

INSPECTION REPORT

QUEEN VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sedgley, Dudley

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103826

Acting headteacher: Mrs A Cheema

Lead inspector: Mr A Portlock

Dates of inspection: 29 September - 2 October 2003

Inspection number: 257251

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	669
School address:	Bilston Street Sedgley Dudley
Postcode:	DY3 1JB
Telephone number:	01384 812545
Fax number:	01384 812546
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Everson
Date of previous inspection:	8 June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Queen Victoria is a very large primary school of 669 pupils and a 120 part-time place nursery. The school is situated in Dudley and draws its pupils from a socially mixed area with a high degree of deprivation.

The children's attainment on entry varies from year to year between well below average and below average. This year it is well below average. There is a wide range of ability and pupils have particularly low language and literacy attainment on entry. Sixteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is average. However, the school is aware that some of the pupils identified as causing concern should be designated as having special educational needs and that the overall percentage figure should be higher than it actually is. The number of pupils with statements of special educational need has remained at about 1 per cent (below average). About 7 per cent (above average) of pupils are from ethnic minority families: none are in the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils receiving free school meals is below average, although the school has details of low take up of free school meals; the last time it was surveyed eligibility was above 30 per cent.

The substantive headteacher is at present on long-term sick leave and she is expected to return before the end of the term. The deputy headteacher is at present the acting headteacher. The school is accommodated in a large well-used building. Most older pupils are taught in a range of elderly mobile classrooms, which are rather cramped and have no toilet facilities. The school is about to start a rebuilding programme to overcome this unsatisfactory situation.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21411	Adrian Portlock	Lead inspector	Science, design and technology and physical education.
13828	Ron Ibbitson	Lay inspector	
11472	Mike Beale	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology and geography.
29989	Pauline Goodsell	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, art and design, religious education and special educational needs.
19410	Andrew Matthews	Team inspector	English, history and music.

The inspection contractor was:

Inspire Educational Ltd
The Coach House
132 Whitaker Road
DERBY
DE23 6AP

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, AND SUBJECTS	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good school** with a very caring and positive ethos. Standards in core subjects improved significantly in the last year and are average, except for writing, which is below average. Underachievement in previous years has been overcome with pupils throughout the school now achieving well, largely because of the good teaching and leadership. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achievement is good in English, mathematics, science and ICT and standards are improving but standards in writing are lower than they should be.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good but there are insufficient opportunities to apply numeracy skills across the curriculum and ICT skills in non-core subjects.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- The school works very hard to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met: support for pupils with special educational needs is particularly strong and relationships in the school are very good.
- The school is led well by the acting headteacher and other key staff.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and they achieve well.
- Links with parents are very good: the parents are kept very well informed.
- Accommodation for older pupils is unsatisfactory.

Since it was last inspected in 1998, the school has made good improvement. The school is effectively led and over the last two years the teaching and learning have improved significantly. The more rigorous assessment of the pupils' progress and changes to the curriculum are helping to raise standards. The issues raised at the previous inspection have been effectively dealt with.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

The pupils are achieving well and overall standards are average, except for writing. By the end of the Foundation Stage standards are below average with about half of the children on course to reach the expected goals with few exceeding them. The children are well taught and are achieving well. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are average except for writing, which is below average and pupils are making good progress. Some below average attaining pupils have been identified by the school as underachieving and the school has developed strategies and resources to overcome this. In 2002, the results of Year 2 national tests were in line with the national average but well below average in Year 6. The Year 6 results were low because of low attainment on entry and underachievement in earlier years. These Year 6 pupils achieved well in their final year but not sufficiently to overcome the earlier problems. The results in 2003 show significant improvement over previous years, although writing is still lower than it should be. This earlier underachievement is still affecting older pupils but the effective quality of teaching and leadership is having a positive impact on all pupils' achievements.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	E	E	D
Science	E	D	D	B

*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.*

By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in religious education and in information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils have very good attitudes to work and school and behave very well in lessons and at break times. Pupils' rates of attendance are below average. The **moral and social development of the pupils is very good: spiritual and cultural development is good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education is good** overall. **Teaching and learning are good** because of teachers' high expectations and a consistency in approach to teaching throughout the school. There is effective literacy and numeracy teaching and learning throughout the school but numeracy skills are not sufficiently developed across the curriculum. In ICT, skills are taught well in ICT lessons but is not sufficiently taught in non-core subjects.

The curriculum provision is broad and interesting. Additional activities that enrich the curriculum are very good. Provision for pupils with special education needs is particularly strong. There is good use of teaching assistants in supporting pupils' learning, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. The older pupils are taught in unsatisfactory, cramped classrooms that are due to be replaced. The school makes good use of the school building and grounds, except for the library, which is under used. Partnership with parents is very good: they are provided with very good quality information. Links with the community are good. The school takes very good care of its pupils, ensuring their welfare, health and safety.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is good. It has effectively overcome the previous underachievement in the school. The acting headteacher effectively leads the school: she is well supported by senior staff and has built very effectively on the strong foundations laid by the substantive headteacher. **Management of the school is good.** The leadership and management of English and special educational needs are very good. **The governance of the school is satisfactory:** governors are well organised and have made an effective contribution to the school's development.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Many parents do not get involved with the school but those spoken to are very supportive of the school and recognise the good improvement being made. The pupils enjoy school and feel that they are valued and supported.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Further raise standards in writing.
- Provide more opportunities to apply numeracy across the curriculum and ICT skills in non-core subjects.
- Carry out the plans to replace the unsatisfactory mobile classrooms.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects.

The pupils' achievement is **good** throughout the school. The children in the Foundation Stage make **good** progress and achieve well against their prior attainment. At the beginning of Year 1 standards are below average. In Years 1 to 6 achievement is good and standards in the present Years 2 and 6 are broadly average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the 2003 national tests are much higher overall, with a greater number of pupils reaching the higher levels compared with previous years.
- Standards in writing are not high enough.
- Achievement in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education is good throughout the school, with previous underachievement and low standards having been addressed.
- The pupils with special educational needs make good progress and they achieve well against their prior attainment.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.0 (15.2)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.2 (14.8)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	16.4 (17.2)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 90 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.4 (25.1)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.2 (24.8)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	28.0 (28.1)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 80 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. When the children enter the school, the baseline assessments show that, although there is a broad range, overall attainment is well below average. By the time they enter Year 1, standards are below average, with about half of the children achieving the early learning goals in all six areas of learning and a few children exceeding them. The good provision in the Foundation Stage enables the children to make a good start to school; they make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning.
2. Standards are average in reading, speaking and listening and mathematics in the present Years 2 and 6. Standards in writing are average in Year 2, with an above average proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. However, despite the below average attainment in English, the present Year 6 pupils have achieved well since they started at the school when their attainment was particularly low in language and literacy. The school has recognised that standards of pupils' writing are not as high as they should be. They are providing good opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills following intensive training that the teachers have undergone. Whilst this is having an impact, the school is aware that standards need to rise further. In science and ICT, standards are above average.

3. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science and ICT throughout the school. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that achievement is generally good throughout the school. The organisation of pupils into four ability sets for English and mathematics results in most pupils being well challenged in their work. In all core subjects, there is no significant difference between boys and girls in reading, writing and mathematics.
4. The school has high expectations that the pupils with special educational needs will achieve well in literacy and numeracy. It is successful in reaching this aim because it makes good provision for the individual needs of the pupils. In lessons, the teachers and classroom assistants interact well with the pupils with special educational needs. They ensure that the pupils are fully integrated into the work the class is doing and that any extra support that is provided challenges the pupils to achieve well. The more able pupils achieve well this has resulted in more pupils reaching the higher levels in the national tests.
5. Previous underachievement and low standards have been addressed. There was a period where the pupils were significantly underachieving; teaching and learning were not focused enough on raising standards and complex setting arrangements hindered progress. The substantive headteacher tackled these issues rigorously and over the last two years pupils having been achieving more effectively. From the scrutiny of last year's work and work seen during the inspection, the pupils are now achieving well throughout the school. Contributory factors to the raising of achievement include: strong leadership and management and good planning and assessment procedures, which are used to identify those pupils who need extra help and are still improving. The subjects are well managed and this has had a positive impact on ensuring that pupils are achieving well. The very good teaching of ICT skills in the ICT suite and combined with the pupils' enthusiasm for using computers, has raised the standards in ICT so that they are now above average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils demonstrate very good attitudes towards their work and school life. The pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons and at break times. Pupils' rates of attendance are below average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are confident and very interested in the work they do and are very well behaved.
- The children in the nursery and reception classes are well on course to achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- There are very good relationships throughout the school.
- The attendance rate is lower than it should be, although there are good procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance.
- Overall, the pupils with identified behavioural difficulties respond well to the school's strategies to support them.

Commentary

6. The good attitudes of pupils towards their work, reported on at the previous inspection, have been maintained and are now very good. The majority of children are well motivated and they enjoy school activities. Encouraged by their teachers, pupils show a sensible commitment to their work. They are confident in their dealings with others and with visitors they are keen to talk about their life in school. Playtimes and lunchtimes provide happy social occasions for the children when they play games or just talk with friends.
7. Pupils have a good knowledge of right from wrong and behaviour throughout the school is very good. During the inspection there were no signs of bullying or other aggressive behaviour and this is the result of a drive by management to eradicate such behaviour. Aggressive behaviour, when it does occur, is dealt with promptly and effectively.

8. In lessons, teachers place an importance on encouraging children to learn and set challenging but realistic objectives in lessons. The use of personal targets enables pupils to see their progress over time. The very good relationships between pupils and staff are a major contribution to children's learning because they create a trusting environment in the classroom. There is a mutual respect between pupils and staff and teachers ensure that all children are fully included in lessons.
9. Through the personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) the pupils are given opportunities to learn and to question knowledge essential to their development. The pupils learn to respect other people's feelings and values and develop a sense of spiritual awareness. Through the school council and the system of class councils pupils begin to develop an understanding of democracy and the responsibilities of living in a community. Pupils have a keen sense of fairness and deplore any kind of discrimination. They show compassion for those less fortunate than themselves through their support of charities. In religious education lessons, they appreciate that others may have religious beliefs that are sometimes different from their own and can accept this with a mature understanding.
10. The children in the Foundation Stage develop good relationships with the adults who work with them and with each other. The children enjoy coming to school. They like to learn and they are beginning to concentrate well and persevere to complete a task before they move to a new activity.
11. The pupils with challenging behaviour are well provided for and supported in meeting their individual targets. All of the adults ensure that the pupils are given good opportunities to develop self-confidence and self esteem.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.7	School data	0.4
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

12. Although there has been an improvement in the past year, the attendance rate is below the national average. The school has developed good procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance and is working hard to improve the attendance rate. Most parents appreciate the importance of their children attending school regularly but the biggest single reason for absences is the taking of holidays in term time and the school is working actively with parents to reduce this.
13. Punctuality is satisfactory and most children arrive on time for the start of the school day. There is, however, a small number of pupils who have difficulty in getting to school on time.

Exclusions

14. During the past year there has been a significant number of half-day exclusions. The school does not exclude lightly and staff make great efforts to resolve problems rather than exclude.

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	688	59	1
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	14	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	8	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	6	0	0
Black or Black British - Caribbean	3	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

15. The quality of education is good overall. Teaching and learning are good in all parts of the school. The curriculum provision is good in nearly all subjects: in geography it is satisfactory. Additional activities that enrich the curriculum are very good. Provision for pupils with special education needs is particularly strong. The accommodation in mobile classrooms is unsatisfactory for older pupils.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good in all parts of the school: the quality of the assessment of the pupils' work is good. These are significant improvements over that found at the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective literacy, numeracy and science teaching and learning throughout the school.
- The teaching meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs well and has a positive effect on their learning.
- Insufficient opportunities are taken to apply numeracy across the curriculum and ICT skills in non-core subjects.
- Assessment procedures effectively support pupils' learning by identifying what pupils can do and what they need to do to improve.
- Good use of classroom assistants in supporting pupils' learning, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 76 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14 (18%)	45 (59%)	17 (23%)	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 improvement in the quality of teaching is one of the main factors in raising standards and achievement and in overcoming the previous underachievement. The good teaching in the Foundation Stage enables the children to make a good start and they progress well. The teachers and their assistants plan the learning activities carefully to ensure that there are opportunities for the children to have access to all six areas of learning and in the reception classes to the literacy and numeracy strategies. This careful planning is continued through the school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is well planned and this results in the good progress seen in learning to read and in numeracy work. For the younger children, child initiated

experiences and direct teaching are generally balanced well, and the adults help the children to feel secure, gain confidence and communicate with others.

17. In the infants and juniors, the quality of teaching is consistently good in English, mathematics and science. The effective leadership of subjects, year groups and senior staff ensures that there is a consistency in teaching throughout the school. More able pupils are taught in a challenging and effective way. Writing was identified by the school as an area for development. Recent training has significantly improved the teaching of writing and it is beginning to have an impact, although standards are still not high enough. Pupils respond well to the teaching, persevering with tasks and taking a pride in their finished work. The school is not providing sufficient opportunities in the planning to apply numeracy skills across the curriculum and ICT skills in non-core subjects and opportunities to use these skills are missed in some lessons.
18. The co-ordinator for special educational needs, teachers and the classroom assistants plan together effectively for the needs of the pupils with special educational needs. The needs of pupils are clearly identified by the assessments that are carried out and strategies to address them are then highlighted in the pupils' individual education plans. The pupils are mainly supported within the classes but are withdrawn appropriately on some occasions so that their specific needs can be addressed. The individual education plans for the pupils contain clear targets that are manageable and practical and are effectively implemented.
19. The classroom assistants are used well in all classes and provide very effectively for pupils with special educational needs. They have been trained well in carrying out their roles and are clear about what they are doing to support the pupils they are working with. Consequently this supports the pupils' good achievements.
20. In Years 2 to 6, pupils' needs in numeracy and literacy are carefully met in each year by four ability groups. This is a much improved arrangement over the system used previously, that was too complex and limited progress because the pupils' progress was not able to be well monitored. Generous teacher staffing of these groups and extra classroom assistant support in the fourth set, enables most pupils to achieve well in these subjects.
21. Good assessment and tracking systems to ensure that pupils achieve well have been established; these are particularly well developed in English. Good arrangements are in place to check what the Foundation Stage children know, understand and can do and the information is well used to plan the next steps children need to take in their learning. Throughout the school, teachers use questions very effectively to assess and extend the pupils' understanding. Marking is a strength of the school and provides pupils with very clear guidance on how they might improve their work.

The curriculum

The breadth of curriculum opportunities offered by the school is good. Opportunities for learning outside of lessons are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils.
- The provision in the Foundation Stage is good.
- The planned use of literacy in other subjects is well developed but not in numeracy and ICT.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils' needs are well met by the good number of well-qualified teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Accommodation for older pupils is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

22. The school has worked hard and successfully to develop a relevant and good quality curriculum since the last inspection. All of the issues identified in the last report have been comprehensively addressed, resulting in a curriculum that interests and challenges pupils whilst ensuring their skills and knowledge are systematically developed. Regular monitoring and tracking systems identify areas of weakness in the pupils' achievement. These are then addressed by careful planning and training for staff. For example, the 'Sharp Pen' initiative which is now raising standards in pupils' writing. Whilst teachers plan carefully to develop pupils' literacy skills in other subjects, the use of their numeracy and ICT skills is underdeveloped.
23. The school plans a good range of learning opportunities that caters for different interests, aptitudes and particular needs, whilst ensuring challenge and progression. A very wide range of after-school activities enriches the curriculum. Because the activities suit the interests of pupils they are well supported and make a valuable contribution to their learning. There is very good provision for personal, social and health education, which is timetabled across the whole school. There is very good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The school meets the disability discrimination requirements.
24. The good provision for the children in the Foundation Stage means that they get a good start to their education and this is a strength of the school. The children have access to a range of well-planned learning activities. The classrooms and use of the very good outside area is well organised and encourages the children to become involved in the adult led and independent learning opportunities provided.
25. Special educational needs pupils are well provided for and consequently make good progress and achieve well. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the teachers and the classroom assistants. Individual education plans effectively promote learning and are implemented well. A good level of support is in place to enable the pupils to sustain their attention and concentration and to participate in lessons and other activities. Good arrangements are in place to review the individual education plans against clear success criteria and to determine the next steps to concentrate on.
26. Although the accommodation is very good in the nursery and main school it is unsatisfactory overall because of the use of five old mobile units. The units are cramped, some distance from the main building and there is no toilet provision. The school is well aware of the need to replace the units and plans are in hand for the construction of permanent classrooms. Although over a hundred years old the main building is well maintained. Teachers have made imaginative use of the classrooms and turned them into attractive and stimulating learning environments. Learning resources are very good in the nursery and are satisfactory in the school.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of its pupils, ensuring their welfare, health and safety. The support and guidance they are offered is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good induction arrangements are in place for the children to start school in the nursery and to transfer to the reception classes.
- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs.

Commentary

27. The school has maintained the high standards of care mentioned in the last inspection report. Very good health and safety procedures ensure that all health and safety requirements are fully met. All staff are very caring and children are well supported, particularly those having special educational needs. Child protection procedures are in place.
28. The school has good arrangements in place for when the children start school. These include liaison with playgroups and nurseries attended by the children, children and parents visiting the classes and meetings for parents. In the nursery and reception classes, the children come into school happily and confidently, the start to the day is calm and positive. There are good arrangements in place for the day-to-day exchange of information between parents, carers and the school staff and for the children to leave school safely in the care of a known adult. The adults in the nursery and reception classes quickly get to know the children and establish good relationships with them. This encourages the children to try hard and to behave well and promotes the good progress and achievement seen.
29. The school respects the views of pupils and seeks their views through interviews with a selection of pupils. Views are sought on all aspects of school life. In addition the school learns of pupils' views through the school council and through class councils and acts upon some of the suggestions made.
30. In discussions with pupils, it was found that most have very good relationships with their teachers and receive from them advice on school matters. Most feel they can talk to an adult in the school about any problems.
31. The school is well focused on the need for involving all pupils fully in the life and work of the school. The school is easily accessible. The school makes good provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs. Throughout the school the pupils receive good support from the adults within the school. The special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and classroom assistants are fully committed to helping the pupils to make progress in meeting their targets. The pupils are encouraged to make their own contributions to the review of their targets and to set new ones.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and good links with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision of information to parents is very good.
- In the Foundation Stage, the school works well with parents to ensure that the children have a good start to school life.
- The school works well in partnership with the parents and carers of the pupils with special educational needs.
- Good links are established with other schools and the community.

Commentary

32. The school's very good links with parents are similar to that of the last inspection and are an important contribution to pupils' development and progress. The provision of information to parents is very good. There are frequent newsletters on all aspects of school life as well as termly newsletters giving details of topics to be covered in future lessons, future events and homework arrangements. Reading diaries are also used as a means of communication between school and parents. The active parents' association (Quids for Kids) raises substantial funds for

the school. The events organised by the association are well supported by parents and the community and provide useful social occasions where parents, teachers and pupils can meet.

33. Consultation meetings are held each term. In the Autumn targets are set, in the Spring progress is discussed and in the Summer the annual reports are discussed. Annual reports show details of the progress made in achieving targets. Many parents accept invitations to attend class assemblies.
34. The school makes very good efforts to consult with parents and to ascertain their views. Questionnaires to parents are sent out annually. A working party of parents, set up in response to concerns raised in questionnaires, resulted in changes to pupils' lunchtime arrangements and the starting of workshops for parents. In the Foundation Stage, the school staff are readily available on a day-to-day basis to discuss with parents and carers any problems affecting their children.
35. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to contribute to and attend the reviews of the progress their children are making and are always made aware of the targets set for their children in their individual education plans.
36. Induction days are held for parents of children starting nursery and reception where there are opportunities for them to meet the staff and learn about ways to help their children. Workshops in literacy and numeracy have taken place successfully for all parents and an ICT workshop is planned for after half term.
37. The school's links with the community are good. For example, family literacy programmes are run annually for parents in conjunction with a local College. There are plans to start this again next term for reception and Year 1 parents. Good links are established with other schools and in particular with the main receiving secondary school. A bridging curriculum has been set with the latter school and this term the focus is on science, with mathematics and English following in other terms. Overall the links with secondary schools provide a smooth transition for pupils about to enter their next stage of education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good overall. Leaders and managers work as a cohesive team to promote a positive attitude towards learning in the school and raise standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the current acting headteacher is good.
- Senior leaders and managers successfully promote a team approach to school improvement.
- All staff are committed to raising standards of achievement.
- Analysis of data and target setting is very good.
- Subject leaders are knowledgeable and effective.
- Financial planning is good.

Commentary

38. The acting headteacher provides effective leadership. She provides a very clear direction and a commitment to raising standards. She is deeply committed to the school, the pupils and the staff and plays a visible role in the daily life of the school community. Her positive approach and determination contribute markedly to the good team spirit found in the school. She has built very effectively on the strong foundations laid by the substantive headteacher who is expected to return later this term. The substantive headteacher has over the last few years built up a very effective management team. This has resulted in improving standards and much more consistent, effective teaching and learning throughout the school. This process initially took time to develop but is now clearly having a positive impact. The issues raised in the last report have been very clearly addressed.

39. Since the last inspection the roles and responsibilities of senior staff have been successfully reviewed. The acting deputy headteacher, and other strategic leaders carry out their duties effectively, share a common vision for the school and provide good support to their colleagues. They initiate change in the way things are done and support others in carrying out their plans. They promote a clear view of what is needed for the pupils and as a result staff have a confidence in the school and a renewed sense of direction and purpose. A clear structure for auditing, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum has been established. A shared approach to decision making is promoted and the team ensures that agreed teaching and learning policies are being implemented. This has been a key component in the recent improvement in standards in many subjects.
40. Senior leaders in the school have done much since the last inspection to foster a positive attitude to raising standards. The ethos of the school is very good and the school successfully meets its aims. All staff conscientiously put into practice agreed policies and reward pupil achievements consistently. The involvement of both staff and governors in school development planning and in the compilation of their own action plans has ensured a shared approach to meeting the school's challenging targets.
41. The school has developed a rigorous process of self-evaluation. A thorough analysis of all available data allows the school to establish specific and measurable targets. More recently the school has undertaken work in analysing each individual pupils' attainment and progress. This has provided an excellent springboard for continued improvement in identifying how to raise standards still further.
42. The school development plan provides an effective evaluation of developments over the previous year and effectively outlines proposed developments for the current year and future years. It gives a clear indication of priorities and timescale. It details specific targets and procedures that will be followed to achieve them. The plan promotes a shared approach to decision making and shows high expectations of all those involved in the life of the school. It encourages senior staff and co-ordinators to take a lead in their areas of responsibility and recognises the need for subject leaders to be given the time to undertake observations of teaching and use the results of evaluations to improve standards still further.
43. The role of subject leaders is a strong feature of the school. They have the opportunity to take the lead in both staff meetings and professional development activities. Their monitoring of classroom practice, screening of teachers' planning and scrutiny of pupils' work is well established. Accordingly they have a complete and up-to-date understanding of standards in their subjects and are able to ensure there is a consistency of approach throughout the school. They have the opportunity to undertake and accurately record a wide range of observations and evaluations and then to use the information to help improve standards.
44. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed. The teacher in charge is working well with her colleagues to promote the provision and development of the curriculum for the children. She has a clear vision of how the planning for the whole Foundation Stage can be further developed to promote the progress of the children, especially in the preparation for the children to transfer from the nursery to the reception classes.
45. The special educational needs co-ordinator's overall approach to review procedures and documentation for the pupils' with special educational needs is thorough and well organised. The governors are supportive of the work done with the pupils with special educational needs and provide extra resources of teaching and support time, and these are effectively contributing to the good overall progress and achievement of the pupils.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,390,279	Balance from previous year	106,973
Total expenditure	1,376,997	Balance carried forward to the next	120,255
Expenditure per pupil	2127		

46. The school successfully links spending to the School Development Plan in providing financial support for the school's key priorities. There are clear budgeting procedures and forward planning is carefully undertaken. Good financial records are kept and all the recommendations made in the last audit report from the local authority have been addressed. Governors obtain a full strategic view of the financial implications of their educational decisions and evaluate fully the effectiveness of expenditure decisions in terms of the improved or sustained educational performance of pupils. Procedures for obtaining value for money are good.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in each of the areas of learning is good and they are well led and managed.

Personal, social and emotional development

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with many strengths.
- There is a good balance of teacher-directed tasks and of children-chosen activities.

47. The children enter the school with a wide range of personal, social and emotional development but overall of well below average level. They children settle quickly and happily when they come into school. The teachers make sure that all the children have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and as a result they develop positive attitudes to learning. The children know the routines well on entering the classrooms. The teachers and their assistants have high expectations of the children's behaviour and ability to take care of themselves. As a result the children's personal and social skills are developed well because they are provided with good opportunities to work and play together and to reflect on the effect of their actions on others. They are beginning to speak confidently to adults and each other. The children behave very well, persevere well with tasks and try hard to think things through for themselves. Good relationships quickly develop between the adults who work in the Foundation Stage and the children.

Communication, language and literacy

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with many strengths including the teaching of the basic skills of reading.
- Assessment is thorough and the information is well used to plan the next steps children need to take in their learning.
- There are too few opportunities for children to try to write independently.
- Planning for integrating the learning opportunities for the older nursery children with those of the reception children has been limited. This has been recognised by the school as an area for development and work has already begun to address this issue.

Commentary

48. When the children enter the school there is a broad range of attainment in language skills but overall it is well below average. The teachers have high expectations that the children will fully participate in the good literacy activities provided. This means that all the children make good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills and achieve well. The children listen well to and respond positively to the adults in all the classes. They are given good opportunities to respond to events in stories and the adults extend the children's vocabulary well. Throughout the Foundation Stage there is provision of a very good range of role-play opportunities for the children to use and develop speaking and listening skills. The teachers develop and build on the children's early reading skills through the sharing of books and stories and the good teaching of phonic skills. By the end of the reception year a small number of the children read fluently and are able to retell stories they have read but standards are below average. On some occasions the use of tracing and copy writing is over used and the children could be encouraged to use their developing knowledge of letter sounds to help them begin to write unfamiliar words for themselves. The teachers are now planning for the older nursery children to have more access to, and closer links with, the learning opportunities for the reception children. This is because some children only have two terms in reception and the school has identified that in some cases this has limited the early development of literacy and numeracy skills. As the time approaches for the children to move from the nursery to the reception classes the teachers prepare the children for transfer, for example by teaching the

same initial sounds to both groups of children. About half of the children reach the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy and a small number exceed them by the time they enter Year 1.

Mathematical development

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with many strengths.
- Assessment is thorough and accurate.
- Opportunities for children to write numbers are limited.

Commentary

49. When the children enter the school there is a broad range of attainment in mathematical skills but overall it is well below average. The teaching of basic numeracy skills is good because it uses the children's natural enthusiasm for counting and using numbers. The teachers provided a good variety of activities and resources to make the learning fun. The children learn through practical experiences and by singing and acting out rhymes that demonstrate the early stages of addition and subtraction. By the end of the reception year a few of the children can write number sentences to record their working out and have a good vocabulary to describe mathematical features such as taller, shorter and longer. The assessment of the children's progress provides clear information, which is well used to plan the next steps, children need to take in their learning and this helps to promote the good progress and achievement seen. Early in the school year there are insufficient opportunities for the children to use and write numbers in play situations. Standards are below average by the time the pupils enter Year 1: about half of them reach the Early Learning Goals in mathematical development and a small number exceed them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with many strengths.
- Resources for teaching and learning are well prepared.
- The children are making good progress in learning to use computers and other information, communication, and technology applications.
- The areas of learning within knowledge and understanding make a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of the children.

Commentary

50. When the children enter the school there is a broad range of attainment in this area of learning but overall it is well below average. The children make good progress and achieve well because the teachers and their assistants plan the learning activities carefully to ensure that there are good opportunities for the children to have access to the different strands within the learning area for knowledge and understanding of the world. These are further fostered and enhanced by visits and visitors to support the learning such as when the nurse talks to the children about looking after themselves. The children are given good opportunities to use the computers that are used to support learning in many areas of the curriculum. They know how to use a program to choose colours, characters and objects. They confidently use the mouse to point and click and can drag objects into a picture. They can recognise the parts of their bodies and how senses are used. When they contrast past and present kitchens they can identify which are the 'odd ones out'. The children have good opportunities to learn about the faith and customs of Christianity as well as other religions, cultures and traditions. They begin to have a sense of their own identity as part of a family and to think about things that make them happy or unhappy. Standards are below average by the time the pupils enter Year 1: about half of them reach the Early Learning Goals in knowledge and understanding of the world and a small number exceed them.

Physical development

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with many strengths.
- The use of the excellent outdoor play area is well planned.
- There are good opportunities to develop fine motor skills through a range of activities.

Commentary

51. The children enter the school with a broad range of attainment in this area of learning but overall it is well below average. The children make good progress and achieve well because the teachers and their assistants plan the learning activities well to make good use of the indoor and outdoor learning areas. They use the very good facilities outdoors to develop the children's gross motor skills, extend the opportunities for speaking and listening, and promote their creative and personal, social and emotional development. The children have opportunities to run, skip and jump, climb and balance and use wheeled vehicles. In indoor lessons the older children show a good awareness of space, they can interpret and follow instructions and respond well when asked to moving in a variety of ways and make different shapes. By the end of the reception year the children can independently dress and undress themselves with occasional help with fasteners. They use paintbrushes, pencils and scissors with care and precision and have many opportunities to develop physical control through joining together pieces when completing jigsaws, using construction sets and building models. Standards are below average by the time the pupils enter Year 1: more than half of the children reach the Early Learning Goals in this area and a small number exceed them.

Creative development

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good with many strengths.
- Resources are very well prepared.

Commentary

52. The children enter the school with a broad range of attainment in this area of learning but overall it is well below average. The children make good progress and achieve well because the teachers and their assistants plan the learning activities well and provide a very wide range of creative experiences linked to the early learning goals. The children thoroughly enjoy art, story and imaginative play and have good opportunities to listen, participate and respond to a range of music. The youngest children soon learn to sing and join in songs with actions competently and enthusiastically. The children know a good range of colours and they paint with enjoyment, confidence and some skill. Materials such as sand and water are available for children to explore on a daily basis. Resources for indoor and outdoor role-play situations are very good and the children enter imaginatively into acting stories such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' or shopping for fruit and vegetables. Standards are below average by the time the pupils enter Year 1: more than half of them reach the Early Learning Goals in this area and a small number exceed them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good** and opportunities for using literacy skills in other subjects are well developed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils are now achieving well, although the school has identified some pupils as not achieving as well as others.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good.
- The organisation of pupils into ability sets results in most pupils being well challenged in their work.
- Recent training has significantly improved the teaching of writing and is helping pupils to achieve well. However, Year 6 pupils writing skills are not high enough.
- The co-ordinator has established very good assessment and tracking systems to ensure that pupils achieve appropriately.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well-supported in lessons.
- The handwriting and library skills of the older pupils are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

53. Pupils make good progress through the school and standards are average in reading and speaking and listening at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in writing are average at the end of Year 2, with an above average proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. However, standards at the end of Year 6 are below average, as they were in the National Curriculum tests for the last two years. In spite of this, however, the present Year 6 pupils have made good progress since they started at the school when their attainment was particularly low in language and literacy.
54. Teachers have good all round skills and pupils of all abilities are challenged well in lessons. Teachers' questioning successfully develops and reinforces pupils' speaking and listening skills whilst ensuring pupils are clear about their learning expectations for each lesson. Pupils rise well to the challenge and are enthusiastic about their lessons. Older pupils interviewed were particularly positive about the improvement they had made in writing. High quality marking by teachers enables pupils to build on their strengths and address their weaknesses. 'Instantly noticeable were the advantages offered...' wrote a Year 6 pupil after the teacher had clearly identified how the pupil's work could be improved. The 'Sharp Pen' initiative, a clearly-focused in-service training programme to improve the teaching of writing in the school, has had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The learning of the great majority of pupils is enhanced by the school's organisation for literacy lessons, whereby pupils are set by ability in Years 2 to 6. This has a noticeable impact on the learning. However, the school is aware that some below average pupils are not making sufficient progress and has developed a range of strategies to overcome it. Teachers have developed particularly good skills in the use of interactive whiteboards to engage and interest the pupils in literacy lessons.
55. The co-ordinator has successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy, which is carefully modified to take account of the needs of the pupils. Very good assessment procedures have been introduced to track the pupils' progress each term and to ensure they are achieving appropriately in all aspects of the subject. This is a very new initiative but, as yet, the benefits of the assessments have not impacted sufficiently to raise attainment in writing at the end of Year 6.
56. The school library is situated too far away from the classrooms of the older pupils. As such, they make little use of this facility and their library skills are poorly developed. With the school's rightful concentration on the development of the pupils' writing skills, the development of their

handwriting skills has been underdeveloped. Consequently too many pupils in the older classes do not have a regular cursive style.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57. Teachers plan carefully to develop pupils' literacy skills in other subjects and this is having a positive effect in improving standards. Good opportunities for writing are taking place in most subjects but particularly, science, history and religious education. This along with the school's other strategies for improving standards in writing is beginning to make an impact. In subjects, such as science and design and technology, the use of specific subject vocabulary needs to be reinforced even more than it is at present.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**. Following a period of underachievement, standards in mathematics are now average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving at a fast rate with pupils making good overall progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is frequently good.
- More able pupils are taught in a challenging and effective way.
- Insufficient opportunities are taken to apply mathematics to other areas of the curriculum.
- Marking provides pupils with very clear guidance on how they might improve their work.
- Pupils respond well to the subject, persevering with tasks even when working out answers is difficult.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

58. Standards are average in the present Year 2 and Year 6. They are improving at a fast rate with pupils making good overall progress. The subject is well led and managed and this is also having a positive impact on the quality of the provision of the subject. Very imaginative and successful recent efforts to raise the profile of mathematics have had a significant impact on boosting pupils' progress and raising attainment. Pupils throughout the school have a good knowledge of number. Many pupils enter Key Stage 1 with below average competencies in mathematics. Building on the good foundations laid in the nursery and reception classes pupils make good progress. Contributory factors to this include very good planning and assessment procedures and an approach that makes the learning of mathematics fun. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills. This was seen, for example, in Year 1 with pupils problem solving. The pupils also develop their mathematical vocabulary effectively. There is a strong emphasis on mental mathematics and pupils have a good recall of simple number facts. In Key stage 2 pupils continue to make good progress. They develop speed and accuracy in their calculation of numbers and have a sound understanding of place value. Investigative tasks are an integral part of the curriculum and challenge pupils' mathematical thinking well.

59. The quality of teaching is frequently good in both key stages. All teachers have the confidence to deliver the subject in a competent and interesting way. Lessons are thoughtfully and carefully planned. There is a good balance between whole-class, group and individual teaching strategies. Tasks are carefully and appropriately set for all pupils and the deployment of classroom assistants is precise and successful. They are always well briefed. Teachers show good subject knowledge in their lesson planning and in their careful expositions and probing questions. Clear learning objectives are shared with the pupils and plenary sessions at the end of lessons are very well used to sum up what has been achieved and to assess progress. Marking is thorough with many positive comments. Teachers consistently offer suggestions as to how pupils can improve their work and indicate what they have done well. Many teachers write

questions to extend pupils' thinking still further and in the best examples pupils begin a written dialogue about particularly stimulating features of the work.

60. Pupils are organised into ability groups across each year group from Year 2 to Year 6. This system works well in ensuring appropriate work is set for pupils of differing ability. The most able pupils are given demanding work that challenges them. Teachers use questions very effectively to assess and extend the pupils understanding. A common strength is the way they provide frequent opportunities for pupils to talk about and explain how they have arrived at answers. This is boosting pupils' confidence in using a range of problem-solving strategies and sharpening their mathematical reasoning.
61. Pupils respond well to the subject, persevering with tasks even when working out answers is difficult. A particular feature of many lessons is the positive working atmosphere created in classrooms. There are high standards of behaviour and the time in mathematics lessons is always used productively. Pupils co-operate with each other when required to work in pairs or groups, answer teachers' questions readily and are keen to learn. Pupils are developing good levels of independent working.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to use and develop their mathematics in other subjects. For example, insufficient opportunities are taken to use mathematics in investigations in other curriculum areas such as science or geography. Because of this, pupils miss opportunities to reinforce mathematical understanding or to practise the use of basic skills. This leads to some pupils having a less secure range of skills than they could have and limits potential progress.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good** and standards are above average. The provision has continued to improve and it is very well managed. Consequently standards are much higher.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved and the pupils achieve well.
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their work.
- The quality of teaching and learning are good overall.
- More able pupils are taught in a challenging and effective way.
- There are good opportunities for developing literacy skills, but there are insufficient opportunities to apply numeracy and ICT skills.
- Marking provides pupils with very clear guidance on how they might improve their work.
- The subject is very well led and managed.

Commentary

63. Standards have continued to improve, largely because of the quality of teaching and the consistency of teaching the subject in all classes. Pupils are achieving well because of this. The subject is very well led and managed and this is also having a positive impact on the quality of the provision of the subject.
64. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. They enjoy their work and they listen well to adults and each other, for example, when Year 6 pupils are carrying out an investigation into the effects of light on creating shadows. The pupils persevere well with completing their work and taking a pride in it. This was seen in Year 4 when they were preparing resources in order to carry out an investigation in to the habitats of woodlice. There is good co-operation when working in pairs or small groups. Older pupils overcome the cramped conditions of their

classrooms through their positive behaviour and attitudes. Pupils use their initiative and undertake responsibilities appropriately and confidently.

65. The quality of teaching and learning are good. Teachers have high expectations, for example, in the quality of presentation of pupils' work and in ensuring that pupils complete the tasks set within a reasonable time. All teachers plan effectively and identify clear objectives for learning. These are shared with the pupils so that they have a good understanding of the focus of the lesson. Tasks are well matched to the different abilities of the pupils and the more able pupils are increasingly challenged to make the most of their potential. The pupils' work shows a consistency in teaching throughout the school with a broad range of work developed. Marking is effectively supporting the pupils' ability to understand how well they are achieving. At its best it is used to develop positive attitudes in pupils' working habits and what they need to do next.
66. The pupils use their literacy skills well. The focus on speaking and listening and writing has improved the pupils' confidence in using language and good opportunities are provided to practise their skills. However, more emphasis is needed on using specific science vocabulary, for example, when writing, spelling correctly and when discussing work. While there are some good opportunities for developing numeracy and ICT skills in the subject; overall these skills are not sufficiently used or planned for.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the age of 11.
- The teaching of ICT skills in the ICT suite is very good.
- The use of interactive whiteboards in classrooms is very effective.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and knowledgeable users of ICT.
- ICT is insufficiently used to promote the best possible learning in other subjects.

Commentary

67. At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is above average. Attainment is higher for pupils than reported in the last inspection and this is largely due to the higher profile of the subject across the school, the improvement in staff confidence in teaching it and the way the subject is now organised and taught.
68. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 understand that computers help them to express their ideas in different ways. They type in short pieces of information, including their own stories and accounts and understand how to use the cursor to change and delete words. They know how to select different programs and run them from the program menu. All pupils observed using computers during ICT lessons were confident in using the mouse, directional arrows and cursor to place text and have made good progress in developing keyboard skills.
69. Pupils continue to make sound progress throughout the school. By Year 6, they use computers confidently in a variety of ways. A very impressive number of pupils from the year group were able to combine text and pictures to create a short Powerpoint presentation on themes such as football or animals. Higher attaining pupils were able to add their own spoken commentary to the presentation. They were able to save and store data and retrieved their own work easily.
70. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of good and very good teaching in many whole-class situations. Teachers show confidence in teaching the subject and have a good knowledge of the programs used. Very successful teaching occurs in the computer suite where teachers are able to spend extended time with pupils ensuring they understand new programs and demonstrating how to use them. In a good Year 4 lesson, the teacher gave a clear explanation of the task, made good use of pupil demonstration and used appropriate

technical vocabulary. Pupils were then able to use newly acquired skills to produce a range of charts and graphs using class data to demonstrate class preferences.

71. Most classrooms have interactive whiteboards. These are an integral part of most lessons and are very well used to promote very effective teaching and learning. All teachers are very skilled in using the boards. They manipulate text, images and pages with ease and allow pupils to demonstrate their developing skills and understanding. During the inspection the boards frequently supported the development of good levels of achievement, demonstrating, for example, some mathematical concepts and processes in an innovative and enlightening way. Teachers and pupils are fascinated and excited by their potential. This has been an excellent financial investment by the school.
72. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes in ICT lessons are very good. They work with enthusiasm and enjoyment, helping each other and concentrating for lengthy periods. Pupils enjoy working with computers at lunchtime clubs, treating equipment with great care and behaving appropriately when they are not directly supervised. Many pupils are skilled at using the keyboard, roaming through programs, accessing sites on the Internet and sending e-mail.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. Resources in the computer suite are excellent and classrooms are generally well resourced with other suitable computers. However pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to practise, reinforce and use the skills they have learned in the suite. During the inspection there was very little evidence of ICT being used to support other subjects. The proposed purchase of a class set of top-quality laptop computers is likely to help remedy some of these shortcomings.

HUMANITIES

74. Only one lesson was seen in history and two in geography and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision in these subjects.
75. In **geography**, an effective range of geographical knowledge is developed. By the end of Year 2, pupils know some of the common features that they may see in their locality. They know about the types of vehicle that they are likely to see outside school and can graph the results of a traffic survey. As a result of their work on the many travels of Barnaby Bear they know some details of countries further away. By the age of Year 6, the pupils have increased their knowledge of countries and places around the world such as France and Peru. They have made comparative studies and know about differences in physical features, daily life and climate. Younger pupils in the key stage learn about globes, find the routes to places and study different journeys. They learn to identify the different geographical features of their own locality and make a detailed study of the area around school. They develop sound map reading skills and produce detailed, attractive and useful land use maps of Sedgley. In a Y6 lesson, pupils were able to make sensible suggestions about the effects on mountainous areas of an increase in tourism.
76. Probing questions were asked in the Year 6 lesson to ensure more able pupils gave detailed answers with pupils responding very well in lengthy and informative group discussions. The school has used the national guidance to establish a scheme of work that ensures progression and continuity of learning. Visits are made to local places to support areas being studied and residential stays provide many opportunities to extend the geography curriculum.
77. In **history**, pupils' learning experiences are carefully planned and are enriched by a good range of visits and visitors that help to bring the subject alive for the pupils. For example, a visit by a 'Victorian lady' enabled Year 1 pupils to make knowledgeable distinctions between the kitchens of the 19th and 21st centuries. The subject is well led by two co-ordinators who carefully monitor teachers' planning, observe teaching and learning in the classroom and make good use of the results of assessments in certain years to monitor the effectiveness of the pupils' learning. Worksheets are now used effectively to support pupils' learning and all teachers plan carefully to ensure that pupils' literacy skills are integrated into their subject planning. The best examples

were seen in Years 1 and 2 and in Year 5, where pupils were given many opportunities to use their writing skills creatively. There is limited use of the Internet to support pupils' learning but, at present, the school does not possess a cohesive series of historical computer programs to support and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the periods of history that they are studying.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and the pupils' achieve very well by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- There is very good coverage of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education.
- There are rigorous and useful assessments made of pupils' work.
- The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Good use is made of literacy skills.
- Use of ICT skills is limited.

Commentary

78. The very good achievement and standards reached in Year 2 and Year 6 represent a good improvement since the last inspection. The teachers use a good variety of methods and interesting activities to help the pupils learn. This results in the very good progress the pupils make in their knowledge and understanding of religions and the part they play in peoples' lives, as well as presenting them with ways to cope with problems in their own lives and helping them to develop a mature moral outlook. The good assessment system in place means that pupils know what they have to do to improve or extend their knowledge and understanding. However it is not clear if the good pointers given by the teachers are followed up in any way.

79. In their work in religious education the pupils learn about Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism. They consider symbolism in the different religions, and how special places can affect people. They find out about famous people who have changed the society in which they lived through the inspiration of their faith. The subject gives the pupils many opportunities to consider how different people view life and use religion to guide their way of living. The older pupils are able to express their thoughts about how their learning helps them to prepare for life in a multicultural society. Good use is made of literacy skills to retell stories and explain ideas in pupils' own words but the use of ICT skills is limited.

80. Visits out of school and visitors to the school enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious ideas and customs. Through the delivery of the curriculum and events, such as assemblies and visiting the local church, the pupils have good opportunities to develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural dimensions of their education.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. One lesson was seen in art and one design and technology and it is therefore not possible to make an overall judgement about provision for these subjects.

82. In **art**, there is a well-planned and worthwhile curriculum that focuses on developing pupils' skills as they move through the school. The pupils enjoy art lessons and activities and the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Good use of ICT skills is being made and contributes to the good range of media and methods being used to depict artistic themes. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to use their skills and knowledge in more open ended and creative ways. The subject is well led and managed.

83. In **design and technology**, provision is likely to be good. Standards are good in the work seen. Year 6 pupils have been developing a controllable vehicle. Whilst much of the construction is teacher directed, there are opportunities for pupils to make choices about ways of developing their vehicles. During the lessons seen, the pupils are installing an electrical motor system. In one class they are planning the best method for fixing the motor. They discuss their ideas well in their groups. In another class, they were constructing and beginning to test their vehicles. The pupils are very enthusiastic and work hard at the task. Those testing their vehicles understand why some are more successful than others, especially in making it go in a straight line. One pupil video records the tests.
84. Teaching is good in the lessons seen. The work is well planned and the teachers support each other effectively in offering advice and guidance. Teachers set high expectations and pupils take a pride in their work, although some of the work appears to be over teacher directed. However, the quality of the work being undertaken is good and this is supporting the pupils' good level of achievement.
85. When discussing their work the pupils are interested, enthusiastic and knowledgeable. They are keen to explain how they produced their products and what they needed to take into consideration when designing and making. They talk about the processes involved and take a pride in their work. There are limited opportunities to develop work using ICT.
86. The acting subject co-ordinator has only recently taken over but is working hard to be well informed. The scheme of work ensures that planning is consistent across the years and classes and that there is a good range of work covered. Effective planning exists in all classes and there is evidence of sufficient time being made available to carry out the planned work. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of the pupils' literacy skills, and to a lesser extent numeracy skills, but these are not planned for and the pupils' specialist subject vocabulary is not sufficiently well developed.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources well to challenge pupils of all abilities.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the work.
- Pupils' learning is based on a carefully planned and stimulating curriculum.
- Singing is effectively developed.
- Good use made of ICT.
- The subject has been successfully developed by the talented co-ordinator.

Commentary

87. Teachers plan lessons carefully and make good use of the much improved resources to stimulate pupils' interest in the subject. As a result, pupils enjoy lessons and work hard to improve. This was clearly evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils performed a round in four parts. Since the last inspection, the co-ordinator has emphasised a curriculum that encourages pupils' active participation in all lessons. It is regularly modified in the light of on going assessments of pupils' performance and analysis of their opinions of the different musical topics they cover. A strength of the consistently good teaching observed during the inspection was the insistence that pupils regularly reflected on their practice to enable them to improve their performance. This resulted in pupils being enthusiastic about the subject and keen to improve further.

88. At the time of the last inspection, two specialist teachers taught music. Well-focused in-service training has improved teachers' subject knowledge enabling all teachers to teach their own class. They make good use of appropriate computer programs and the much-improved range of musical instruments to stimulate the pupils' interest and raise their achievement. Pupils very regularly listen to a wide range of music, from classical and opera to pop. Their evaluations of this music successfully extend their musical vocabulary. Singing is given a high priority in lessons and assemblies and is enhanced by a choir that meets weekly and regularly performs to the school.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well throughout the school
- Well-developed curriculum.
- Curriculum enriched significantly by additional activities.
- Well led by co-ordinator.

Commentary

89. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. There is a comprehensive programme of work to meet all aspects on the National Curriculum and a very good range of activities provided outside lessons enhances this. Year 4 pupils have swimming lessons at a local swimming pool. Nearly all pupils attain the expected level of competence by the time that they leave the school, although there are no opportunities for pupils not achieving the expected level to attend lessons with the school in the older years.

90. Year 5 pupils achieve well at a range of activities. In an outdoor activity, pupils are developing their navigational skills. This is a challenging activity in which they have to find different stations, complete the course in as quick a time as possible and co-operate as part of a team. Pupils rise to the challenge and enthusiastically work well with their partners. In the dance lesson, pupils again work well in their groups and develop their ideas further for performing a dance sequence. They have good ideas and the quality of their performances improves well during the lesson. Some involve difficult changes of direction, height and combinations of movements, which they achieve well. Another very active session involves the pupils in developing netball skills. The pupils demonstrate good understanding of using different passes and most work at an appropriate level of skill. However, by this time the pupils are fairly tired having already carried out the previous two activities.

91. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Where the teaching is successful, the teachers have good subject knowledge, plan thoroughly and have high expectations of the quality of the work and make very clear to the pupils what they are doing. This allows the pupils to feel comfortable to explore and develop their own skills. Overall, the pupils enjoy their work and get involved well in the wide range of activities. In one lesson, two pupils used cameras to record pupils' performance and the teacher used a video recording of pupils' working at the beginning of the lesson to make appropriate teaching points.

92. The subject is managed well and there are appropriate and useful plans. The very good out-of-lesson activities enhance the pupils' learning. The school takes part in a variety of sporting events and matches. There is only one very long lesson per week for older junior pupils. This is split into three different activities, which pupils are involved in for about half an hour each. This session is too long and the teacher took account that the pupils were tired and not performing as actively as in earlier sessions.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

93. Three lessons were seen in personal, social and health education and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement, however, from the available evidence and the wide range of additional aspects provided to support this subject it is more than likely to be **very good**. The provision in pupils' social and moral development is very good and it is good in their spiritual and cultural development.
94. All classes have regular lessons in **personal, social and health education**. Teaching and learning was good in the lessons seen. The pupils are confident and very interested in the work they do. They are given very good opportunities to explore and think about issues that affect their personal, social and health development and they respond very well to the opportunities provided. The pupils are helped to understand the importance of respecting other people's feelings and values. This is developed through specific personal, social and health lessons, through circle time and assemblies but most of all through the way all staff relate to the pupils and are effective role models. The school council and the system of class councils give the pupils opportunities to develop their awareness the responsibilities of living in a community. Through this, the pupils are helped to develop a clear sense of fairness and to support each other.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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