

INSPECTION REPORT

GUNS VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

West Bromwich

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 131178

Headteacher: Mr Barry Samuel

Lead inspector: Mrs Rowena Onions

Dates of inspection: 21st –23rd June 2004

Inspection number: 256304

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 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 389 full-time equivalent

School address: 2 Hanbury Road
West Bromwich
West Midlands
Postcode: B70 9NT

Telephone number: 0121 5531427
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Mark White

Date of previous July 1998
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Guns Village Primary School is a school of well above average size, with 427 pupils on roll, 76 of whom attend part time in the nursery. The school caters for pupils from the age of three to eleven years. Although the school is mixed, there are significantly more boys than girls in most year groups. Pupils come from very mixed cultural heritages and there are 75 pupils for whom English is an additional language. Most pupils live close to the school. An above average number of pupils leave or join the school at times other than at the usual times of admission and transfer. Those entering the school after the reception year frequently have lower levels of attainment than pupils already in the school. The socio-economic context of the school is well below average, with a significant number of pupils having troubled social backgrounds. The percentage of pupils taking free school meals is above average, being 35 percent. The pupils enter the reception class with a wide range of attainment but, overall, this is well below average. Many of the children have poorly-developed language and very limited social experience. There are 35 pupils (ten per cent) currently identified as having special educational needs. This is below the national average and is so because of the strength of the school's provision. The school has pupils with a wide range of special needs. Six have a statement of special educational needs, including two who have been placed in the school because they have behavioural difficulties. The school has enhanced provision for educating pupils with such difficulties, but these pupils are fully included in classes. The school has a Quality Mark (2002) and Investor in People status. It was awarded Department for Education and Skills (DfES) School Achievement Awards in 2001 and 2002. The school is housed in two separate buildings a short car drive apart. Building works to bring the school onto one site are due to commence in July 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18354	Rowena Onions	Lead inspector	English Art and design
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12367	Tony Green	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a good quality of education and good value for money. Teaching is good overall and ensures that pupils achieve well, especially in English, mathematics and science. They attain average standards in most subjects by the time they leave the school. Pupils learn to work hard and behave very well. The school benefits from good leadership and management and is held in high esteem by parents. The school's split site has been a barrier to raising standards that the school has had to overcome.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teachers help pupils learn how to work, as well as helping them to make good progress.
- Pupils like school. They develop good attitudes to work and learn to behave very well.
- The good leadership and management of the headteacher, key staff and governors ensure that the school continues to develop and improve despite the difficulties caused by the accommodation.
- Children in the nursery and reception classes are given a good start to their education.
- Standards in speaking and listening are below average.
- As a result of the determination of the headteacher and staff, pupils get on very well together, irrespective of their gender or background.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well as a team to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well.
- The curriculum, although meeting statutory requirements, is not as well balanced and exciting as it could be, in part because coordinators do not have sufficient time away from their classes to develop work in their subjects.

The school has shown good improvement since its last inspection. Standards have improved in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT). There have been improvements in teaching, particularly for older pupils. The quality of teachers' planning is better. Pupils' behaviour has improved and there is greater awareness of multicultural issues. The role of subject coordinators is greatly improved, but there remains a need to increase the time available for coordinators to fulfil their roles. The school has successfully addressed the issues raised in the last report.

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	E	C	A
Mathematics	E	D	D	B
Science	D	D	C	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Overall, pupils achieve well. Inspection evidence shows improving standards and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that is now average for both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils. Standards in science are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. In English and science, pupils do particularly well in comparison to similar schools nationally. Pupils of lower

attainment and those with special educational needs do well, as do pupils for whom English is an additional language. Children in the nursery and reception years are successfully helped to make good progress in all aspects of their development, and very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Despite this, many will not attain the goals children are expected to meet by the end of reception.

Pupils' personal qualities are good. Behaviour is very good. Pupils are very diligent and understand the importance of working hard. They enjoy school and happily join in with all that is offered to them. Pupils' moral and social development is very good. Their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Rates of attendance increase as pupils get older and overall attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils arrive punctually.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching is very good in the nursery and good in the reception classes and in Years 2 to 6. Teachers manage pupils very well and pay very good attention to the teaching of basic skills. Teaching assistants have good skills and are used well to enable pupils to be taught in smaller groups. This is effective in raising standards. Some of the teaching in Year 1 is, however, not appropriate to the age of the pupils and therefore teaching in this year group is only satisfactory. The school has already identified ways of improving this. The school uses assessment well to identify pupils who need extra help and to put pupils into ability groups. New initiatives are beginning to assist pupils to understand how they can improve their work, but the current system is too complex to be fully effective. The curriculum is satisfactory, but the successful focus on raising standards in English and mathematics has caused a lack of balance and variety. Care and support are good, as are links with parents and the community. The school's accommodation is currently unsatisfactory, but building to bring the school onto one site will have begun before the publication of this report.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, key staff and governors have their eyes firmly fixed on raising standards and there have been many successful initiatives, supported by staff, to enable this. The leadership and management of a school housed in two buildings a car drive apart has been very complex and time consuming. It is to the credit of all, but particularly the headteacher and deputy headteacher, that good school improvement has been enabled despite the difficulties. Coordinators are very hard working, but have had too little time away from their classes to develop their subjects. This is particularly true of those whose subjects have not been the focus of school improvement. Governance is good and ensures that statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with the education provided for their children, particularly liking the ways in which their children are encouraged to work hard and do well. Pupils like school and are appreciative of the work their teachers do for them. They enjoy working and playing together.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards in speaking and listening;
- improve the balance of and the variety in the curriculum;
- give coordinators sufficient time away from their classes to further develop work in their subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement throughout the school is good. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, as do those for whom English is an additional language. Standards in English and mathematics are average in both Year 2 and Year 6, as are standards in science in Year 2. Standards in science in Year 6 are above average and pupils have achieved very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Over recent years, standards in English, mathematics and science have risen more quickly than they have in other schools nationally.
- Compared to pupils in schools in similar contexts, Year 6 pupils attain well above average standards in English and science and above average standards in mathematics.
- Pupils acquire secure skills in reading and writing.
- Pupils achieve well in learning to calculate with appropriate speed and accuracy.
- Standards in speaking and listening are below average throughout the school.
- By Year 6, pupils are interested and knowledgeable scientists.
- Very good provision in the nursery and reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 ensure that children with English as an additional language learn English rapidly.
- Pupils with a wide range of special educational needs, including those with behavioural and emotional difficulties, do well.

Commentary

1. When children enter the school in their nursery year, they have well below average levels of attainment. They have particularly limited language and very limited social experience. They are well taught and, as a result, make good progress in most areas of their development. Despite this, few will meet the national goals for this age of child by the end of the reception year. Their communication, language and literacy skills remain a particular area of weakness because they had so far to go when they entered the school. There is particularly effective provision for children with English as an additional language in the nursery and reception year but, despite rapid progress, their attainment remains below average.
2. Standards in English and mathematics in Year 2 and Year 6 have shown steady improvement. The school has twice been in receipt of a DfES School Achievement Award to mark this improvement. The school management has taken the need to raise standards very seriously and every effort has been put into achieving the success seen. In 2003, standards at the end of Year 2 were average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. In comparison with schools in similar circumstances, standards were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Standards continue to rise and in the 2004 national assessments for Year 2 pupils (for which there is as yet no national comparison) are higher in both writing and mathematics and have been maintained in reading.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.6 (15.8)	15.9 (15.8)
writing	14.2 (14.7)	14.8 (14.4)
mathematics	16.6 (15.6)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- In 2003, standards in Year 6 were average in English and science and below average in mathematics. When compared with their performance at the end of Year 2, pupils had made well above average progress in English and science and above average progress in mathematics. Inspection evidence is that these standards have been maintained overall and improved in mathematics, where attainment is now average. Current Year 6 pupils have also made good progress since Year 2.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.5 (24.4)	27.0 (27.0)
mathematics	26.0 (26.1)	27.0 (26.7)
science	29.6 (28.5)	28.8 (28.3)

There were 48 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- As a result of the good education provided, pupils steadily gain skills in reading and writing. A clear focus on basic skills such as phonics (the link between sounds and letters), spelling and handwriting means that by Year 6, pupils are able to read and write effectively and use these in a wide range of different contexts. In mathematics, daily practice ensures that pupils are competent in calculating and able to apply their knowledge to mathematical problems efficiently. In science, pupils have a good range of knowledge. They investigate thoughtfully and the standard of writing about their investigations is particularly good.
- Not as much focus has been given to the improvement of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Teachers are aware of the need to improve pupils' vocabulary and this is a feature of many lessons. Overall, pupils achieve in a satisfactory way in developing language. Their achievement is limited by a lack of opportunity to discuss or talk about their thinking. Standards in speaking and listening are below average in both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils at the early stages of English language acquisition achieve well overall. Achievement in learning English in Years 1 and 2 is very good, especially because of the support given by the coordinator and the teaching assistants. This ensures that pupils have full access to the curriculum. As a result of the very good foundations laid in Years 1 and 2, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are generally at the intermediate and higher stages of English language acquisition. Good support ensures that they continue to achieve well.
- The school identifies a relatively small number of pupils as having special educational needs. This is in part because the teaching of lower-attaining pupils is well thought out and prevents these pupils from having special needs. Throughout the school, pupils are divided into sets for English and mathematics and lower-attaining pupils are often taught in small groups. This helps them to make good progress. Pupils who are identified as

having special educational needs also benefit from this arrangement and are given additional teaching that ensures that they too make good progress overall. In English, the extra support is particularly successful and assists pupils to achieve very well in learning to read and write. Setting arrangements also ensure that pupils with higher attainment achieve well. During the inspection, there was no evidence in class of differences between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds achieve well.

8. Standards in ICT, music, religious and physical education meet expectations and pupils achieve in a satisfactory way.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development and attitudes are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Standards of behaviour are very good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy learning and are interested in all the activities that the school provides.
- The school works hard to promote good relationships, and mutual respect and understanding.
- Behaviour is very good in class, in the playground and around the school.
- There is no bullying and, irrespective of sex or background, pupils get on very well together.
- The school misses some opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative.

Commentary

9. The pupils' keenness to learn is evident in their enjoyment of lessons, their participation in the extra-curricular activities and their very positive attitudes towards adults and each other. The commitment and enthusiasm of the teachers in helping pupils to achieve higher standards is an important factor in setting the tone of the school. Teachers have high expectations and, because pupils appreciate all the work that is done on their behalf, they respond with equal dedication. Their environment is stimulating, with well-made displays, although opportunities to fully reflect the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the pupils are sometimes missed. The school rewards achievement of all kinds with praise and awards.
10. From the time the children arrive in the school, they are expected to behave well and as a result, behaviour is very good. Movement around the school is very orderly and a calm, relaxed atmosphere pervades all activities. The pupils play very well together in the grounds and play areas and are very well supervised. At the infants' site, the playgrounds are small and each year group has to take turns to use them. Teaching assistants organise games and quiet areas so that no one need feel left out. Pupils help to devise the classroom and other rules and all are familiar with the ways in which the school can be helped to run smoothly. When they are supposed to be sitting quietly reading, that is what they do! Children in the nursery and reception classes are very well taught in personal, social and emotional development and many are on course to meet the national goals in this area of learning by the end of their reception year.

11. Pupils' calmness and compliance are accompanied by a willingness to take responsibility, although there are fewer opportunities for this than might be expected. Pupils say there is no bullying. Anything that does worry them is taken straight to the teachers and problems are sorted out. The school has a mix of pupils from a range of different cultural backgrounds, as well as a high proportion of boys, but there is no racial or other harassment. Pupils get on well together because the school promotes understanding of cultural differences as well as harmony between the sexes. Pupils have very good moral values and an understanding of others' feelings. There have been no recent exclusions.
12. The school has good systems for managing pupils who have particular difficulties in controlling their emotions and behaviour. The special educational needs coordinator and some teaching assistants have particular skills in this field. This also benefits other pupils and helps to ensure the quality of behaviour for all. Other pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to work and try hard to succeed.
13. The pupils' personal development is well fostered in most aspects of school life. Older pupils say they enjoy the respect of adults, which adds to their maturity. There are good opportunities for social development through clubs and sports activities, as well as field trips, camping and visits to museums and galleries. The well-planned programme of personal, social and health education also helps to prepare pupils for life in general and the responsibilities of living in a community. The newly-formed school council is beginning to give pupils a say in how the school is run and has helped to improve school meals and provide more play facilities. In lessons and on visits, pupils have satisfactory opportunities to learn about their own cultural traditions and those of others. The school draws on the pupils' experience of different religions and customs to help develop their knowledge. Teachers do not, however, always plan or identify the specifically cultural focus of activities, so that some opportunities to develop pupils' understanding are missed. All pupils take part in an assembly every day and these are varied and interesting, with opportunities for pupils to participate by singing and playing instruments. Assemblies provide satisfactory opportunities for spiritual development through a range of universal themes, songs and opportunities for contemplation and reflection.
14. The school's provision for the development of pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities has improved well since the last inspection. The pupils' personal development has improved along with their behaviour, attitudes and cultural development.
15. Attendance is satisfactory. Although absences are well above the national average for similar schools, the rate of absence drops as pupils reach Years 5 and 6. A significant minority of parents disregard the advice given by the school and continue to take holidays in term time. In the latest year (for which data is not complete) the school has been much stricter in its definition of what constitutes unauthorised absence and this has helped to encourage better attendance. The more stringent policy recently agreed by governors and now in place is having a beneficial effect on the number of holidays taken. The school co-operates effectively with the educational welfare officer in working with families to improve the attendance of their children. As a result, the poor rate of attendance in the junior classes improves as pupils progress through the school and, by Year 6, the rate is now above the national average for similar schools. Punctuality is good, even though some parents have to deliver children to both sites.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.8
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0
National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good overall. The curriculum is satisfactory and is extended well by extra-curricular activities. The school provides a good level of care. Links with parents and the community are good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is very good in the nursery and good in reception and in Years 2 to 6. It is satisfactory in Year 1. The use of assessment is also satisfactory overall, although there are some good elements within this.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very consistent teaching of basic skills in English, mathematics and science.
- Teachers manage pupils very well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in all the subjects they teach.
- In the best lessons, teachers use questioning well to promote learning as well as to check understanding.
- Teachers do not always provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to talk in lessons.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those who have special educational needs are given good support.
- Some lessons are overlong and activities chosen to fill the time are not always well suited to the length of the lesson.
- The school uses assessment data well to identify pupils who need extra help and to pinpoint areas of general weakness in attainment.
- Procedures to ensure that pupils understand how to improve their work are not yet consistent.

Commentary

16. The drive to raise standards in English, mathematics and science has been focused on the quality of teaching and the learning of basic skills. Teachers are very consistent in their approach and hold very high expectations of the quality of work the pupils will produce. Pupils make very good efforts to live up to these expectations. They produce good quantities of work in all subjects and thus have many opportunities to practise what they have been taught. Teachers plan well to ensure that the development of basic skills is systematic. Books show that pupils in all year groups, including Year 1, make good gains in learning these skills.
17. Pupils are very well managed throughout the school. The strength of relationships means that pupils are happy to do as they are asked in class, and lessons are run in a well-controlled way, allowing pupils to concentrate well in a calm, purposeful atmosphere. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are taught well and a consistent approach means that

disruptions are very rare. Pupils' very good behaviour contributes significantly to their rate of learning.

18. Teachers take good care to be knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. This means that they are able to add interesting detail to their explanations and thus motivate pupils further. Teaching assistants too are well prepared and contribute significantly to overall learning by the teaching they do with small groups of pupils. Management decisions about the deployment of staff allow for this targeted approach to small groups. This is particularly effective in supporting pupils of lower attainment and those with special educational needs. Pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition receive good support from teachers, teaching assistants and the two coordinators for ethnic minority achievement. This results in very good achievement in Years 1 and 2 and good achievement overall. Pupils who are at the intermediate stage of English acquisition are regularly monitored to ensure that they continue to make good progress.
19. The most effective lessons seen were characterised by the good use of questioning to assist pupils to think more deeply and to articulate their thoughts. This is an element of teaching that is not, however, used consistently throughout the school. Although teachers are aware of the need to teach vocabulary, not all are sufficiently aware of the need to teach other aspects of oral communication. Additionally, insufficient focus is placed on pupils' knowledge of correct grammar in speech and, at times, staff are not sufficiently careful in presenting pupils with a good example by ensuring that their own speech is grammatically correct.
20. The school timetable includes some long lessons. Whilst some teachers are good at ensuring that this time is appropriately used by presenting pupils with a variety of activities during the lesson, others do not do this sufficiently well. Good practice was seen in the reception class and time is used well here, with exploratory and self-initiated work being well balanced with 'teacher talk'. Less good provision is made in Year 1 and pupils are sometimes expected to work in a way that is better suited to older pupils. Very occasionally this results in unsatisfactory lessons. Year 1 pupils' books show good progress in basic skills, but their learning overall is only satisfactory. The school has been aware of the relative inadequacies of the teaching in this year group and, prior to the inspection, good plans had been made to ensure better future provision.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 57 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13 (23%)	28 (49%)	14 (25%)	2 (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.

21. The school has in place systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils and for analysing the progress of groups in English and mathematics. Data from end-of-year assessments has been used well for this purpose. Teachers use the information to plan appropriate levels of work for their pupils and the use of data in this way has been instrumental in raising standards.
22. In the best lessons, teachers make it very clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and why. There is not, however, consistency in this throughout the school and occasionally

teachers are less clear, particularly about why pupils are being asked to learn something. This reduces pupils' understanding and means that they are not fully able to target their efforts. A relatively new system has been introduced in which pupils take part in the assessment of their work and thus gain an understanding of how to improve their work. The system is due to be reviewed but the assessment coordinator has already rightly identified that it is a little complex and presents pupils with a great deal of information which some struggle to understand. Some marking, for example in Year 6 English, is of very high quality and very clearly points out to pupils where they have succeeded and how they could further improve the work. Although all work is conscientiously marked, not all marking is as informative to the pupils as the best examples.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Enrichment activities are good. Staffing and resources are satisfactory; accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for pupils' individual needs that ensures that all pupils can access all activities.
- The curriculum in the nursery and reception classes supports learning in all areas of development well.
- The emphasis on literacy and numeracy has caused some curricular imbalance.
- The school provides a wide and interesting range of extra-curricular clubs.
- The school's accommodation is currently unsatisfactory because the two sites make the management of the school very complex.

Commentary

23. Curricular strengths outweigh weaknesses. The curriculum, including religious education, meets statutory requirements and is satisfactory overall. Improvements since the last inspection have also been satisfactory. The organisation of the curriculum for English, mathematics and science has been a key factor in improving achievement. The necessity to raise standards has resulted in a concentration on these subjects. This has caused there to be some imbalance in the overall curriculum. Although all aspects of all subjects are covered, the time allocated to some is less than is usually seen. This means that achievement in areas other than the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is only satisfactory. The imbalance has particular impact in physical education, where the time allocated to the subject is well below the nationally-recommended two hours per week. The effect of good teaching in physical education is reduced as a consequence.
24. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language is good. Good thought has been given to the curricular opportunities provided for these pupils. Pupils placed at the school because they have particular behavioural difficulties are provided for well. This good attention to the needs of all groups of pupils ensures that all achieve well.
25. There are many opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their skills in English and mathematics by using these in other subjects. This has helped to raise standards. The school had not, however, fully considered ways in which this work could be coordinated with the programmes in English and mathematics to make better use of time

to create better curricular balance. As a result of the emphasis on literacy, opportunities for pupils to be more creative are limited. In art, for example, more emphasis is put on pupils' writing about their work than extending their creativity. As standards are now raised, the school is now looking forward to developing a more imaginative curriculum that will widen pupils' experiences across all subjects.

26. The curriculum for pupils in the nursery and reception classes is good and provides the children with a good balance of types of activity, both taught and self-initiated. Particularly good use is made of outdoor facilities for children in the nursery class. The present poor access to outside accommodation makes this more problematic in the reception classes. Although teachers make efforts to ensure that the children have some access to outdoor learning, the amount of this is currently restricted.
27. The good range of extra-curricular activities includes sport and music. The range of sporting activities is good and helps to make up for a lack of time in the curriculum for the good number of pupils who attend them. The good range of visits and visitors to the school enhances the curriculum and extend pupils' learning in a variety of ways. The Year 3 visit to a Tudor manor house, for example, greatly enhanced pupils' interest in the period. Good use is made of visiting specialists in music to enhance the provision and to assist teachers in improving their own teaching skills.
28. The school has a good number of staff, both teachers and teaching assistants, and in general they are deployed well. Resources are satisfactory and are well organised. Most teachers make good use of them to support pupils' learning. The library areas are satisfactory and good use is made of the new computer suite by pupils and staff. This is having a positive effect on pupils' ICT skills. The school's split-site accommodation is unsatisfactory and has made the development of the curriculum significantly more difficult because it is difficult for coordinators to have a full overview of work in the building in which they do not teach. Additionally, the running of the two schools has made day-to-day administration time and energy consuming, particularly for the headteacher. An extension to the junior school site so that the school will be on one site will have begun before the publication of this report.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for the care, welfare and health of the pupils. The views of pupils are valued and they are involved well in decision making. The provision for pupils' support and guidance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils feel secure and they are well cared for.
- Pupils are confident in seeking advice from school staff if they have a concern.
- Support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good overall
- The school council enables pupils to be involved in the work of the school.
- Systems to advise pupils and to inform them about their progress are not yet fully effective.

Commentary

29. There is a happy and industrious atmosphere in the school which encourages learning and helps to build pupils' self-esteem. Staff are vigilant about health and safety matters. Child protection procedures are good and staff are well aware of their responsibilities. There is a well-designed module to encourage healthy eating included in the personal, social and health education programme. As a result, one of the first items for debate in the new school council concerned the food offered at break and lunchtime. The council's recommendations have been put into effect. Pupils' suggestions for the new school building, such as the need for a quiet playroom, are being considered by management. Staff are well qualified to attend to pupils if they are sick or injured. Records are kept and parents informed.
30. Because pupils have such good relationships with staff, they are confident in seeking advice or further explanation if they have not fully understood a teaching point. Staff know the pupils well and treat them as individuals. This means they are able to monitor and support their personal development. Because some assessment procedures are new and rather complex, they are not so well able to advise pupils on their academic progress. Targets are set in some subjects, which pupils find useful, but the wording of some targets is not clear. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with behavioural difficulties, are supported and guided well.
31. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given good support and guidance overall. The two coordinators for ethnic minority achievement analyse results in English, mathematics and science by ethnicity and gender to ensure that pupils at the early and intermediate stages of language acquisition are given appropriate support and can fully access the curriculum. They also monitor attendance by ethnicity and gender to ensure that pupils who return from a long absence from school are not disadvantaged.
32. Induction arrangements are good. Parents are very satisfied with the help they receive before their children come to school and as they settle to their new surroundings. Year 2 pupils are also well prepared for the move to the junior school. Pupils who are about to make the move are able to express their misgivings and these are carefully responded to by their teachers. Pupils in the junior school have a natural concern for each other and newcomers to the school are well cared for in the playgrounds. Pupils are well prepared for their life in secondary school.
33. The school successfully finds ways of involving pupils in the way the school is run. The new school council has made a good start and is already respected for the work it does. Members are realistic in the matters they discuss and the recommendations they make. They are confident that the school will make changes if appropriate. The council gives pupils an insight into the way the school works as a community. This is further encouraged by the many after-school clubs and activities that are provided by the school, often working in co-operation with members of the community.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents, other schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of parents are supportive of the school and make a good contribution to their children's education.
- Parents' views are taken into consideration well when planning developments.

- Links with parents of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are good.
- There are good and widening links with the local community.
- The school's links with other schools and colleges assist teachers to raise standards, particularly in physical education.
- A significant minority of parents insist on taking their children for holidays in term time.

Commentary

34. Parents are highly satisfied with the school and all that it provides for their children. Most parents value the education and the proposed developments at the school and are keen to secure the best for their children. This has a beneficial effect on the partnership with the school and its efforts to achieve higher standards. Parents agree that the good teaching helps their children to make good progress. They also agree that, with the encouragement of all the staff, their children become increasingly mature and independent.
35. Parents are kept well informed about the school and its activities. Parents are kept up to date on the work their children are doing. Annual reports focus mainly on what each child knows and can do. There are suggestions in the reports for the three core subjects about how a pupil could improve progress. Attendance is recorded in the reports, but there is nothing that clearly links poor attendance to a pupil's general progress. Most parents attend review meetings to discuss the work in the year ahead and progress to date. Parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language are kept well informed of their children's progress through meetings with class teachers and the coordinators for ethnic minority achievement. Both coordinators speak a number of languages and act as translators between teachers and parents where necessary.
36. The school is successful in encouraging parents to become more involved with their children's education. A parent and toddler group meets in school. Parents are encouraged to increase their ICT skills by working with their children in school. Parents feel that they are consulted. The school has sought their views through questionnaires, particularly on the proposed rebuilding of the school on one site, and the headteacher issued feedback to keep parents informed. Parents provide valuable help in the classrooms and some have completed training, which makes their contribution all the more useful. Parents' meetings and social events are well attended. Parents raise funds and contribute help on school trips and at sports meetings. A small number of parents, however, are not as supportive of the school when they take holidays, sometimes for an extended period, during term time. This affects the progress their children can make.
37. The school is working to increase its links with the community. The community makes use of the buildings and sports areas on a regular basis. An adult-learning partnership is well established with the local colleges. These facilities will be further developed when the new buildings are completed. In the meantime, improved links with Sandwell and Dudley Colleges have resulted in A-level students helping pupils to develop their sporting activities. This coaching is very popular, not only benefiting pupils' sports skills but also increasing their self-confidence and social development. A pre-nursery meets in the school, which helps to prepare children for the early years classes. The good links with secondary schools ensure that pupils transfer with confidence to the next stage of their education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher, senior staff and subject coordinators are good, as is the governance of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has high aspirations and a clear vision of the way the school must develop in order to raise standards.
- The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher well.
- The work, leadership and management of senior staff and coordinators have successfully promoted school improvement.
- Coordinators do not have sufficient time during the school day to enable them to further develop their subjects while maintaining a reasonable workload.
- The governing body makes a good contribution to the management of the school.
- Finances are controlled and managed well.

Commentary

38. The energetic headteacher provides strong and effective leadership and is clear about the sort of school he wants to create and the way staff will achieve this. Since the amalgamation of two schools in 1998, he has ensured that the separate sites function well as one school. He manages to maintain a high profile at both sites, which results in all staff having the same sense of purpose and vision for the school and pupils knowing the headteacher well. He has created a team of staff who work very well together to make sure that they are providing a good quality of education for all pupils.
39. The deputy headteacher supports the headteacher well and makes a positive contribution as a senior manager and Year 3 to Year 6 coordinator. She ensures that daily routines, especially in the junior school, run smoothly and unobtrusively, whilst the headteacher retains the overview of both sites. They are ably supported by senior staff. This good leadership and management results in a school in which staff work well together and where pupils achieve well.
40. Leadership and management of the foundation stage are good. Teaching and curricular opportunities are good and well balanced, which gives children the opportunities to achieve well. Leadership and management by subject coordinators are good overall and support the good achievement of pupils. In English, mathematics, science and ICT, there are coordinators for each site. They lead the subjects well and ensure that there is good continuity between the two age ranges and a smooth transition for pupils from Year 2 to Year 3. The management of English and mathematics is satisfactory. The co-ordinators have had a limited amount of time to monitor and observe teaching and learning in the age range where they regularly work. They have not regularly monitored on the other site to develop their understanding of work throughout the school. Although coordinators of other subjects have worked hard and ensured that pupils make at least satisfactory progress, they have not had the time or opportunity to make innovative developments.
41. The two coordinators for ethnic minority achievement work well together and ensure that pupils' progress is regularly reviewed and that links with parents and other agencies are maintained well. This results in good achievement by pupils from minority ethnic

backgrounds. Although the coordinators are employed only part time to support these pupils, they are also employed to support in class or to give teachers non-contact time. This means that they teach full time and have a good overview of all classes and pupils in the age range where they are based. The provision for special educational needs is well led and managed and the coordinator benefits from the opportunity to work on both of the school sites.

42. The governance of the school is good and has developed since the last inspection. The governing body has developed its role and responsibilities well and ensures that it fulfils its statutory duties. The Chair of Governors is experienced and knowledgeable, is committed to the school and gives good support. The governors are eager to extend and improve their performance and that of the school.
43. The finances available to the school are used well and spending decisions by the headteacher and the governing body focus on raising standards. Educational developments are costed and linked closely to the items identified in the school's improvement and development plan. Financial arrangements in the school are clear and are kept in good order by the school's administrative assistant based in the infant school, who is supported well by the junior school secretary. Both ensure that efficient and unobtrusive systems are in place, which helps to overcome the difficulties caused by the school being on two sites and allows the school to run smoothly. When consideration is given to the good improvements since the last inspection, the good achievement of pupils, the good quality of education provided, the good leadership and management, and the average costs per pupil, the school provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,104,418
Total expenditure	1,168,717
Expenditure per pupil	2,750

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	90,788
Balance carried forward to the next	26,489

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44. Children achieve very well in the nursery and are given a very good start to their learning. Achievement in the reception year is good. The good quality provision found in the last inspection has been maintained and built upon. The innovative organisation in the reception classes of grouping children according to their attainment for communication, language and literacy and mathematical development means that activities are well matched to children's differing needs. This makes a significant contribution to children's good achievement. There are good procedures for checking progress, and information is used well to guide their next steps.
45. The provision is well led and managed. Nursery nurses and teaching assistants are effectively deployed and are well supported in carrying out their responsibilities. Adults work very well together as an effective team. Leadership ensures that provision is

reviewed to bring about improvements and ensures good liaison between the nursery and the reception class teachers.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The welcoming and very caring atmosphere in both the nursery and reception classes helps children to settle happily, to develop confidence and to form good relationships with others.
- Adults' very high expectations of children's involvement and behaviour result in good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour.

Commentary

46. Children achieve very well from a well below average starting point. Almost all are on course to reach the standards expected by the end of the reception year and some are likely to exceed them. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers and other staff ensure that children are made to feel welcome and they offer very good levels of individual care and support. This successfully helps to build all children's confidence and self-esteem so that they are happy in school and develop good relationships with others. As a result, boys and girls and children from different ethnic backgrounds work and play very well together.
47. Because staff have very high expectations of the children's behaviour, children quickly learn what is expected of them and respond very well. They behave sensibly in class, in the outdoor areas and when moving around the school. Children make choices confidently because they are given many opportunities to do so. A wide range of play activities provides children with opportunities for co-operation and collaborative play as well as engaging their imagination. Snack times are used very effectively to develop social skills and children learn to take turns at giving out the milk and fruit and to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Teachers expect children to develop independence. They are, for example, taught to take responsibility for tidying up both indoors and outside.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery are very well supported in developing language for communication.
- Good teaching and learning opportunities throughout enable children to achieve well overall.
- Skills in handwriting are a relative weakness because teaching does not focus sufficiently on improvement.

Commentary

48. When they enter the nursery, children's communication skills are poor. Good quality teaching and a good range of activities lead to good achievement. Despite this, most children are unlikely to reach all the goals expected nationally at the end of the reception year, although a few are likely to exceed them. As a result of the very effective support they receive, children with English as an additional language come on in leaps and bounds in learning English.
49. Children in the nursery are very well supported in developing language. Staff model language very effectively and take every opportunity to engage children in conversation. This helps to develop children's vocabulary and their confidence as speakers. In reception classes, 'circle times', when children sit in a circle to discuss matters of interest, and literacy lessons contribute well to the development of children's speaking and listening skills.
50. Standards in reading are higher than in other aspects of communication, language and literacy and children achieve very well in this area. Children get a very good start in the nursery, where adults stimulate an interest and enjoyment in reading by effectively sharing stories, rhymes and other familiar texts. In the reception year, good attention is given to the teaching of basic reading skills. Teachers often begin lessons with games and actions that reinforce the linking of sounds to letters and the recognition of high frequency words. As a result, all but the lowest-attaining children are beginning to develop skills in reading simple texts.
51. In the nursery and reception classes, the labels, captions, words and phrases displayed around the classrooms successfully promote children's understanding that print conveys meaning. Writing skills are developed well overall because teachers provide good opportunities for children to write in imaginative contexts as well as in formal situations. The highest-attaining children are helped to write one or two sentences independently. Children learn to form letters adequately but this aspect of writing is a relative weakness because teaching does not focus enough on improving handwriting once children start to write independently.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching and learning opportunities in the nursery are effective in developing children's early mathematical skills, which are well maintained in the reception year.
- Good assessment procedures mean that children are challenged at appropriate levels.

- Very good use of effective teaching assistants gives children a high level of attention both individually and in small groups.
- Planning in the reception classes is not always sharply enough focused on what children are expected to learn from practical activities, especially those they choose for themselves.

Commentary

52. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the nursery and good overall. It is a key factor in children's good achievement. Teachers provide a good balance of practical activities that cover the full range of mathematics, including number, shape and measurement, and these help children to learn effectively. Despite this, it is unlikely that the majority of children will reach all the nationally expected goals by the end of the reception year. A small number of higher-attaining children, however, are on course to exceed national expectations.
53. In the nursery, children receive a very good level of attention, both individually and in small groups. This helps them to recognise and name numbers in a wide range of situations both indoors and outdoors. In both the nursery and reception classes, work is well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils so that all are challenged at the right level. Teachers make effective use of good systems for checking and recording children's progress. The information from assessment is used well to guide children's next steps in learning and to assist in grouping children for different activities. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to develop children's learning and they reinforce teaching points skilfully as they participate in practical activities and games with individuals and small groups.
54. A weakness in the teaching in reception classes is that planning does not consistently identify what children are expected to learn in the practical activities that follow on from the main teaching activity, especially those activities that children undertake without direct adult intervention. On occasion, too much freedom of choice results in some children selecting activities that do not develop or consolidate their mathematical knowledge and understanding and, as a result, they do not make as much progress in lessons as they could.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good start in the nursery is maintained in the reception year so that children achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- There are too few opportunities in reception classes to use outside areas to develop knowledge and understanding of the environment.

Commentary

55. Attainment is below the national expectation for children of this age. It is unlikely that children will reach all the nationally expected goals by the end of the reception year. Children achieve well, however, from a low starting point because of good teaching.

56. In the nursery, very good teaching and a wide range of learning experiences both indoors and outdoors develop children's knowledge and understanding very effectively. Early science skills are taught very well so that children learn to handle magnifying glasses and learn to care for living things when observing snails and spiders in their garden and in the classroom observation area. In reception classes, teachers make good use of topics such as 'pets' and 'animals' to develop children's understanding about conditions needed for survival. Children develop early skills in design and technology as they make shelters for their pets. Role-play areas are set up to promote play and these support children in acting out imaginary situations, such as caring for animals at the 'vets'.
57. ICT skills are developed well as children are given good and frequent opportunities to use computers and laptops to play games and to support their work in other areas of learning, particularly in reading and mathematical development. Teaching includes a good range of activities to cover early understanding of religious education and geography, such as how festivals are celebrated and life in other countries. This helps children to begin to know about their own culture and that of other people. Good use is made of visits in the local area and of visitors, for example during a multicultural week. In reception classes, however, because access to outside areas is difficult, there are fewer opportunities to further develop children's knowledge and understanding of the environment.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good experiences in the nursery develop children's competence in using paint and other materials to make pictures and in using clay to make models.
- There is good provision of musical activities, which is supported by a visiting specialist.

Commentary

58. Overall achievement in this area of development is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. Additionally, children achieve very well in the art and design aspect of creative development. Teachers in reception classes build effectively on skills taught in the nursery so that children achieve well in exploring a range of techniques and materials, such as in observational paintings, printing, collage and clay. Good cross-curricular links are made with mathematics and literacy when, for example, children are helped to make symmetrical patterns on drawings of butterflies or illustrate their writing about a visit to a safari park.
59. Opportunities are provided in both nursery and reception for children to experiment with sounds and various percussion instruments and to build up a repertoire of familiar songs and rhymes. Role-play areas are used successfully to promote independent play. Despite this good progress, few children are likely to reach the national goals by the end of the year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of activities ensures that children frequently use a broad range of equipment and tools that helps to develop manipulative skills and small hand movements.
- Nursery staff make very good use of the outside area.

Commentary

60. The overall teaching of this aspect is good and enables the children to progress well. Although few will attain the goals set in all aspects of their physical development, many will do so with respect to activities such as running, climbing and balancing. Outside activity supports the development of spatial awareness and of climbing and balancing skills, as well as the control of movements through the use of wheeled toys and vehicles. There are, however, fewer opportunities for the reception classes to use the outside areas for imaginative role-play, creative and physical activities.
61. Children are given good opportunities to develop their dexterity through the use of a range of tools and equipment. These tools include scissors, glue sticks and paintbrushes as well as jigsaws, construction materials and large and small models. All adults sensitively support and encourage children so that they work carefully and safely.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English have risen at a faster rate than they have nationally.
- Basic skills in reading and writing are very securely taught.
- Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are provided for very well.
- Not enough attention is given to the teaching of speaking and listening skills.
- Pupils have very frequent opportunities to read and write in other subjects.
- There are examples of very good marking in English but this is not fully consistent.

Commentary

62. English has been well led and, as a result, standards have risen since the last inspection. Staff have put considerable effort into the raising of standards. Standards in Year 2 in 2003 were average in reading and below average in writing. Since then, standards in reading have been maintained and standards in writing have risen. 2004 results and the scrutiny of pupils' books show that standards are average. Given the below average starting point of many of the pupils, this means that pupils have achieved well in these aspects. In 2003, Year 6 pupils attained average standards in the national tests. Inspection evidence indicates that current Year 6 pupils have achieved well since Year 2 and standards remain average.
63. Particular efforts have been made to ensure that pupils gain good literacy skills in aspects like spelling, punctuation and handwriting. A consistent programme of work, the good use of data to identify which pupils need additional help, and the good use of staff to provide small 'setted' teaching groups have all contributed positively. Pupils undertake a good deal of reading and writing each day and this consolidates and extends their learning well.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, being good in Years 2 to 6. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and pupils live up to these by working hard. Teaching assistants are used well, especially in the good support for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The provision for both these groups of pupils is well organised and helps them to make good progress. Teaching is satisfactory in Year 1. It is less good in this year group because it is sometimes of a style that is rather more suited to older pupils. Pupils' books show that they are not always able to live up to the teachers' expectations and some rather negative marking is evident. In other year groups there are some very good examples of constructive marking where books are marked with comments such as, 'This is a good use of simile, you might have added another when you described...'. This detail greatly assists pupils to know how to improve.
65. The English coordinators have rightly identified a need to improve the teaching of speaking and listening. Pupils achieve in these skills in a satisfactory way overall, but standards remain below average. Good attention is given to extending their vocabulary but not to developing a variety of methods of encouraging them to use language to think

and debate. There are, however, examples of good practice, particularly in Year 6. A very good drama lesson was observed during the inspection, but there are too few of these. Some staff are not as careful as they should be in providing good examples of grammatically correct speech.

66. The leadership of English is good, but its management is satisfactory. Coordinators have worked hard to drive up standards and have been successful in this. They do not, however, have sufficient opportunities to observe lessons or to work together to promote further development.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

67. Pupils have many opportunities to use their skills in all other subjects. Writing is part of many activities. Pupils have opportunities to write in many different styles for many different purposes. Pupils' writing in science is of particularly good quality. At present, there is not the same emphasis on the development of speaking and listening. Additionally, the school has not yet fully coordinated opportunities for reading and writing in other subjects with the programme in literacy and, thus, links between English and other subjects have not been used to streamline the curriculum so that a better overall use of time can be made.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The grouping of pupils by attainment is helping pupils to achieve well.
- Good teaching in Years 2 to 6 ensures that pupils are interested in mathematics.
- Pupils work hard in mathematics lessons.
- Teachers do not always take the opportunity to encourage pupils to talk about their work.
- Leadership in mathematics has successfully promoted rising standards.

Commentary

68. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are average and have improved since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be below average. The improvement is because teaching is good overall. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well because of good teaching, grouping of pupils by prior attainment so that work can be more closely matched to their needs and good support by teaching assistants and the coordinators for English as an additional language. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls.
69. Teaching and learning are good in Years 2 to 6 and satisfactory in Year 1. In the large majority of lessons, teachers plan activities that challenge and interest their pupils, and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers' planning is made easier and more effective because pupils are grouped by attainment. In a minority of lessons, however, teachers do not consider the range of attainment that still exists within the class and all pupils are given similar work. In the one unsatisfactory lesson observed in Year 1, pupils were not given work that was appropriately matched to their abilities, which resulted in boredom and frustration.

70. The majority of teachers manage their pupils very well. As a result, pupils have good attitudes. They want to learn and they work well together. Teaching assistants provide good support for lower-attaining pupils and pupils for whom English is an additional language. This effectively promotes good progress. In many lessons, teachers make good use of pupils' errors as teaching points to share with the class. This is sensitively done and improves understanding. Mathematical vocabulary is promoted well, but not all teachers use every opportunity to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills by encouraging them to explain their work and strategies to the class.
71. Where teaching is good, teachers share the objectives of the lesson with their pupils so that they know what is to be learnt and why. This helps them to target their efforts appropriately and thus to make more rapid progress. The marking of pupils' work is conscientiously completed but its quality is somewhat inconsistent. The best marking includes comments and targets to move pupils forward in their learning. Good attempts are being made to help pupils understand how to improve their work through the sharing of targets. The recent introduction of target cards is leading to better understanding by pupils of ways to improve. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of their individual targets, but the language on the cards makes it difficult for some younger pupils to understand them.
72. Leadership of the subject is good. The two coordinators work well together and ensure that pupils make good progress and that there is good continuity between the work done on the two sites. Management is satisfactory. The coordinators have had a limited amount of time to monitor teaching on their own site but have not observed lessons on the site where they are not based to give them a better understanding of pupils' progress and of teaching across the whole school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

73. The use of mathematics and numeracy across the curriculum is good. Teachers plan activities in subjects such as science, ICT and geography which consolidate and develop pupils' use of mathematics. In ICT, pupils use spreadsheets to record data and control programs to reinforce work on length, shape and angles. These opportunities have a positive impact on the good achievement in mathematics and also support pupils' development of mathematical language.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are above average and achievement in Years 3 to 6 is very good.
- The curriculum is firmly based on experiment and investigation.
- Teachers are enthusiastic about science and inspire the pupils.
- Leadership is good and the coordinator is knowledgeable and committed.

Commentary

74. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average and pupils achieve well. Their rapid early progress in developing reading and writing skills plays an important part in their progress

in science. Nearly all pupils can carefully observe wildlife, compare different types of materials and sort them into categories or conduct simple experiments. Their writing and labelled drawings are particularly good and the highest-attaining pupils provide explanations for the things they have seen. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average. In the national tests for Year 6 pupils, standards in 2003 were well above average compared with schools in similar circumstances. Pupils understand a wide range of different scientific concepts and can, for example, conduct sophisticated experiments into forces or measure the speed of sound. The highest-attaining pupils can devise plausible hypotheses based on their observations and give logical explanations when their predictions do not match the outcomes. This represents very good achievement.

75. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Almost all lessons are challenging, stimulating and exciting. Practical lessons, such as those involving dropping balls into tanks of water or tugs of war between teams of pupils, occur frequently. Teachers take care to involve all pupils so that boys and girls do equally well, as do pupils from ethnic minorities. Because most lessons include experiments or investigations, the pupils' interest and involvement in science are very good; they are keen to find things out and work collaboratively, often for long periods. In a very good Year 4 lesson, groups of pupils explored the light-transmitting properties of a large collection of materials and, by the end of an hour and a half, nearly all could explain subtle differences in translucency and transparency. All teachers provide tasks at different levels for pupils of differing capability, but sometimes these are simply based on easier texts rather than simpler concepts or experiments. On the other hand, when older pupils are expected to write up the experiments and conclusions in their own words, their maturity shows in the very clear thinking that emerges. Pupils' books demonstrate the very good advice and marking they receive, as well as the very good knowledge and understanding of the teachers. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for through extra support from teachers or teaching assistants and make good progress.
76. The leadership and management of science are very good. The coordination is shared between two teachers because of the split site. Teamwork is very good and the coordinator for the juniors ensures that all teachers have high expectations and work to an exciting and demanding curriculum. The curriculum involves ICT in the form of data logging. Since the last inspection, when science was unsatisfactory, the school has worked extremely hard and the improvement is excellent. The quality of leadership, planning, assessment, teaching and learning have all improved, resulting in a dramatic rise in attainment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are enthusiastic and all aspects of the national curriculum are covered.
- Resources are used effectively throughout the school but on the infants' site the shortage of computers inhibits the range of activities.
- Lessons are not always planned to meet the needs of all pupils.

Commentary

77. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average. Pupils can edit text using a simple word-processor, paint pictures and interact effectively with a range of software. They have not learned to save or retrieve work effectively but can print it. By the end of Year 6 standards are average. Pupils exchange e-mails, design a range of texts, such as newspapers, posters, leaflets or poems, control traffic lights and solve problems using simple spreadsheets. As many children have average attainment in this aspect of their development when they enter Year 1, achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Many aspects of the ICT provision have, however, been introduced relatively recently and pupils are now beginning to learn more effectively. The school has made a good improvement in ICT since the last inspection.
78. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with enthusiasm and enjoyment overcoming the lack of experience and unfamiliarity with new software and hardware. Pupils in the somewhat cramped computer suite work hard to overcome the problems of sharing a computer and the fact that the teacher cannot easily get round to see them. In a Year 5 lesson on control technology, the teacher had only just learned the program herself and had not planned the kinds of tasks to stretch the highest-attaining pupils or support the lower attainers. It was a case of 'all learning together'. Pupils struggled but made satisfactory progress because of the good humour, patience and very good relationships exhibited by all. A good Year 3 lesson on the use of e-mail was more successful because it involved interactive software and pupils were able to learn at their own pace. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 only have access to one or two computers at a time. The demonstrations and instructions that teachers give are good, but learning takes much longer as pupils have to wait to 'have a go'. The school has some useful software to help pupils with special educational needs, so that they make similar progress to their peers.
79. Leadership and management of ICT are good. The coordination is shared between two teachers because of the split site. Teamwork is good and teachers are confident and keen to employ ICT to enhance learning in different subjects. The scheme of work is well planned and based on national guidelines so that lessons are set at the appropriate levels. Teachers are able to satisfactorily assess the standards that pupils reach and give good feedback to help pupils move on.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

80. The use of ICT in other subjects is satisfactory. Pupils are able to exercise their computer skills in many subjects, for example in design and technology to design puppets and in geography to explore the features of rivers. ICT makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills as there are lots of opportunities for reading, analysing and writing. Mathematical skills are also well developed by work in spreadsheets, databases and Logo geometry.

HUMANITIES

In humanities, work was sampled in history and geography, with two lessons seen in history and none in geography. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. Religious education was inspected in detail and is reported below.

81. There is every indication from pupils' work that standards in **geography** and **history** are broadly average in Year 2 and Year 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. In both subjects it is clear that visits and visitors play an important part in making the work

interesting and relevant. Subject co-ordinators have started to monitor their subjects through discussions with pupils and looking at samples of their work. There has been limited time allocated to this and so it has not been done in sufficient detail to monitor the quality of teaching and provision effectively.

82. In history, a visit to a local Tudor manor took place during the inspection week for pupils in Year 3. This is to be followed up by a visitor who will guide pupils in making mock Tudor buildings. From discussions with pupils in Year 5, many obviously enjoy history and spoke enthusiastically about their current topic on the contribution the Greeks made to today's society. In one lesson seen, pupils were successfully comparing and contrasting the old and new styles of the Olympic Games.
83. In geography, a small minority of Year 6 pupils have achieved above average standards in producing thorough work on mountains and weather using ICT to research avalanches. Year 2 pupils have produced treasure maps with their own key. They have then planned a journey, thinking about types of transport and what they would need to take with them. Marking is consistently good. It rewards pupils' efforts and encourages them to improve their work.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are encouraged to apply what they learn in religious education to their everyday lives.
- A coordinator has been appointed since the last inspection.
- Assessment procedures and the monitoring of teaching and learning are not fully in place.

Commentary

84. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection are in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Four lessons were observed, and a reasonable volume of written work in all years shows that pupils' achievement is sound in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to realise that our planet is only a small part of the universe. They know a range of facts and stories about different faiths, including Christianity. Pupils in Year 6 have much more extensive knowledge and understanding of the faiths studied.
85. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers take good care to research the faiths they are teaching and to use the knowledge of their pupils to add further detail. Year 3 pupils, for example, were learning about Sikhism and in one lesson some pupils were able to help the teacher with the pronunciation of words relating to the religion. This increases the interest of the lessons for the pupils. Pupils are taught to think about what they learn and to consider how the teachings of various faiths reflect or could influence what happens in their daily lives. Teaching is better for the older pupils because teachers are more careful to identify the learning to be gained in a lesson and this helps the pupils to learn more efficiently.

86. Teachers use different methods of teaching in religious education. Pupils' books indicate that they learn in a variety of ways, for example through making notes, question and answer sessions, diagrams and interviews. Teachers encourage pupils to make good use of their literacy skills in religious education when reading and recording work. Work seen was well presented and informative. The curriculum is satisfactorily led, and schemes of work are being improved to meet the needs of the current pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Design and technology and art and design were sampled during the inspection, but not in sufficient detail to provide a judgement on provision. Music and physical education were inspected in detail and are reported below.

87. Two lessons in **art and design** were observed during the inspection. Pupils' art books and work displayed on walls were examined. Work in books clearly shows that there is a programme of work that covers all aspects of the subject and that there is a consistency of approach to the teaching of art. Pupils gain skills in aspects such as drawing and the use of paint and other materials. They learn to evaluate and improve their work and to use the work of others, for example Andy Warhol, to influence their own. Activity is, however, very tightly controlled and much of the work seen lacks creativity and individuality. There is an overemphasis on writing about what has been undertaken at the expense of pupils thinking about and discussing their work in art.

88. No lessons were seen in **design and technology**. Completed work shows that standards are at least average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' work books and the schools' photographs and displays show a sound range of design tasks, investigations and well-made products. Pupils learn the design method from Year 1 onwards and their drawings are clear, detailed and well labelled. Older pupils usually show how their designs will be made and produce step-by-step plans. There are examples of work using levers, pulleys and other mechanisms, work in textiles such as glove puppets and slippers, and work in food such as bread-making and sandwich analysis. Pupils learn to evaluate their work and Year 6 pupils base the development and improvement of their work clearly on the design criteria. From talking to pupils and looking at photographs of them at work, it is evident that they are enthusiastic and enjoy the subject. The pupils' work is not marked but achievement is celebrated and the pupils proudly explain the displays around the school.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school receives valuable support from visiting teachers.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and work very well together in class and in groups.
- Some staff need expert help in developing their subject skills.
- Those pupils taught by subject specialists achieve well.

Commentary

89. As at the time of the last inspection, attainment in music is in line with national expectations by Year 2 and Year 6. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. A significant number of pupils achieve above average standards in singing and playing instruments. The pupils' enthusiasm for music was obvious during singing lessons. A visiting pianist helps pupils to sing in tune but some staff do not have the expertise to demonstrate with their voices.
90. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Pupils that are taught by visiting musicians are achieving well in playing instruments and singing. Pupils also achieve well in class lessons when taught by a specialist musician. In a lesson for pupils in Year 5, for example, pupils worked in groups to improvise a section of a 'space journey'. They organised themselves well in deciding the order in which to play their well-chosen instruments, whether to play loudly or softly, fast or slowly. The room was too noisy for pupils to refine their work but they performed willingly and used their imagination in creating different space sounds.
91. Work is well planned to enable pupils to make steady progress across the years. Listening to music with repeats in Year 2, for example, leads to analysing songs and music with more complex form in Year 6. The subject is effectively led by a specialist musician, who is very well supported by visiting teachers. Planning is supportive to class teachers and helps with instrumental and listening lessons but not vocal work. The school takes every opportunity to invite members of the community to support the subject. Music is not always played in assemblies and these are missed opportunities. All pupils have the chance to learn to play an instrument but specialist singing lessons are not available in all years. The school brass ensemble is attaining above average standards.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and high expectations, and teach well-structured lessons that proceed at a lively pace.
- The infant hall and playground are inadequate for games and gymnastics lessons.
- Insufficient time is allocated to physical education in some classes.
- Good links have been established with the local secondary school, which has sports college status.

Commentary

92. By Year 2, standards in games are in line with national expectations and have been maintained since the last inspection. By Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations in games and athletics and have been maintained since the last inspection. Assessment records indicate that standards in swimming are below expectations. As lessons were not seen in gymnastics and dance, it is not possible to make judgements about standards in these aspects. The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is satisfactory.

93. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are well managed, which results in good behaviour and a safe environment where pupils can apply themselves well to the tasks set. In the one indoor athletics lesson observed, teaching was very good. Pupils are developing a good understanding that exercise has an effect on the body and stimulates the heart. Only in a few lessons, however, are pupils encouraged to watch each other and constructively evaluate each other's performance so as to improve the quality of their work.
94. Although teaching is good overall, standards by Year 2 are only average because of the small hall and playground on the infant school site. This restricts pupils' variety of movement, actions and control in lessons, which prevents pupils from developing at a rate that matches the good quality of teaching. Standards by Year 6 remain average because in Years 3 to 6 some lessons are allocated thirty minutes only. By the time pupils have changed, the time remaining for the lesson is less than this, which impacts on the rate of progress pupils make over time.
95. Good links have been established with the local secondary school, which has the status of a sports college, and a local college. This has resulted in regular visits by students who provide specialist coaching in lessons. Leadership of the new coordinator is satisfactory. He already has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in physical education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

96. The programme in personal, social and health education is good and helps to promote the good attitudes and very good behaviour seen. Personal, social and emotional development is a high priority when the children are in the nursery and reception classes and the emphasis on self-management and control continues throughout the school.
97. The personal, social and health education programme stimulates discussion in class on a range of topics such as anti-social behaviour and the use of illegal substances in society. A healthy eating programme is beginning to have an impact on pupils' understanding of the importance of a balanced diet. Interesting talks by the police, the school nurse and other outside speakers help to promote the programme.

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	3
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	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
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	4
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	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).

