'baby items'. Children were also encouraged to study the world around them and one group were fascinated with what they could see on shells and pebbles using a magnifying glass.

Physical Development

43. Children benefit from the regular provision of suitably challenging outdoor and indoor activities. In addition, they learn how to take part in a more structured physical lesson using apparatus in the school hall. In a lesson observed, the children were able to balance well and form stretching shapes. They could also think of a good variety of new shapes for themselves. The teacher's records showed that these children were lacking in confidence in these lessons a short while ago and had clearly achieved well to participate as they did.

Creative Development

44. Children sing with confidence and are beginning to follow the rise and fall in pitch in a melody. They often sing to themselves while playing and enjoy joining in, especially when songs have actions and repetition. Both classes have children's paintings, collages and drawings displayed well and these show that the children are developing their creative skills well. For example, the reception class have made self-portraits and these are painted well, with lively expressions, and a good attention to details, facial characteristics and hair styles.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are high, and pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Most pupils are extremely enthusiastic about writing and, by the end of Year 6, write very well.
- Pupils with lower attainment in writing get good additional literacy support, which helps them to overcome difficulties.
- Most pupils enjoy reading and develop very good reading skills.
- Pupils are given very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Basic literacy skills are developed well in subjects other than English.
- Consistent records are not always kept of how well pupils are reading.

Commentary

45. The literacy strategy is very well established throughout the school and teaching and learning is very good. As a result, standards are above average and achievement in English is good by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils continue to achieve well and reach well above average standards. The results of the national tests in 2003 are an improvement on those of 2002. Ninety-one per cent of pupils in Year 6 attained Level 4 or above, with thirty-seven per cent obtaining the higher level 5. The national data for the 2003 tests became available during the inspection and shows that these results are well above average. This is a rise in standards since the last inspection, especially in the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed knowledge and understanding above average for their age and in Year 6, many pupils already demonstrated work that was well above average.
46. The quality of teaching is very good and this improvement in quality is likely to raise further the achievement of pupils over time. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work. They have developed some very good ideas to motivate pupils and make their lessons very productive and successful. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class had learned the story of 'Farmer Duck'. The story was set out in sentences. Each sentence on a different poster. The teacher pretended she did not know the story and the pupils had to arrange the story for her in the correct order. This was not easy for the pupils and very challenging. However, they eventually succeeded and the process strongly reinforced reading skills, strengthened understanding of the story and the importance of linking sentences in the correct sequence. Pupils were totally motivated and concentrated hard to the end of the lesson. This is typical of the motivating ideas displayed by all teachers.
47. Teachers are very enthusiastic about developing imaginative writing for a wide range of different purposes, such as writing stories and poetry, letters, lists, diaries and plays. Some high quality writing was seen, which demonstrated that most pupils have a very wide vocabulary and chose words with a great deal of imagination and understanding. A range of punctuation is used accurately and both simple and complex sentences are joined together into paragraphs, which are lively and enjoyable to read. Teacher's planning is of good quality, especially in providing appropriate work for pupils with different abilities. In addition, lower attaining pupils often get extra support from well qualified classroom assistants. Consequently, all pupils receive

challenging work, which helps them to achieve well.

48. The well-stocked library is used well to encourage good regular reading habits and pupils use books for individual research, as well as for personal pleasure. Most pupils enjoy reading and all are encouraged to take books home regularly. Most read to a parent at home and to the teacher or other adults in school. However, although the teachers are confident that most parents listen to their children read and take a keen interest in their child's reading, the school does not keep formal records of this and consequently teachers cannot always be certain that all pupils receive this important support.
49. Pupils are provided with many additional opportunities to develop their enthusiasm and fascination with spoken language, not only in lessons, but also by listening to visiting theatre groups, attending performances in local theatres and taking part in drama productions in school. Many pupils take part in at least three school productions each year. Speaking and listening is developed very well in the literacy period where almost all lessons have a question and answer session, which stimulates constructive debate. In assemblies, pupils regularly make good contributions, which develop their confidence in addressing an audience.
50. Good leadership is provided for the subject. The quality of teaching, the planning and pupils' work is regularly monitored. Consequently, teachers feel well supported and all demonstrate a good depth of knowledge and understanding of the teaching of literacy.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. Many examples were seen of literacy being addressed successfully in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 have been studying World War II in history. They had to imagine they were evacuees and were conveying their feelings in a letter, back home to mother and father. Pupils produced lengthy writing, which developed the skills learned in literacy lessons in a lively and imaginative way, expressing their deep feelings and concerns about such things as missing home, losing their teddy bear or having to eat strange food. Similar inspirational writing was also seen in religious education and in pupils' geography books.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above the national average.
- The achievement of pupils is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching assistants support pupils very well.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their lessons and work very well together.
- The subject is very well led and managed.
- Standards are not yet as high as in English and science.

Commentary

52. Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are above the national average and have been maintained since the last inspection. Effective use is being made of the National Numeracy Strategy to develop pupils' mathematical skills. Although standards in

mathematics are above average they are not as high as those in English and science. The school has identified as a priority the need to raise standards in mathematics still further. The reason for standards not being as high as in English and science is that there was a period when mathematics lessons were often taught by a specialist teacher. This did not give other teachers the opportunity to teach the subject to their class and develop their own skills, knowledge and understanding of teaching the subject. After the specialist teacher left the school, there was a dip in results as not all teachers were used to teaching to the format of the National Numeracy Strategy.

53. Since then, the school has appointed a new co-ordinator for the subject and there is now a focus on improving the subject, especially practical and creative mathematics. As a result, inspectors see an increased confidence in teachers to teach the subject, and an improvement in teaching and learning. The school's targets for 2004 show an appropriate aim for well above average results in the national test by the current Year 6.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and has been maintained since the previous inspection. In one lesson observed in Years 1 and 2 and in one lesson observed in Years 3 to 6 teaching was very good. In one lesson observed in a Years1/2 class teaching was excellent.

Example of outstanding practice

In introducing the addition of money, the teacher used a very practical approach and pupils quickly understood how to add money and give change from one pound

The teacher role-played as a café owner, even dressing for the part. Tables were laid out with tablecloth, plates, cups and plastic cutlery for pupils to dine at and the teacher acted the part of a waitress. She acted her role so convincingly that the pupils were totally absorbed and believed they were in a café. She invited pupils to enter and to order breakfast from a menu. As the teacher gave the diners their orders she called out the prices of everything selected. The pupils watching were asked to help the diners total the cost of their meal and offered answers to help the "waitress" take the right money and to give the correct change. When incorrect answers were offered, the teacher used these well for teaching and discussion points. Pupils were then able to continue for themselves their role-play in groups as diners and waiters or waitresses

55. Lessons are well planned and well organised and work is well matched to different groups within a class. Teachers manage behaviour very well. As a result, pupils want to learn, feel challenged by tasks and behave very well. They work hard in lessons, support each other and achieve well. Very good use is made of learning support assistants to support pupils. For example, in the excellent lesson observed, one learning support assistant worked very well with a group of lower attaining pupils and supported them as they played a game involving money. Meanwhile, a second learning support assistant worked very well with a group of Year 1 pupils, introducing them to addition of money. This allowed the class teacher to work with a Year 2 group to teach addition and subtraction of money in a 'real life' situation through role-playing a class café. As a result achievement for all pupils in the lesson was very good. Although information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support the subject in the computer suite, no evidence was seen of ICT being used in the classroom to support mathematics lessons.
56. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well. She monitors planning and teaching, works alongside colleagues and teaches lessons for colleagues to observe in order to raise the quality of teaching and learning and to raise standards to be in line with English and Science. She is an excellent role model for the teaching of mathematics. She is ensuring that the elements of the National Numeracy strategy are being implemented fully in order to raise standards. She has analysed results from the

national tests to target relative weaknesses in the mathematics curriculum. The often practical nature of lessons contributes very well to pupils speaking and listening skills.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. The breadth of the curriculum ensures that pupils have a good all round knowledge in mathematics that they are able to use to support subjects such as science, history, design technology, music and geography. For example, in science pupils sort materials by their waterproofing properties and chart their results, in history pupils use timelines, dates and statistics in their research on the Aztecs and construct pie charts to show the day in the life of a monk. In geography they plot co-ordinates and in information and communication technology they use spreadsheets. As part of a Year 6 residential visit to York, pupils cost a visit to the Air Museum and to Rievaulx Abbey.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen and the test results for pupils in Year 6 are usually well above average.
- There is a good emphasis on practical investigations and experiments.
- Pupils are taught well, show good achievement over time, and learn how to think scientifically.
- Despite their success, some of the older pupils regard the subject as 'boring'.

Commentary

58. The results of national tests in 2003 are an improvement on those of 2002. Ninety seven per cent of the Year 6 pupils attained Level 4, with two thirds of the class attaining the higher Level 5. Although national data for the 2003 tests is not yet published, these results are well above average. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed knowledge and understanding above the average for their age. For example, all the pupils in Year 2 were able to make a basic circuit to light a bulb, understood the function of a switch, and showed awareness that a break in the circuit would stop the flow of electrons. The work of the Year 6 pupils is already well above average. Most of the class know that seeds are an attempt by a plant to ensure survival of a species and appreciate the impact of different soil types on growth, using terms such as 'nutrients, clay and loamy' with accuracy. In the lessons seen, all the pupils were suitably challenged and were achieving well. In particular, pupils were encouraged to think and reason for themselves. Good achievement is evident throughout the school, not only in the increase in test results, but also in the way that pupils learn to make hypotheses and then test them out with practical investigation and careful observation.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are planned well and most teachers include a lot of experiments, demonstrations and investigations that pupils find interesting. These motivate the pupils to work hard and improve their knowledge. For example, the Year 2 pupils were asked to make a switch in an electrical circuit and enjoyed investigating how this could be done. As a result, the pupils learnt a lot about which materials were conductors as well as concentrating on making and breaking the circuit. In a lesson for pupils in Year 4, the teacher asked a pupil to run into the wind holding a large book in front and efficiently demonstrated the impact of air resistance, which pupils were then led to consider in different applications such as a parachute. Teachers also make a point of the pupils finding things out for themselves. For example, in a lesson for Year 1, the teacher led the pupils to realise for themselves that they could only test reflective materials in a 'dark box' if a controlled source of light was introduced. This meant that the pupils learnt more about the nature and properties of light as a result. In all lessons, assistants worked very well with the teachers and supported pupils' learning very effectively. Teachers manage behaviour in practical lessons very well and this results in the pupils being able to concentrate on their investigations and learning.
60. Good leadership is provided for the subject. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement and science lessons now contain a good range of experiments and investigations. Teachers have been provided with standard ways for pupils to record their experiments and this is effective in making sure the pupils observe accurately and explain their findings. The subject co-ordinator has restructured the curriculum and keeps a careful check that pupils are not repeating topics unnecessarily. As a result, there has been a steady improvement most years in the national test results. Most pupils have very good attitudes towards the subject and work together cooperatively and with obvious enthusiasm in lessons. However, more can be done in making sure that all teachers present their lessons in such a way that the older pupils regard the subject as interesting and enjoyable.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average.
- Teachers are confident with information technology and use it well.
- The quality of teaching is good. As a result, pupils learn well and show good achievement.
- Development and improvement in the subject are very well led, and the subject co-ordinator is already addressing appropriate areas for further development.

Commentary

61. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have skills that are above average. In a lesson seen for Year 2 pupils, they were able to import pictures into their word processing, select the font, size and colour that would best present their work, and were able to programme a 'Roamer' using simple instructions. Pupils in Year 6 have standards that are well above average. For example, in a lesson seen, pupils were confidently and quickly adding a sound commentary to their 'Powerpoint' presentations. Work from the previous Year 6 shows that they made brochures for tourist attractions, using computers to produce work of high quality for specific audiences and purposes. Pupils achieve well and are suitably challenged to improve the quality of their work at all times. As a result, pupils show a high level of confidence and understanding about computers. For example, pupils in Year 4 understood how to select a printer other than the default setting, including the specific way in which it could be activated. Pupils also have a very clear understanding of how computers can be used for communication purposes, as well as for the handling of information.
62. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assistants often take charge of groups using the multi-media suite and do this very well, showing a very good level of knowledge and helping pupils continually to improve what they do. Teachers use computers routinely in their lessons, for example with an interactive white-board, or through a data projector onto a screen. In this way, they provide good role models for the pupils. Teachers set interesting tasks for pupils to do and, as a result, pupils are motivated and show very high productivity and application to their lessons. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 4, the teacher set the task of completing a newspaper article. The pupils had tight deadlines for their work and worked very hard, without supervision, to finish and print their final version to the required quality. In all lessons seen, pupils were really interested in their work and gave considerable effort independently. They also cooperated well with other pupils in sharing advice, tips and support.
63. Leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and keen for pupils to do as well as they can. Through very good self-evaluation, he has already identified what needs to be improved, and appropriate development work is on-going. As a result, there has been very good improvement since the last inspection so that teachers have increased their confidence and skills at the same time as standards for the pupils have risen. Resources for learning are of good quality and quantity and about to improve further. The accommodation is very good and the use made of the multi-media suite is continuing to raise standards. The next step for improvement, already planned by the coordinator, is for pupils to choose when to use computers as a natural tool for their work and to select the application(s) best suited to their needs.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects and all classes are timetabled to use the multi-media suite for this purpose. For example, Year 6 pupils' presentations were to

demonstrate to others what they had learnt about the German language; the computer club were using a 'paint' application to enhance digital images as art work; word processing is used to enhance literacy development; and pupils routinely use computers to handle data, draw graphs, and collect information from the Internet to supplement their work in most subjects.

HUMANITIES

65. In humanities, work was sampled in geography and history and religious education were reported in full. Due to the limited evidence available during the inspection it is not possible to make an overall judgment on teaching, learning, standards and achievement in geography. The geography curriculum is well planned and enriched by visits. Planning ensures that the geography curriculum is broad and balanced and is relevant to the pupils. Good use is made of visits. For example, to the Wye Forest Centre, to Bobbington Village, to Birmingham and to Ironbridge. The residential visits for Year 5 and Year 6 also support geography well.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above national averages.
- Teaching is good.
- Good use is made of visits and visitors.

Commentary

66. Standards in history are above the national average by Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils achieve well. They have a good knowledge of the key historical events and figures studied, and a good understanding of chronology. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
67. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and work is well matched to the different groups within a class. This results in pupils enjoying history lessons and being very well motivated and very well behaved. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good overall. In one lesson observed teaching was very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and bring it to life through story telling, role play and drama. In a very good Year 1 lesson observed, pupils worked in groups to act out the story of the arrest of Guy Fawkes and his fellow conspirators. When the teacher used a question and answer session in the lesson to assess pupils' understanding, they displayed a good knowledge of the key facts of the Gunpowder plot and the differences and similarities between life and religious tolerance in the past and now. The lesson also contributed well to pupils' speaking and listening skills. Although no direct teaching was observed in Years 3 to 6, the analysis of pupils' books, displays and teachers' planning indicates that teaching is good. Pupils are encouraged to research topics from reference books, the local library and the Internet. A Year 6 topic on 'The Aztecs' showed good use of research by pupils and a good interest in the topic.
68. Good use is made of visits and visitors to bring the subject to life and to capture pupils' interest and imagination. A Viking and Tudor re-enactment group visit the school and pupils are taken on a canal barge visit and visits to the Black Country Museum, Ironbridge and Bobbington Village.

Religious Education

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 6 standards are above those set out in the Locally Agreed Syllabus for Dudley.
- Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good and supports the good achievement of pupils.
- Visits are used well to enhance the religious education syllabus and the understanding pupils have of different faiths.
- The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well.

Commentary

69. By Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity, Sikhism and Judaism. Their achievement in religious education is good and has been maintained since the previous inspection. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 and the evidence available to judge standards, achievement and teaching was limited. Therefore no judgments can be made for Years 1 and 2.
70. Important aspects of the curriculum provided in religious education are good. Work effectively focuses on learning about and from religious and human experiences. The principle focus is the teaching of Christianity, with Judaism and Sikhism also studied in appropriate depth.
71. Teaching overall in Years 3 to 6 is good. Pupils are taught well to identify similarities and differences between their own beliefs and that of others. There is a very good expectation by teachers that pupils will respect the opinions and beliefs of others and this is evident in pupils' everyday behaviour and in their discussions about different faiths seen in lessons. Their work in religious education plays an important part in pupils' understanding of different cultures and beliefs. For example, in a very good Year 6 lesson about the symbolism in the preparation of a Jewish meal, pupils listened with respect to the different opinions offered by each other about their own and others' beliefs. Pupils' understanding of the importance of the church in Christianity and in the community is enhanced by the close links and visits that the school has established with the local Anglican, Methodist and Calvary churches and the Gurdwara, Synagogue and Mosque in Dudley.
72. The leadership and management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of the subject and has ensured that the curriculum for religious education is enhanced by activities, visits and visitors, which stimulate pupils' interest. She keeps up-to-date in her knowledge by regularly attending courses organised by the local authority. The subject is well resourced with artefacts that stimulate pupils' interest. Teachers make good use of opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills in lessons, which supports the high standards in English.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. Physical education was inspected individually and is reported in detail below. Two lessons were seen in design and technology and music, and one lesson was observed in art.
74. Evidence on standards in art was obtained by analysing the work of pupils in each class. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and could be higher. In some classes, pupils are taught how to observe more closely and apply this to their work. For example, in Reception and Year 1, the children have been encouraged to look more closely at each other and their self-portraits reflect this with good proportion, scale and recognisable facial features. In Year 4, the pupils have studied the work of Jackson Pollock and their paintings show a good attention to shape, form and colour and demonstrate the pupils' developing artistic appreciation.

In a lesson seen in Year 5, the pupils were given very good encouragement to develop their observation skills. As a result, they drew bottles with good attempts at depicting three dimensions and transparency. However, in some other classes, pupils revert to immature drawings and these lack form, scale and proportion. Examples were also seen of the inappropriate match of materials and techniques with, for example, pupils colouring large areas, on dull paper, with fine pencils. These variations between classes prevent the pupils from building continuously on their skills and lead to standards being lower than they could be. There is an appropriate curriculum in place and there is a noticeable improvement in the quality of subject leadership within the last year. However, the impact of this improved leadership has yet to be seen in all classes and the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection are still apparent.

75. Through an examination of teacher's planning, a discussion with the subject leader and a scrutiny of photographs of pupils' work, it is clear that there is good provision and coverage for all aspects of design and technology for all age groups throughout the school year. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils are beginning to understand that vehicles are made up of different parts, such as axles and wheels and they also learn basic sewing techniques. In Years 3 to 6, pupils build on their earlier experiences to evaluate products with levers and linkages and investigate, disassemble and evaluate a range of musical instruments in order to learn how they function. Throughout the school, food technology plays an important part which incorporates basic hygiene and food handling techniques, and makes a good link with the teaching of science. In the two lessons seen, one was of very good quality and the other of an excellent standard. The excellent lesson involved the pupils thinking about a design to make glove puppets. As a result of the teacher's very lively and expressive communication, pupils thought out their ideas very well, were keen to share their ideas and discuss the importance of choosing the right materials. As a result, pupils made rapid progress with their designs.
76. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader is well qualified and is monitoring the subject this term, with a close examination of teacher's planning and the observation of lessons. The curriculum is planned well and the subject is enriched well with visitors and visits.
77. In music, observation of the choir shows that the pupils sing with a confident awareness of how to perform. Their teacher is a talented musician with infectious enthusiasm that leads the pupils to try as hard as they can to improve the quality of their performance. As a result, they were able to sing 'Baby it's Cold Outside' with full question and answer, and accurate two part harmony. Pupils in Year 3 demonstrated, in a lesson, that they could hold a steady beat and clap counter rhythms. In a lesson for pupils in Year 6, the pupils could play the notes required on keyboards, guitars and tuned percussion instruments to make a chord of C major. However, in this lesson, organisation was slow and pupils had to wait a long time before they could start playing. As a result of the missed time, pupils (especially those who can play an instrument) were underachieving in this lesson.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils show good achievement.
- Teachers use good ideas that motivate and challenge pupils to achieve well.

- The quality of subject leadership is good.

Commentary

78. It was not possible to make a judgement of standards or achievement in all aspects of physical education. However, standards in dance and games are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They are also above average in swimming by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well in all these areas. For example, pupils in Year 1 are able to pass the ball to their partner with good control and direction and to trap and stop a ball sent to them. In dance, pupils in Year 4 were seen developing a sequence of ideas in time to percussion instruments appropriately and accurately with a great deal of imagination and flair. In swimming, almost all pupils are able to swim 25 metres before they leave the school and most can swim much further.
79. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. A great strength is the very good relationship that exists between pupil and teacher. This results in pupils making a great deal of effort to demonstrate to their teacher and to each other that they are determined to improve their performance. Teachers give good demonstrations, participate fully in the activity and have high expectations of pupils' effort and behaviour. Lessons are carefully planned so that there is clear progression as pupils develop increasingly complex skills. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 4, the teacher used a range of musical instruments linking their beat to a variety of group movements. Pupils found this exciting and stimulating and they remained focused and interested to the end of the lesson.
80. Good leadership is provided for the subject. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and dedicated to maintaining and improving standards and supporting her colleagues. She has ensured that resources are good, and that adequate training is available. For example, members of staff have had training in gymnastics and dance skills. She has ensured that the physical education curriculum is suitably enhanced and extended. For example, there are after-school clubs in cross-country, football, netball and gymnastics. Outside coaches are brought in for dance and rugby, and are also used to provide 'taster sessions' for pupils in Years 4 to 6 in netball, cricket, tennis and basketball. The wide range of activities are also suitably linked to the theme of healthy bodies within the 'Fit Kids' scheme.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

81. Members of the school council are diligent in sounding the opinions of the classes that they represent. They have a real influence on the work of the school, as when they helped to revise the statement of the school's aims. The school has taken part in Dudley's 'Healthy School Award' and has organised themed weeks to promote a healthy and safe life style. A 'Community Focus Week' and visits by the emergency services and drama groups have focused on healthy living, drug and alcohol misuse and 'Stranger danger'. 'Circle time', where pupils sit in a group or circle and discuss themes important to themselves and others, is used well in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Although used in Years 3 to 6, the large class numbers reduce its effectiveness so that circle time is a less intimate occasion for the pupils.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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