

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Park Hill Primary School**

Wednesbury

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103910

Headteacher: Mrs Hazel Taylor

Lead inspector: Dr Michael Best

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> September 2003

Inspection number: 257143

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 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 244 (full-time equivalent)

School address: Coronation Road  
Wednesbury  
West Midlands  
Postcode: WS10 0TJ

Telephone number: 0121 556 2188  
Fax number: 0121 556 2188

Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mr Phillip Horton

Date of previous inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> September 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Park Hill Primary School serves a mixture of owner-occupier and rented homes in Wednesbury in the West Midlands. The majority of parents and carers work in the retail and service industries. The nursery admits children soon after they are three from all over the area. At four, some children move to the school's reception class whilst others move to schools nearer where they live. When they enter the reception class, simple tests show that a significantly high proportion of children have very low early reading and number skills.

There are 274 pupils on roll, including 60 part-timers in the nursery. The school is similar in size to other primary schools in England. The school is over-subscribed and has a waiting list for any vacancies that may occur during the school year. Pupil mobility is low. About 10 per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic groups, mainly Indian. Nearly all pupils speak English as their first language. About 14 per cent of pupils have free school meals but the school believes the entitlement to be at least twice this figure. This is borne out by official statistics which identify high levels of deprivation in close proximity to the school.

Just under 15 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average. Three pupils have statements, which is about average and a further two pupils are awaiting statements. Pupils' needs vary but the majority has moderate learning difficulties. No children are looked after by the local authority at present.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10413	Michael Best	Lead inspector	Science; Information and communication technology; Music; Physical education; Inclusion
10965	Patricia Edwards	Lay inspector	
3751	Trudy Cotton	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; English; Art and design; Special educational needs; English as an additional language
21317	Will Gale	Team inspector	Mathematics; Design and technology; Geography; History; Religious education; Personal, social and health education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Park Hill Primary school is a very caring school with more strengths than weaknesses. The effectiveness of the school is satisfactory and it provides satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils have a very good regard for the school and its staff; relationships between adults and pupils are a strength of the school
- In mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), and in their personal development, pupils make good progress from when they start in the nursery to when they leave at the end of Year 6
- In writing in English and across the curriculum, achievement is not high enough throughout the school
- Key staff do not have a sharp enough focus on how to monitor and improve standards
- High quality and well deployed support staff help pupils with special educational needs to achieve well
- Teachers make insufficient use of information about what pupils know and can do
- Links with other schools and the community are strong and benefit pupils well
- Teaching and learning in the junior classes are good
- The range of extra-curricular activities is good and pupils support them enthusiastically

**Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall.** In many important areas, such as the National Curriculum results in mathematics and science at the end of Year 6, and in information and communication technology, the effectiveness of the school has improved well since the previous inspection. It has maintained most of the strengths and addressed all the key and minor issues identified in the previous report. However, in the use of assessment information, the school has not moved on sufficiently. Recent changes in the roles and responsibilities of key staff have adversely affected some managers' effectiveness in shaping and securing improvement. Standards and achievement in writing are not high enough. They are suppressing standards both in English and other subjects, and are a barrier to improvement.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED<sup>1</sup>

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

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

**Overall, achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in both key stages.**

Many children start school with very limited experiences in literacy and numeracy. Their achievement in the Foundation Stage<sup>2</sup> in all areas of learning<sup>3</sup> is **good overall**. By the time they start in Year 1, **most children**

<sup>1</sup> The results for 2003 have been provided by the school and comparisons made with data published in the 2003 Autumn Package. These results are, at the time of publication, unvalidated.

<sup>2</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning.

are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals<sup>4</sup> in their physical development but **less than half** are likely to meet them in the other areas of learning.

Standards in Year 2 are **average** in listening; **below average** in reading, mathematics and science; and **well below average** in speaking and writing. In Year 6, standards are **above average** in listening; **average** in mathematics and science; and **below average** in speaking, reading; and writing. In both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, achievement is **good** in listening and reading; **satisfactory** in speaking; and unsatisfactory in writing. In science and mathematics, achievement is **satisfactory** in Key Stage 1 and **good** in Key Stage 2.

Standards in information and communication technology are **above those expected nationally** in Years 2 and 6, and pupils **achieve well**. Pupils in both key stages also **achieve well** in personal, social and health education. In art and design, design and technology, music and physical education, **standards are in line with national expectations** in Years 2 and 6, and pupils **achieve satisfactorily**. In geography and history, standards are **below those expected nationally** in Years 2 and 6, and pupils **do not achieve as well as they should**. This is because their underdeveloped writing skills let them down in these subjects. In religious education, **standards are in line** with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus in Year 2 and pupils **achieve satisfactorily**. In Year 6, standards are **below those expected** and achievement is **unsatisfactory**. Again, pupils' writing skills let them down.

Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs **achieve well**. Pupils' **attitudes and values are very good** and their **behaviour is good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good** and attendance is **broadly in line with the national average**.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory.**

The overall quality of teaching is **satisfactory**. The **most effective** and **consistent teaching** is in Years 1, 3 and 4 and there is some good subject teaching in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching by support staff is **strong** and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**. Assessment procedures are **satisfactory** but the use of the information gathered is **unsatisfactory**. Pupils' application and productivity are **good** but teachers provide them with **insufficient** opportunities to work independently. The school provides a **satisfactory** range of worthwhile curricular opportunities for its pupils. Opportunities for them to participate in activities outside the school day are **good**. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils throughout the school are **good** and contribute effectively to the calm working atmosphere in the school. The school's partnerships with parents, other schools and the community **are good** and make positive contributions to pupils' achievements.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**The leadership and management are satisfactory.**

The governance of the school is **sound**. The leadership of the headteacher is **satisfactory** but that provided by other key staff is currently **unsatisfactory**. The effectiveness of the management of the school is **satisfactory overall**.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

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<sup>3</sup> The areas of learning mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

<sup>4</sup> The Early Learning Goals are the goals children are expected to reaching by the end of reception.

The majority of parents are **very satisfied** with what the school offers. They particularly appreciate the information the school provides for them and the activities outside lessons. Pupils are **highly satisfied** with the school. They have a high regard for the staff and want to do well. They recognise the help they receive from adults and appreciate the fairness with which staff deal with issues at lunchtime.



## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise standards in speaking and writing;
- strengthen the school's strategic planning for improvement, and improve the effectiveness of key staff, particularly in monitoring and raising standards;
- improve teachers' use of assessment information to ensure that pupils make consistent progress as they move through the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

**Overall, achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in both key stages. Standards in the 2003 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 are above the national average in mathematics and average in science. Standards in reading are improving but standards and achievement in writing are not high enough throughout the school.**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well from when they start in the nursery to when they leave at the end of Year 6 but the rate of progress is uneven as they move through the school
- Achievement in many areas of the curriculum is good, particularly in Key Stage 2
- Standards in writing are too low throughout the school and are affecting standards in other subjects
- Standards in information and communication technology are above those expected nationally at the end of both Years 2 and 6
- The school's targets for English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 do not take sufficient account of the available information about pupils' previous attainment and achievements
- Pupils at both key stages achieve well in personal, social and health education
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress

#### **Commentary**

##### **The Foundation Stage<sup>5</sup>**

1. Although many children have very limited experiences in communication, language and number work when they start in the nursery, their achievement in all areas of learning is good other than their knowledge and understanding of the world where it is sound. Simple tests undertaken at the beginning of the school year show that nearly 90 per cent of children have very low number skills and low early reading skills. Two important factors in the progress children make in the Foundation Stage are their positive attitudes and good behaviour. They enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. There are no significant differences in achievement between boys and girls or specific groups of pupils. Most children meet the Early Learning Goals in their physical development by the time they start in Year 1. In the other areas of learning, over half the children are still working towards the Early Learning Goals.
2. National Curriculum test results for children at the end of Year 2<sup>6</sup> (the end of Key Stage 1) in 2003 show that, compared with all schools, standards were below average in reading, and well below average writing and mathematics. Compared with other Year 2 pupils in similar schools (on the basis of free school meal entitlement), standards were average in reading, below average in mathematics and well below average in writing. Teacher assessments indicate that standards in science are below the national average. In this particular year group, a significant number of pupils have learning difficulties. Results in reading are improving because of the school's action to drive up standards.

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<sup>5</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. The areas of learning mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

<sup>6</sup> The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are expected to reach Level 2 at the end of Year 2. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

## Key Stages 1 and 2<sup>7</sup>

### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores<sup>8</sup> in 2003*

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.00 (14.3)	n/a (15.8)
Writing	12.38 (12.4)	n/a (14.4)
Mathematics	14.72 (14.8)	n/a (16.5)

*There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. National Curriculum test results for children at the end of Year 6<sup>9</sup> (the end of Key Stage 2) in 2003 show that, compared with all schools, standards were well below average in English and above average in mathematics and average in science. Compared with other Year 6 pupils in similar schools (again, on the basis of free school meal entitlement), standards were below average in English, well above average in mathematics, and above average in science. Teachers' assessments, which, over time, have been accurate indicators of test results, closely reflected pupils' test results in mathematics and science but were much higher than the results in English.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.2 (29.1)	n/a (27.0)
Mathematics	27.6 (27.7)	n/a (26.7)
Science	28.6 (29.1)	n/a (28.3)

*There were 31 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. The school is very disappointed with Year 6 pupils' English results in 2003, particularly as results in previous years were so much higher. The English co-ordinator has identified weaknesses in pupils' papers and is successfully applying these to her teaching in the current Year 6 class. The school did not meet the very challenging targets it set two years ago in conjunction with the local education authority. Inspectors' discussions with the school suggest that it based these targets more on aspirations than a rigorous analysis of pupils' attainment and progress.
5. Over the last four years, the school's National Curriculum results at the end of Year 6 show considerable improvement. At the end of Year 2, results have remained stubbornly low during this time although there are signs of improvement in the past two years, particularly in reading. Standards in information and communication technology have risen substantially since the last inspection. There has been some improvement in religious education but not sufficient to raise standards at the end of Year 6.
6. Inspectors' judgements about standards of attainment differ from the 2003 National Curriculum test and assessments. This inspection took place at the very beginning of the new school year and these judgements refer to different groups of pupils. Furthermore, inspection judgements take no account of the considerable hike in attainment achieved by the *booster classes* that take place later in Year 6. Inspectors judge that the school places too much reliance on such arrangements rather than ensuring that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are

<sup>7</sup> Key Stage 1 refers to Years 1 and 2; Key Stage 2 refers to Years 3 to 6.

<sup>8</sup> The average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in another school. The level attained by each pupil for each test is given a points score. The average points score is worked out by adding up the points based on the levels attained by pupils and then dividing this by the number of pupils who took the test.

<sup>9</sup> The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils are expected to reach Level 4 by the end of Year 6. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

systematically built on throughout the school. Scrutiny of pupils' work from last year demonstrates the effectiveness of this programme in mathematics and science.

7. A crucial barrier to raising standards in the school is the low attainment and unsatisfactory achievement in writing in English and across the curriculum. Linked with below average standards in speaking, pupils have particular difficulties in articulating their ideas and linking cause and effect. Skills are carefully taught but pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply and develop these. These are whole school issues from the Foundation Stage right through to Year 6. Standards in reading are improving because staff are making good use of information about what pupils know and can do to move their learning on. As yet, pupils have limited opportunities to undertake their own research and study, something highlighted in the previous inspection report.
8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in the school. This is because staff identify them effectively at an early stage. The school is aware that it has pupils who have particular gifts and talents but, as yet, does not run specific programmes to support them. This links with teachers' limited use of assessment information to accurately challenge pupils in the work they set. In both key stages, teachers, pupils and parents agree annual targets for improvement. However, few pupils recall what these are and there is little reference to them in day-to-day lessons. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make good progress in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2; in Key Stage 1 they make satisfactory progress. Overall, there are no significant differences in the attainment and achievement of boys and girls. Analysis of test results over time show that boys do better than girls at the end of Year 2 but that the gap closes by the end of Year 6.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils enjoy school very much and try to do their best
- The school has maintained many of the strengths highlighted at the time of the previous inspection
- Behaviour is very good in lessons and good at break and lunchtimes
- Personal development is good
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to take responsibility and use their initiative to improve their learning

#### **Commentary**

9. Pupils have a very good regard for the school and its staff and get on well with each other. Their behaviour in lessons, in the dining hall, around the school is very good and outside in the playground it is good. They have settled down to work very quickly to the new school year. Pupils know and discuss the school rules. They know the behaviour expected of them and the consequences when they misbehave.
10. In discussions with pupils, none expressed any concerns about bullying or harassment. Staff deal with rare instances of unpleasant behaviour or bullying swiftly and firmly. All adults working in the school use the school behaviour policy consistently.

11. Pupils' personal development is good. They are friendly and confident amongst adults. Pupils clearly enjoy working co-operatively in the friendly atmosphere of the school. The relationships formed between pupils and teachers are good. Pupils are comfortable chatting to adults in the school about work and personal issues and there are high levels of mutual respect. Pupils know they have to work hard and try to do their best. They are generally well motivated in lessons and this makes a positive contribution to their progress.
12. The school provides pupils with knowledge of, and insight into, the values and beliefs of others through its religious education programme and collective worship. Within lessons, staff sometimes miss opportunities to give pupils time to reflect on what they are doing, particularly in art and music. Pupils are willing to take responsibility and they carry it out to the best of their ability. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to put themselves forward for such roles or to take the initiative to extend their learning in lessons.
13. As the following table shows, there were no exclusions in the last reporting year.

#### Ethnic background of pupils

#### Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	250	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	15	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0

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

14. Pupils effectively learn right from wrong and negotiate their own class rules. They are encouraged to make positive decisions about their conduct and attitudes and show respect for each other's contributions. The school is successful in teaching its pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions through the curriculum and by visits to local museums and places of interest. Teachers take care to ensure that pupils also learn about the richness and diversity of non-European cultures, as seen in their work on African masks.

#### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.7%	School data :	0%
National data:	5.4%	National data:	0.5%

15. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils enjoy coming to school and staff monitor attendance well. Teachers call registers at the beginning of every session and consistently follow up absences on the first day. Parents know the school rules regarding absence and the vast majority sign and return the home school agreement which supports the school's policy on attendance well.



## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. The school provides good care, support and guidance for its pupils and has good partnerships with parents, the community and other educational institutions.**

### Teaching and learning

**The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Assessment is unsatisfactory.**

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in Key Stage 2
- In the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 teaching and learning are satisfactory
- Assessment procedures are in place but teachers make insufficient use of the information available
- Pupils do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of how they can improve
- Teaching and learning in lessons led by staff from the WEAZ and Wood Green Sports College are good

#### Commentary

##### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	6 (16%)	15 (39%)	17 (45%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

16. The most effective and consistent teaching is in Years 1, 3 and 4 and there is some good subject teaching in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching by support staff is strong and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' command of what they teach is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in information and communication technology that reflect recent training and development. Specialist teachers from the Wednesbury Education Action Zone and Wood Green College of Sport make a significant contribution both to pupils' learning and staff development through their teaching in the school. However, there are weaknesses in religious education, where staff have yet to become fully familiar with the new locally agreed syllabus.
17. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to improve the quality of teachers' planning. An effective, common format for yearly, termly and weekly planning is now established and almost universally used throughout the school. Teachers identify learning objectives for the majority of their lessons. Sometimes, these refer more to content than to what pupils will learn. In a small proportion of lessons, these learning objectives are not systematically shared with pupils or reviewed in sufficient detail in the closing section of the lesson (the plenary). Overall, teachers employ a suitable range of teaching methods and make sound efforts to include all pupils in class activities.
18. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, although satisfactory, are not precise enough. They do not always respond effectively to individual needs, or consistently challenge pupils to the full. Teachers do not give their pupils sufficient, specific guidance as to how they

can improve their work. Although the school has put procedures in place to address this key issue in the previous inspection report, it has not developed its practice sufficiently.

19. Pupils, parents and teachers discuss individual targets for improvement each year but these are often too general and pupils forget what they are. Many pupils say they would welcome closer direction as to what they could do to help themselves do better. Their application to work and productivity are good and their attitudes very good. It is too early in the school year to make a judgement as to the effectiveness of homework but nearly all pupils spoken to say they like to take work to do at home.

## **The curriculum**

**The school provides a satisfactory range of worthwhile curricular opportunities for its pupils. Opportunities for pupils to participate in activities outside the school day are good. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are satisfactory.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils actively support the school's good range of extra-curricular activities
- The good provision made for pupils' personal, social and health education
- The good use of support staff to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities, and particularly their support for pupils with special educational needs in literacy
- The adaptations to the curriculum in Year 6 which prepare pupils well for national tests and learning at secondary school
- The lack of guidance for teachers to help them address areas of weakness in pupils' learning
- The room used for teaching pupils with special educational needs is not suitable

### **Commentary**

20. The school's curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage covers all the areas of learning leading to the Early Learning Goals. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 includes a suitable range of subjects for pupils of primary school age. There is a thorough curriculum plan based on national recommendations but only in reading and mathematics has it been carefully modified to meet the weaknesses in pupils' learning.
21. The school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for all its pupils. These meet all statutory requirements, including those for collective worship and religious education. A suitable amount of time is devoted to each subject. The curriculum plan provides good outline guidance on each subject. Supplementary advice in English and mathematics successfully supports this. In other subjects, teachers do not always have sufficient information to help them plan their lessons. There is, for example, insufficient guidance provided as to how teachers should develop pupils' writing in all subjects.
22. In English and mathematics, the national literacy and numeracy strategies provide a good basis for teachers to plan for the different ranges of ability in each class. Different work for groups and individuals allow all pupils full access to the curriculum. In literacy, a good range of targets help pupils with special educational needs to build effectively on their previous stage of understanding. In other subjects, teachers do not always sufficiently vary the work they plan to provide challenge and the maximum access for all pupils.
23. There have been substantial efforts to ensure that the curriculum in Year 6 successfully meets pupils' needs. There are also good arrangements for teaching by subject specialists from the



local secondary school. This provides a useful insight for pupils into the type of subject demands there will be when they move school.

24. Teachers meet the intentions of the personal, social and health education policy well. The emphasis is on ensuring pupils' social awareness is sufficiently well developed to help them benefit from all aspects of school life. For older pupils, this includes learning about relationships and individual responsibilities through the school's sex education programme. The good arrangements for 'circle time'<sup>10</sup> have helped pupils to talk about their feelings and to understand those of others. The school has a thorough policy for encouraging healthy eating and lifestyles, including an introduction to the benefits and potential hazards of drugs and medications.
25. The school provides a good range of activities at the end of the school day. Attendance is good and pupils are enthusiastic about taking part. The school is also committed to taking part in as wide a range of local cultural events as possible to help pupils to feel proud of their school and its involvement. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in a week's residential activity, which is of particular benefit to those who have not stayed away from home before.
26. The school has a satisfactory range and quantity of resources to support the curriculum it offers. Classroom accommodation is good; rooms are spacious and well organised. Space within the building for other activities is at a premium. Most of the separate small group teaching takes place in the areas outside classrooms. The room used for special needs teaching is very small and poorly ventilated. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in developing the curriculum. However, several co-ordinators are relatively new to their roles and have yet to develop ways to help teachers.

### Care, guidance and support

**The care, guidance and support provided for pupils throughout the school is good overall and contributes effectively to the calm, working atmosphere in the school. The involvement of pupils in the work and development of the school is satisfactory.**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very caring and supportive of pupils
- Teachers know their pupils well
- Parents are very happy with the school's induction arrangements
- Pupils are not sufficiently aware of their targets and what they need to do to improve

### Commentary

27. The school continues to provide a caring environment where pupils are valued as individuals. Staff closely monitor the personal development of pupils and class discussions play an important part in this process. The school holds the gold standard for its work in the *Healthy Schools* initiative, which includes consulting with parents and pupils on a range of issues. The school has an effective health and safety policy and carries out regular risk assessments. Health and safety arrangements have improved since the previous inspection and all safety checks are now in place. Child protection procedures are well understood by staff and training is regularly undertaken.

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<sup>10</sup> During 'Circle Time' pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference of interruption from others.

28. In reply to the inspection questionnaire, most parents say they are happy with the school's induction arrangements for the youngest children. These allow the children to settle quickly into school and feel safe and secure in their new environment. All pupils have a good and trusting relationship with adults working in the school. Pupils are particularly pleased that the lunchtime staff treat everyone fairly and that they always listen to both sides in any disagreement. There is a recently established School Council to which classes elect their representatives.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

### **The school's partnerships with parents, other schools and the community are good and make positive contributions to pupils' achievements**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Regular newsletters and curriculum information keep parents well informed
- The information provided on pupils' annual progress reports does not give sufficient information about targets for improvement
- Parents and the community it serves have a high regard for the school
- Staff are willing to talk to parents at any reasonable time
- The school has good links with other schools and colleges
- There is insufficient detail about some of the topics in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents

#### **Commentary**

29. As reported at the time of the previous inspection, the school has maintained its strong links with the community and the local high school. Most parents think well of the school and feel comfortable about approaching staff with any questions or concerns. Parental involvement with the school is good and has a positive effect on pupils' learning. At the parents' meeting, some parents felt that homework was inconsistent. Inspection evidence suggests that homework is regularly set and builds on work done in class. The school encourages parents to help in school. Staff appreciate greatly the help of a small number of regular reliable parents in classes and on educational visits. The Friends' Association organises fund-raising and social events that raise considerable additional funding to enrich pupils' learning.
30. The information the school provides for parents has improved since the last inspection. Parents are pleased with what the school provides. Pupils' annual progress reports are clear about what pupils can do but less informative as to how they have progressed. On many, there is little specific information on ways they might improve. The detailed prospectus provides parents and carers with a useful practical guide to the school but statutory test results are not clearly dated to ensure appropriate comparisons. The governors' annual report to parents lacks detailed information about the provision for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs. The school has consulted parents regarding the home school agreement and the healthy schools initiative.
31. The school has productive links with Wood Green High School, particularly its Sports College, and other educational establishments through the Wednesbury Education Action Zone (WEAZ). With the work of the WEAZ due to end in November 2004, the school has linked with a number of similar schools in the area to continue and develop many of the positive initiatives started through the WEAZ. This is good practice. The school's link with the local community contributes well to pupils' learning. Pupils have visited the parish church and local

water works. A nearby factory, which produces savoury snacks, works with pupils in Year 6 each year on a business project.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.**

**The governance of the school is sound. The leadership of the headteacher is satisfactory but that provided by other key staff is currently unsatisfactory. The effectiveness of the management of the school is satisfactory overall.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Governors work well with the headteacher and each other to achieve the school's priorities
- The headteacher provides firm, committed leadership to a hard-working and capable staff who clearly want the best for the children in their care
- Many curricular and other responsibilities have recently changed and staff have yet to become effective in their new roles across the school
- The school successfully identifies its shortcomings and sets itself challenging goals to address these; staff do not focus sharply enough on how to achieve these
- The school works hard to include pupils from all different groups in all that it offers
- Performance management is well established in the school and is closely linked to professional development
- The day-to-day management of the school is good

### **Commentary**

32. The headteacher is particularly successful in maintaining the school's calm, friendly and industrious working atmosphere which pupils and parents value greatly. In her dealings with adults and children alike, she provides a good model of integrity and respect. The deputy headteacher, who has recently returned from a successful secondment as acting headteacher in a neighbouring school, brings complementary strengths and experience to his role.
33. Classroom support staff are highly valued in the school and good arrangements are in place for their ongoing professional development. The headteacher systematically monitors teaching, planning and pupils' work. The school successfully provides placements for teachers in training on the Graduate Teacher scheme. Staff new to the school speak highly of the support and guidance they receive from colleagues. The day-to-day management routines are well established and the school runs smoothly. Administrative staff undertake their duties effectively and enable teaching staff to focus on their professional duties.
34. The school's procedures for self-evaluation, although adequate, do not make the most effective use of the large amount of information readily available in the school. This is a contributory factor in the uneven progress made by some pupils as they move through the school. A shortcoming in the school improvement plan is the absence of any analysis of statutory and non-statutory test results. This lack of rigour in using available information is an underlying weakness in the school's leadership and management.
35. There are weaknesses in the contribution made by staff with responsibility for curriculum areas, many of whom are newly in post. Members of the senior management team are still adjusting to their new roles and responsibilities following recent staff changes. As a group, managers do not focus sharply enough on the specific, corporate steps required to raise standards and improve achievement throughout the school. The school's strategy to improve

standards in reading provides a good model for success; a key element in this is the way in which all staff are involved and work to a common goal.

36. The school rightly identifies pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour, staff commitment and the strong parental and community support as being significant factors in helping it maintain and raise achievement not only in subject areas but also in pupils' personal development. The inspection team acknowledges that many children start school with very limited experiences and that the school has to plan carefully and prioritise the available financial resources.
37. An experienced and well-informed chairperson leads the governing body well. He has a good grasp of the school's strengths and shortcomings. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's priorities and work well with the headteacher and each other to realise these. They have regular reports about the progress the school is making in relation to the priorities in its improvement plan. Through their committee structure, governors keep a watchful eye on the work of the school. There is a clear commitment to achieving the principles of *best value* in all aspects of the school's work. Financial procedures are well established. Governors prudently maintain the school's reserves within recommended limits.

## Financial information

### Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	649,976
Total expenditure	623,042
Expenditure per pupil	2,329

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	Agreed deficit
Balance carried forward to the next	1,200

38. Members of the governing body draw on a wide range of skills and experiences in their work, particularly their unique knowledge of the area, its aspirations and its people. They do not avoid taking difficult decisions, when necessary.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

39. The Foundation Stage consists of a separate nursery and reception classes. Children attend nursery on a part-time basis from all parts of Wednesbury. All children in the nursery are 3 years old. Some children move on from the nursery to reception classes in other schools. At the time of this inspection, all but two children in the reception class were 4 years old. Good links with parents and community projects<sup>11</sup> are helping to strengthen the partnership between learning at home and in school.

- ❑ **Provision in the Foundation Stage is sound**
- ❑ **Although children achieve well, often from a very low starting point, most are not likely to achieve all the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses in the Foundation Stage**

- the staff team works well together and has good relationships with the children
  - parents are pleased with pre-school visits and how children settle in nursery
  - the range of activities children choose is not sufficiently monitored
  - children make good progress with their learning
  - planning for child-chosen experiences lacks clear objectives for learning
  - day-to-day assessment is not used sufficiently to guide the next steps in children's learning
40. Children respond well to the safe and caring environment and grow in confidence. Simple checks show that attainment at the start of nursery is very low in all areas of experience, particularly in early reading and number skills. Despite good achievement in both the nursery and the reception class, children are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Many children are not yet able to express their ideas clearly. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is sound overall. Teachers plan and manage children's learning experiences well but there are not enough opportunities for children to make choices and develop independence in their learning.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- ❑ **Provision in personal, social and emotional development is sound**
- ❑ **Achievement is good but most children are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are well settled and happy in school
- Many children lack independence
- Children do not take the initiative

#### **Commentary**

41. A good number of children in the reception class show confidence when linking up with others and are interested and involved in activities. They are beginning to take turns and share equipment and all age groups take on responsibility and act as monitors at fruit and drinks time. However, few children take the initiative to develop their own ideas in role-play. Sound teaching supports children's learning and

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<sup>11</sup> The Wednesbury Education Action Zone mainly runs these.

helps them to gain in confidence and to tackle problems, for instance, encouraging a left-handed child to persevere with cutting out. Children are pleased when they do well. In the reception class, they are beginning to understand the need for agreed class rules and behaviour. This is enabling them to understand right from wrong.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

- ❑ **Provision in communication, language and literacy is sound**
- ❑ **Achievement in listening is good**
- ❑ **Most children are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers focus well on reading and children make good progress with their reading skills
- Children make good progress in developing good listening skills
- Children do not have enough opportunities to develop early writing skills

### **Commentary**

42. Many children have much catching up to do from a very low starting point with their literacy skills. Younger children in nursery learn to recognise their names and begin to distinguish between pictures and print. In reception, children enjoy sharing 'big books' and begin to recall the storyline along with Floppy the puppet. Pencil control is taught soundly, but there are few opportunities to develop their early writing skills.
43. Teaching is sound. Teachers concentrate on developing children's speech, but many nursery children use only single words and body gestures to communicate. In the reception class, children become more confident as talkers and speak to others about their interests but few spontaneously ask questions. Children in both classes listen well to teachers and each other.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

- ❑ **Provision in mathematical development is sound**
- ❑ **Achievement is satisfactory**
- ❑ **Most children are not expected to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff make good use of opportunities for children to develop number skills in other areas of learning
- Children make little use of mathematical language in their play

### **Commentary**

44. At the start of nursery, children do not use number names and language spontaneously. Teaching and learning in the nursery is sound. Teachers encourage counting during registration, asking children '*How many children are here today?*' Children label simple shapes correctly and begin to identify small and large shapes and objects with help. A few count four circles independently. The children make little use of mathematical language in play and generally use simple statements and gestures to make meaning clear.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

- ❑ **Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is sound**
- ❑ **Achievement is satisfactory but most children are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage**

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are enthusiastic to learn about what is going on around them
- Many children find difficulty in sharing their ideas and discoveries with others



### **Commentary**

45. Young children in the nursery learn about the wider community and recognise their own place within it. They successfully learn how to control the mouse and create coloured images when using the computer. In the reception class, children explore what happens when water is added to paint and how materials change. They label facial features and talk tentatively about the senses. Although children are keen to learn, they do not always communicate their findings confidently or clearly. Teaching and learning are sound.

### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

- ❑ **Provision in physical development is sound**
- ❑ **Achievement is good and most children are expected to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children respond well to instructions
- They handle equipment and apparatus well

### **Commentary**

46. The provision for outdoor experiences has improved since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. A safe play area is now completed. Teaching and learning are sound. Staff use both the hall and outside play area for lessons, and the children are successfully learning to move and travel safely in a larger space. They listen to, and follow commands and explore moving in different ways. The children gain in confidence in handling small apparatus and show dexterity with cutting, gluing and joining materials.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

- ❑ **Provision in creative development is sound**
- ❑ **Although achievement is good, most children are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching by the WEAZ staff helps children to make good progress in lessons
- Children are becoming more confident in joining in with activities

### **Commentary**

47. Children in the reception class benefit well from a Wednesbury Education Action Zone initiative. Teaching and learning are very good in the lessons taught by specialist teachers and, as a result, children achieve well in them. Children explore mixing colours and applying paint. They begin to use lines to enclose space and use shapes to represent objects. Children are keen to join in with their favourite songs and action rhymes. In the nursery, children enact a favourite story on large outdoor apparatus. Although shy at first, children quickly take the lead as the troll and enter enthusiastically into the spirit of the stories they hear.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

**Provision in English at both key stages is satisfactory in reading, speaking and listening but unsatisfactory in writing. Achievement is good in listening and reading, satisfactory in speaking but unsatisfactory in writing. Standards in writing are below average in both key stages and are a barrier to higher standards in English and in other subjects**

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Listening skills are good
- Pupils achieve well in reading lessons
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress
- Teachers value and encourage pupils' contributions to lessons
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills are limited
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning

#### Commentary

48. Many pupils start school with very low skills in speaking, reading and writing. Emphasis on teaching reading enables pupils to achieve well and become more competent readers over time. The development of writing across the school is not so clearly planned, and achievement in writing longer pieces of work and spelling is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those with difficulties with literacy benefit from regular help in lessons and make good progress. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2 attainment in speaking and writing is well below the national average. Standards in reading are below average. By the end of Year 6, attainment in speaking, reading and writing is below average.
49. Pupils achieve well with their listening skills. This is because teachers manage lessons well. Staff and pupils listen carefully to each other and give value to what others have to say. At the start of school and well into Year 3, very few pupils initiate talk or ask questions. Many are still developing their confidence and competence as speakers. A significant number are unable to make appropriate choices between the use of standard English, everyday informal talk and dialect. Teachers' planning insufficiently develops speaking skills in literacy lessons and in other subjects. There are very few pupils learning English as an additional language in school and none at the early stages of English acquisition needing extra help.
50. Discussions with pupils show that they enjoy reading. Guided reading now has a stronger focus outside the literacy hour and is helping to raise standards. Pupils with special educational needs and those with difficulties with their reading benefit from the expertise and regular help from learning support staff. By Year 2, some pupils read many words by sight, and use their knowledge of letters and their sounds (phonics) well when identifying unknown words. However, a significant number of average pupils do not read fluently. By Year 6, most pupils have moved on from the books of the reading scheme to making their own choice. Pupils are beginning to read with deeper understanding, but a good proportion still need help with comprehension. As they move through the school, pupils learn how to write more complex sentences and structure their stories, but they make unsatisfactory progress when creating longer pieces of independent writing. Teachers do not develop pupils' writing in a systematic way throughout the school. Although spelling is taught throughout each year, standards are well below average. Often pupils' spelling is linked to their mode of speech. Evidence from pupils' past written work shows steady improvement with handwriting skills.

51. Teaching in English is sound in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Teachers teach word and sentence work confidently in the literacy hour. The quality of marking varies from class to class, and does not always help pupils to improve their work. Discussions with pupils indicate that procedures for assessing work and sharing learning targets are not established firmly enough in literacy lessons. Some aspects of the subject - such as the teaching of reading - are clearly planned. However, monitoring of teaching and learning, to ensure consistency and raise standards, is unsatisfactory. Although there is evidence of improvement in reading and speaking, writing has not developed sufficiently since the time of the previous inspection.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

52. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for writing in other subjects to help develop literacy skills and provide purposeful writing experiences. This impedes learning and recording in subjects such as history and religious education.

## **MATHEMATICS**

### **Provision in mathematics is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2 Achievement is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers show a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy.
- Staff provide clear instructions, especially about number calculations.
- Pupils make good progress in recalling number facts and carrying out calculations
- Year 6 pupils achieve well in their preparations for national tests.
- Pupils find it difficult to adopt different strategies, including ‘shortcuts’ in their calculations.
- Pupils are not always able to apply their number knowledge to ‘word problems’.

#### **Commentary**

53. At the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards which are at least in line with national averages. In their understanding of number, they produce work which is above the national average. On entry to the school, pupils have a very limited understanding of number. At the end of Year 2, the results of national tests show that pupils reach levels which are well below average. At the end of Year 6, national tests show that pupils reach levels above average. Overall, this represents good progress during their time at school and particularly good achievement in Year 6.
54. The standard of pupils’ work seen at the time of inspection is similar to the results of the national tests, except that pupils in the current Year 2 are on course to achieve a higher level than last year’s pupils, where there was a much higher proportion of less able pupils. Year 6 pupils benefit from specialist teaching in ‘booster’ classes, which improves their test results considerably. The current Year 6 has yet to benefit from these classes and is currently achieving at a level which is in line with national averages.
55. Throughout the school, pupils achieve best in number work. Teachers demonstrate methods of calculation to the whole class well, spending time to ensure pupils’ understanding and recalling previous learning. Support staff are well deployed to meet the needs of the less able and those with special educational needs. They frequently provide additional resources, such as number lines or cubes, to help pupils. Pupils show good levels of concentration and are often determined to achieve the right answer. The good working atmosphere and pupils’ attention to class rules help them to think clearly and consult adults when they need help.

56. Pupils find it difficult to apply their number knowledge flexibly. They frequently fail to notice number patterns which might help them to complete their calculations more quickly. Teachers recognise this weakness and are attempting to address the problem, but their efforts are currently only having a limited effect. Pupils' standard of mathematical notation is improving, but there are still too many examples of pupils writing calculations down incorrectly and becoming confused. Teachers in Key Stage 2 are addressing pupils' difficulties in solving 'word problems' well by providing pupils with frequent practice in this work.
57. The co-ordinator left the school at the end of last term. The results of tests in Key Stage 2 have been carefully analysed and key weaknesses identified. These form the basis for the 'booster' classes and enable teachers to help pupils to raise their standards. A similar level of detailed analysis has not yet taken place in Key Stage 1. Pupils' standards in Key Stage 2 are similar to those noted at the previous inspection. In Key Stage 1, standards are lower. The changing abilities of pupils on entry to the school is one reason for this. The gap between the performance of younger pupils and national averages is beginning to narrow. Overall, there has been a satisfactory level of improvement since the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

58. There is satisfactory use of pupils' mathematical skills in other subjects. Pupils' work shows that they frequently practise their number and measuring in science, and design and technology. In Key Stage 1, pupils are not very flexible in applying their number skills to different situations. As a result, the standard of their work is below average. In Key Stage 2, their confidence increases and there are more opportunities for pupils to use their skills in, for example, science.

## **SCIENCE**

### **Provision in science is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2 Achievement in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and good in Key Stage 2**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good emphasis on investigative and experimental work in both key stages
- Good use of charts, diagrams and tables helps pupils to record their plans and findings for experiments but written accounts often lack detail
- At the end of Year 2, too few pupils are reaching the higher levels in the National Curriculum assessments
- By the end of Year 6 pupils have a secure subject knowledge but few spontaneously link and develop their ideas and experiences to explain the "why" rather than just the "how"
- Staff provide a good level of support, especially for those pupils with learning difficulties, and this helps them to achieve well in practical work

#### **Commentary**

59. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests and assessments, standards were average at the end of Year 6. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that many made very good progress in the *booster classes* held before the tests. There has been an improvement in Year 6 results since the time of the last inspection. At the end of Year 2, standards were well below the national average. Although most pupils reached the Level 2 standard expected for pupils of this age, none achieved the higher Level 3. A contributory factor is the difficulty many pupils have in expressing their ideas and findings.

60. Pupils very much enjoy the opportunities they have to undertake practical work in science and their enthusiasm helps them to achieve well in this area of their work. In a Year 1 lesson, teaching was good. Imaginative planning and a high ratio of adults to pupils ensured that everyone was able to take an active part. This was particularly important because many pupils, although clearly interested, listened to others rather than responding to questions or taking opportunities to contribute to discussions. In Year 6, pupils are very aware of the importance of conducting a fair test and make this the basis of their planning. They use technical terms such as *saturation* and *condensing* correctly.
61. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in practical work because of the adult help and guidance they get in lessons. In Year 5, good use of visual aids and role-play to explain the various steps in pollination helped pupils to understand the process even though many struggled to recall the correct names for the parts of the plants. Teachers' close attention to helping pupils draw and label diagrams correctly is helping improve their work.
62. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that they cover all aspects of the science curriculum at both key stages although there appears to a greater focus on *plants and living creatures* than *materials and their properties*. There is a good emphasis on using charts and diagrams at both key stages. Where pupils write freely about their findings, as seen in Year 6 work, they demonstrate logical and systematic thought. In some of the work seen, the achievement of lower ability pupils exceeds that of the average pupils; a contributory factor is the adult support available in lessons. The co-ordinator has not long had responsibility for the subject and, in the interim, has been absent due to ill health. As a result, she has yet to make an effective contribution to the leadership and management of the subject.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

**Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is good in both key stages  
Pupils achieve well as the result of high quality teaching and access to good learning resources**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are good at the end of Years 2 and 6
- Pupils are enthusiastic and push themselves hard to meet the challenges they are set
- The application of information and communication technology skills across the curriculum, although satisfactory, is lagging behind work in information technology lessons

### Commentary

63. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in information and communication technology were below average and, with the exception of pupils in two-year groups, progress was unsatisfactory. The school has successfully addressed these issues, with particular help and support from the Wednesbury Education Action Zone (WEAZ) in equipment and staff training. Advisory teachers from the WEAZ led and supported lessons observed in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. It was not possible to see any lessons in Key Stage 1 but judgements are based on discussions with, and observations of, pupils who have just moved to Year 3, together with a scrutiny of their saved work.
64. Pupils at both key stages achieve well in information and communication technology. They are confident in using computers and other equipment, such as the interactive white board. They demonstrate good self-control and a systematic approach to their work. They follow instructions carefully and think hard when answering teachers' challenging questions. Pupils work well with each other, sharing ideas and previous experiences freely. Learning objectives

are clear and readily shared with pupils, who respond with maturity and a sense of urgency to learn. Pupils' special needs present no barrier to their good achievement. Developing their use of tool bars, pupils in Year 3 rose well to the ambitious challenge set by their teacher. Their learning benefited from the careful support of adults who helped pupils find the solutions to their problems rather than simply showing them.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

65. The application of information and communication technology across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils are starting to develop and apply their skills in word-processing and data handling. They are familiar with the use of the Internet for sending and retrieving information. Scrutiny of pupils' computer work shows some good use of programmes to develop skills in art.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **History**

#### **Provision is unsatisfactory in history in both key stages**

##### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils find it difficult to write about why people in the past lived as they did.
- Pupils' writing about the reasons for historical events is too brief and superficial.
- The weaknesses in pupils' work have not been fully analysed and addressed.

##### **Commentary**

66. Pupils produce too little written work and, as a result, do not meet national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. When asked questions, all pupils have a satisfactory recall of the main events of the periods they have studied. In Year 2, pupils construct simple timelines, putting events in date order, but find it more difficult to find out information for themselves from books and pictures. In their writing, their achievement is unsatisfactory, because they often miss out important pieces of information, which they can recall when questioned.
67. At the end of Year 6, pupils describe events in more detail, indicating that they have listened carefully to teachers' narratives. Their writing about these events is usually expressed in short sentences, often with little to distinguish the written work of the less and more able. Pupils find it difficult to explain the causes of events and why circumstances often made people act as they did. Their writing remains superficial and descriptive, and does not demonstrate how much they understand.
68. Very little teaching of the subject took place during the period of inspection, but a scrutiny of work indicated that teachers provide reasonable explanations of historical events. They are not yet sufficiently emphasising the need for pupils to link events and situations in their writings, and provide explanations for what occurred. The similarities in pupils' written accounts shows that they are not accustomed to independent research and are too reliant on teachers to provide them with information; this weakness was noted at the last inspection. Since that time, standards have declined, largely because of the poor quality of pupils' writing.

### **Geography**

#### **Provision is unsatisfactory in geography in both key stages**

##### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' written work is brief and rarely provides more than the simplest of descriptions of geographical features
- There is little whole school monitoring of pupils' progress

##### **Commentary**

69. Achievement is unsatisfactory and leads to standards which are below national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Year 2 pupils describe some of the main features of their own and other localities. They correctly name some of the main buildings in the streets around the school. However, they find it difficult to express clear opinions about their home area and its characteristics. Written work is very brief and the drawing of simple maps often lacks detail and clarity. Pupils in Year 6 explain the meaning of key geographical words, such as settlement and industry. Their understanding of how their home area relates to the rest of the world is

underdeveloped. Many pupils find it difficult to label the major regions of the world on a map. Pupils' descriptions of different places in the world are satisfactory, but their writing about the impact of human activity on the environment is descriptive and lacks sufficient depth of understanding.

70. In the lesson seen, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. The introduction was good and the teacher provided pupils with accurate information about geographical terminology. The co-ordinator has established a satisfactory framework for subject planning, based on national recommendations. Teachers implement this framework reliably, but there is little evidence of adjustments to planning to take account of the particular weaknesses in pupils' learning, such as writing.

## **Religious education**

### **Provision in religious education is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The telling of Bible stories in Key Stage 1 is good
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 have a good recall of the main elements of the stories they hear
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not strong enough
- Pupils' writing is very brief in Key Stage 2
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 have limited understanding of religious meaning, faith and belief

#### **Commentary**

71. Pupils reach the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of Year 2. During Key Stage 2, their writing lacks sufficient explanation of faith and belief and their work does not meet expectations by the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory in Key Stage 1. They listen carefully to the stories, showing interest in how characters such as The Good Samaritan behaved. Pupils describe the importance of behaving well towards others. They successfully complete drawings and brief written work based on Bible stories. Pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. The small amount of written work they produce rarely extends beyond the simplest of descriptions and does not reflect the level of understanding they have developed in class. Pupils struggle to explain faith and belief in their writing. They are more comfortable describing the clothing and ceremonies involved in the main world religions than the significance of ceremonies to religious communities.
72. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Teachers have a satisfactory command of the important stories of the Bible and are able to focus on the most important actions of the characters. Regular questioning checks on pupils' understanding, and teachers and support staff are skilled in recognising when the less able and those with special educational needs have not fully understood. It was not possible to see sufficient lessons in Key Stage 2 to make a firm judgement on teaching, but pupils' work indicates that some teachers have limited subject knowledge and need further guidance in making classroom activities more meaningful for pupils.
73. The school recently introduced the new locally agreed syllabus and the co-ordinator led the training of teachers in its implementation. Teachers understand the range of work they need to cover but find it difficult to encourage pupils to seek a deeper understanding. As a result, pupils' work in Key Stage 2 shows only very limited advance on that in Key Stage 1. There is a satisfactory level of improvement since the previous inspection in Key Stage 1, and the



introduction of the new syllabus has helped to resolve some of the problems identified at that time.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

### **Art and design**

#### **Provision in art and design is satisfactory in both key stages**

##### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The high quality support from specialist teachers in lessons<sup>12</sup>
- The good quality work produced by pupils in the ALICE project<sup>13</sup>
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure skills are built upon year on year

##### **Commentary**

74. Inspection findings are similar to those in the previous report. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are similar to those expected nationally Achievement is satisfactory in both key stages An expert teacher from the WEAZ led two of the three lessons observed. The very good quality of this teaching encouraged pupils to experiment with new ideas and to create something original and imaginative by themselves. Discussions with pupils indicate that art is one of their favourite subjects and that they have regular opportunities to draw and illustrate their work in other subjects. Management is a mixed picture. The school has tapped in to some exciting initiatives, such as WEAZ support and visits to Ingestre Hall, which enhance pupils' learning. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning in art are informal and do not identify clearly areas for improvement.

### **Design and technology**

#### **Provision in design and technology is satisfactory in both key stages**

##### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' skills in assembling materials, cutting and shaping are good
- Pupils make insufficient use of pictures and explanations to demonstrate their designs
- Pupils make too little use different ideas to improve their designs

##### **Commentary**

75. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are similar to those expected nationally and reflect those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Achievement is satisfactory in both key stages Pupils in Year 2 successfully assemble materials such as paper, card and wood. More able pupils shape and tidy their work into a more accurate finished product. By Year 6, the majority of pupils measure shapes to achieve a better fit. They combine materials for better effect and use a wide range of tools. Throughout the school, pupils produce relatively few drawings and written comments to demonstrate their ideas or indicate that they considered their original designs and sought to improve them.

### **Music**

#### **Provision in music is satisfactory in both key stages**

##### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils sing tunefully and maintain a steady beat in rhythmic work

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<sup>12</sup> Provided through the Wednesbury Education Action Zone

<sup>13</sup> The ALICE project combines work in the creative arts, ICT and literacy

- Specialist teaching from the WEAZ is good and enables pupils to achieve well

### **Commentary**

76. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are similar to those expected nationally. Achievement is satisfactory in both key stages. It was not possible to see a full range of lessons during the inspection. In Key Stage 1, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils learn a range of songs in different styles and from different cultures. They recognise the difference between *loud* and *soft* and respond to directions promptly. They achieve satisfactorily. In Key Stage 2, pupils' work on African rhythm patterns is at an early stage of development; they listen well to the specialist teacher from the WEAZ and copy increasingly complex patterns accurately. The specialist teaching is good. A notable feature is the high quality support for pupils from minority ethnic groups and for those with special educational needs.

### **Physical education**

#### **Provision in physical education is satisfactory in both key stages**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have a good understanding of the effects of exercise on their health and well-being
- Opportunities for pupils to evaluate and improve their own performance are not consistent
- Most pupils reach the national requirements in swimming at the end of Year 6

### **Commentary**

77. It was only possible to see two lessons, one at each key stage, during the inspection and both of these were in dance. Discussions with pupils confirm that the school covers all aspects of the physical education curriculum. Older pupils are particularly pleased with the extra-curricular provision made by the school through its involvement of specialist staff from Wood Green College of Sport.

78. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievement and teaching are satisfactory. A number move rather stiffly and, despite concentrating hard, find it difficult to finely control their movements. Although teachers use exciting music to help stimulate pupils, they do not make sufficient use of opportunities for pupils to observe others or evaluate and improve their own performances. In contrast, in the lesson seen in Year 5 pupils, working in pairs, made good use of the frequent opportunities to evaluate their own work and come up with original ideas, particularly as to how to link a series of movements. A feature of the good teaching of the specialist teacher was the crisp pace and the clear but challenging demands which inspired pupils and enabled them to achieve well in this lesson. Overall, achievement is satisfactory in both key stages.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

#### **Provision in personal, social and health education is good in both key stages**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The consistent promotion of school rules by all staff
- Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of positive relationships in school
- They have a highly developed sense of fairness and tolerance
- They recognise how good behaviour can improve their learning
- Pupils have a limited understanding of the wider community beyond their immediate locality

## **Commentary**

79. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching in a wide variety of lessons and other activities. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in developing its programmes in this area of the curriculum. All staff are effective in helping pupils to develop the social skills necessary for a happy school community. They establish good role models by showing how much they value the suggestions of all pupils during class discussions. As a result, the more able and sociable pupils recognise the importance of including all of the class in activities, such as role-play. Staff help pupils to express their opinions and develop a more sophisticated understanding of their own lifestyles. By Year 6, pupils talk confidently about the main elements of a healthy lifestyle. Their knowledge about balanced diets is good and they appreciate why the school has fruit for break time snacks. Pupils appreciate how important it is to work together and relate this to successful contributions to life in the community. They have a good understanding of decision-making in school. However, they find it difficult to link this to society and government on a broader scale.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
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	4
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

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	4

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