

INSPECTION REPORT

St Giles C of E Primary School

Willenhall West Midlands

LEA area: Walsall

Unique reference number: 104226

Headteacher: Mr. R. Travis

Lead inspector: Mr M. J. Johnstone

Dates of inspection: 14.06.04 – 17.06.04

Inspection number: 257663

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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	259
School address:	Walsall Street Willenhall West Midlands
Postcode:	WV13 2ER
Telephone number:	01902 368308
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Fr. K. Johnson
Date of previous inspection:	June 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the small industrial town of Willenhall, near Walsall. The pupils come from a mix of privately owned and rented accommodation with most pupils coming from a large nearby council estate. The area served by the school has features of significant social and economic disadvantage and is in the top ten per cent of the most deprived areas of the country. The school is about the same size as other primary schools with 259 pupils on roll (142 boys and 117 girls). The number on roll includes 52 children who attend part-time in the nursery and 28 who attend full-time in the reception class. About a quarter of the pupils (above average) come from ethnic minority backgrounds and 16 are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The main language spoken is Punjabi. A broadly average percentage of the pupils have special educational needs and seven have a statement. The main areas of need relate to moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural needs. Most children enter the school with attainment that is well below average. About 22 per cent of the pupils (broadly average) are eligible for free school meals. The school was awarded a school achievement award in 2003 and is part of a national behaviour improvement initiative (BIP).

The school was inspected in December 1999 and placed in special measures. It was subsequently visited by HMI in May and October 2000, in February, June and October 2001 and in March 2002.

It was last inspected in June 2002 when it was removed from special measures and deemed to be providing a satisfactory education.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21114	Malcolm Johnstone	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Personal, social, health education and citizenship
11437	Anthony Anderson	Lay inspector	
21450	Daniel Kilborn	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology Physical education
33168	Tracey Sharkey	Team inspector	English as an additional language English Geography History Music Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

The school is providing a satisfactory and improving education with some strong features. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on pupils' standards and achievements. The leadership of the school is becoming increasingly confident and effective. Pupils like school and try to do their best. The parents are pleased with what the school does for their children. The school provides satisfactory and improving value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- Increasingly effective teaching leads to good achievement for pupils of all abilities
- By the end of Year 6, standards are good in information and communication technology, religious education and art and design
- Children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception
- Despite recent improvements, standards in English, mathematics and science are not yet high enough
- The leadership, management and governance of the school are increasingly effective
- All adults in the school have worked very hard to improve the quality of education
- There is a very good ethos in the school and all pupils, whatever their needs, are supported well
- Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning; their personal development is very good
- Monitoring is not focused sharply enough on which initiatives work well and which do not and there are not enough opportunities for teachers to learn from each other

Since the school was last inspected in 2002, the school has continued to build well on the issues raised. There has been a steady but clear improvement in standards overall. The headteacher and senior managers are now more influential and teaching is more effective.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools by prior attainment
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	E	E	C
Mathematics	C	E	E	C
Science	E	E	E	D

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

As a result of consistently good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes, children of all abilities achieve well and in personal, social and emotional development and creative and physical development most children are on course to meet the expected goals. However, most children are unlikely to reach those goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical understanding and knowledge and understanding of the world. Inspection evidence shows some improvement in the standards attained in the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 but standards remain well below average in reading and below average in mathematics. They compare well with the national average in writing.

Standards by the end of Year 6 are now better than those reflected in the 2003 results. While below the national average in English and science and average in mathematics, standards compare more favourably with those in similar schools. This represents **good overall achievement** given the very low starting point on entry for many of the pupils. Improvements in teaching and subject leadership over the past year are gradually raising standards, and in most of the lessons observed pupils achieved well. This was particularly marked for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Standards in most other subjects are broadly average with some good work seen in art and design and religious education. Standards have improved well in ICT and standards are above national expectations in Year 6.

Pupils enjoy school and work hard. Most pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They develop well as mature and sensible individuals. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory overall but there is too much unauthorised absence. **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is now good. Teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) are taught well and receive effective support. The teaching of English and mathematics is mostly good across the school. Recent initiatives to develop teaching in these subjects and new teachers coming in over the past two years have helped improve the teaching. The teaching of reading is a weaker element. At all stages most lessons have good pace, there are high expectations and resources are used well to stimulate learning. Relationships are very good and the teachers' enthusiastic delivery has a positive impact on learning. Pupils apply themselves well and are productive in lessons. They work well independently and collaboratively.

The school curriculum is good and meets all statutory requirements. It provides good equality of opportunity and inclusion. There is an interesting range of activities, including good extra-curricular opportunities in sport, the arts and music. There is good provision for SEN and EAL pupils and very good provision for pupils' personal and social development. The accommodation is adequate and resources are mostly good. Throughout the school, the care and welfare arrangements are good, there are good links with parents and very good links with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall leadership, management and governance of the school are good. The governors meet their statutory requirements and are developing their strategic role well. The headteacher provides competent leadership and good management. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and all staff. The monitoring of pupils' performance has improved but current monitoring is not focused sharply enough on which initiatives work well and which do not. Financial planning and management are good and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The large majority of parents appreciate what the school does for their children. Pupils say that they like school and feel safe and secure.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The school should now:

- Continue to work on raising standards with particular emphasis on speaking, reading and science across the school and mathematics in Years 1 and 2
- Evaluate what is working well and what is not by stringent monitoring of recent initiatives
- Provide opportunities for all teachers to observe the good and very good teaching in the school

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Although generally below the national average, standards show a gradually improving trend, despite a dip in 2003. Achievement is now good overall. Improvements in teaching over the past year are leading to accelerated learning for pupils of all abilities.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes
- Standards are improving after a dip in 2003
- There has been particularly good improvements in standards of mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT)
- Overall, achievement is now good across the school
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) make good progress

Commentary

1 Most children enter the Nursery with well below average attainment. Teaching is consistently good in the Nursery and Reception classes and helps pupils settle quickly into school life and make good progress in all the areas of their learning. Good additional support for children with SEN and for children who are at the early stages of learning English enables them to achieve well. Despite this good start, the teaching cannot fully compensate for the poor skills of the children on entry and most are unlikely to reach the goals expected of them in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Most, however, are likely to reach the goals set in personal, social and emotional development, creative and physical development.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.4 (15.1)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.8 (14.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	13.2 (15.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2 Standards in the 2003 National Curriculum tests and assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics were well below the national average and well below those attained in similar schools. Standards in mathematics were in the bottom five per cent of schools. Standards in writing were similar to the national average and compared favourably with the standards reached in similar schools. Results from the previous three years had shown an upward trend in all three subjects and this was maintained in writing in 2003. Inspection evidence and provisional results from the 2004 tests and assessments indicate marginal improvements in reading and good improvement in mathematics, although standards remain well below the national average in reading and below average in mathematics. Standards in writing are similar to the national average. The group of

children who took the 2003 tests contained a larger than normal proportion of pupils at the lower levels of the National Curriculum and more pupils with SEN. Over their time in school, pupils have achieved well in writing but there has been underachievement in reading and mathematics. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations show improvements in learning brought about by better teaching that is focused more clearly on effective use of assessment and challenge. In most of the lessons observed in Years 1 and 2, pupils of all abilities achieved well. In science, teacher assessments and inspection evidence indicate standards to be below but close to the national average and high enough to be comparable with similar schools.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.0 (24.6)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.8 (25.3)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	26.7 (25.6)	28.6 (28.3)

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

3 Current standards in Year 6 are better than those indicated by the 2003 results. While below the national average in English and science and average in mathematics, standards now compare more favourably with those in similar schools. Over the past three years there has been a gradual upward trend in line with the national trend. The good teaching seen on the inspection and analysis of pupils' work show good achievement over the year. A few more pupils are now at the higher level 5 of the National Curriculum and there has been a gradual shunting up of pupils at the margins of the particular levels. This reflects the good use of performance data from the school's assessment systems and optional National Curriculum tests to set more challenging work for the pupils. Over the past few years, there is no firm evidence to show any significant variation in the achievement of boys and girls. In Years 3 to 6, school assessment systems have shown boys to be weaker at writing and initiatives have been developed to address this. These are too recent to show clear evidence of success. Across all subjects, annual fluctuations are usually the result of imbalances in the numbers of boys and girls.

4 Pupils with SEN receive good levels of challenge in English and mathematics and, as a result of good support in classrooms, make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. There is also good support for pupils at the early stages of learning English and this helps them to achieve well. Generally, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are well represented in the above average pupil groups.

5 Standards in ICT have improved well and are similar to the national average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding in religious education and the work seen in art and design and was better than expected for pupils' ages. In these subjects pupils achieve well. In all other subjects the work seen was similar to that expected for pupils' ages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils' attendance and punctuality at the school are satisfactory.

The main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils have good attitudes and behave well
- The level of unauthorised absence is too high

6 Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Good and sometimes very good attitudes and behaviour were observed in many lessons and there was a direct relationship between the quality of teaching and the concentration levels of the pupils. Pupils with SEN have positive attitudes to their learning. When they are supported by a class teacher and support staff their motivation, concentration and effort are especially good. In the playground, pupils were observed to play well together and their relationships with each other and with teaching and supervisory staff were often very good. The previous relatively high level of fixed term pupil exclusions from the school has significantly declined over the past year, mainly due to the good efforts of teaching and support staff in consistently applying the school behaviour management initiatives.

7 The school council has been in operation for a few years and this forum has provided many pupils with the opportunity to take responsibility for a number of projects such as the introduction of a 'buddy' system in the school playground. This system was observed to work well during the inspection and it has clearly had a positive impact on children's attitudes and behaviour around the school. Many other opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility for their own work and for carrying out various tasks around the school such as putting chairs out and arranging the background music for assemblies.

8 The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong; they are provided with many opportunities to work together in the classroom and to explore the local environment by means of curricular linked visits into the community. Many subjects of the curriculum, such as art and design, history, science and particularly music, are used well to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Moral and social development is enhanced, for example, through the many opportunities provided for speaking and listening and in working and playing with other children. A range of incoming visitors, who enrich the curriculum and add to pupils' personal development, further underpins this. The school prepares pupils satisfactorily for life in a multi-cultural society. There are now more opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and religions but the all-embracing study of the richness and diversity of other cultures is not yet fully embedded into the school's curriculum. Most children have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong and the positive ethos pervading this school provides a significantly strong and firm foundation within which all pupils are given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.7
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

9 Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory overall and attendance rates are in line with the national median. The incidence of unauthorised absence is much higher than the national median and is unsatisfactory. A minority of parents are not supportive of the school in helping to ensure that their children attend regularly and promptly. The school is proactive in following up unexplained absence with the regular assistance of the local Education Welfare Officer. However, the much lower than average attendance figures from a small minority of pupils has a negative impact on overall standards and achievement.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	179	8	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	9	1	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	43	1	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	1	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is now good. The quality of teaching is mostly good and there is a broad and relevant curriculum. There are very good care arrangements. The partnership with parents is good and there are strong links with the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and has improved since the previous inspection. Good strides have been made in assessment procedures for English and mathematics and the information is being used well to improve pupils' achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good across the school with some good teaching observed in all year groups
- Teaching is consistently good in the Nursery and Reception classes
- Consistency in the teaching of literacy and numeracy is improving standards and pupils' achievements
- Additional teaching support for pupils with SEN and EAL is good
- In English and mathematics, assessment is now being used well to match work to pupils' abilities

Commentary

10 On the basis of lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work over the year, the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. An influx of new teachers over the past two years and the hard work and willingness of all teachers to improve is having a marked effect on pupils' learning. During the inspection almost all of the teaching was at least satisfactory with good teaching seen in all year groups. Some very good teaching was observed in the Reception class and Years 2 and 5.

11 The good teaching in the Foundation Stage noted at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained and is consistently good. This has a positive impact on children's learning, gets them off to a good start to their school life and helps them make good progress in all aspects of their learning. Good relationships feature strongly and result in happy children who cooperate well. Activities are well organised

and facilitate effective learning. The teachers have good knowledge of how young children learn and plan realistic levels of challenge in the work. Resources are used well to stimulate and consolidate learning. Assessment is used well to plan subsequent work.

12 At all stages, the teachers' high expectations result in effective learning. This is characterised by the pupils' strong work ethic, a clear desire to improve and good behaviour in lessons. Most lessons have good pace and the teachers' enthusiastic delivery impacts well on pupils' learning. Pupils are productive, try hard and learn how to collaborate effectively. Strategies such as the 'buddy' system, where one pupil looks after another who may be struggling, and paired discussions are particularly effective in developing strong attitudes to learning.

13 Teachers make good links between subjects and this adds further stimulus to learning. Learning objectives are shared with pupils in all lessons and this ensures that they understand what they are expected to achieve in the lesson. Resources, including new ICT technology, are used increasingly well to add a further effective dimension to the teaching. Classroom assistants offer valuable support to the teachers and help pupils with their work. Where the teaching is less effective, work is not matched well enough to the needs of the pupils, being either being too difficult or too easy. In all subjects, work is marked regularly but there are inconsistencies between year groups with some marking that is clearly developmental and others that is only cursory.

14 The teaching of English and mathematics is becoming increasingly effective. Over the past year or so monitoring of teaching and learning in the two subjects and better use of assessment and target setting has brought about the improvement. Assessment and pupil tracking information is generally used well to plan what pupils do next in the two subjects. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are now well embedded and lessons have a consistent structure. On a few occasions, the closing session at the end of lessons was too rushed and lost its impact. The emphasis now being given to investigative work in mathematics is having a good effect on standards and pupils' achievements. Strategies to improve pupils' writing and speaking skills, for example, an emphasis on drama and greater stimuli to motivate extended writing are meeting with some success. Plans to improve the teaching of phonics are much needed since there remain some weaknesses in the teaching of reading. Homework supports learning in the two subjects reasonably well.

15 The teaching and support for pupils with SEN is good. Teachers use their good knowledge of pupils to select interesting materials and plan carefully to provide achievable challenge and take account of what different pupils can already do. This enables pupils to increase their knowledge skills and understanding in each lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in lesson discussion sessions and helped effectively by the classroom assistants. Individual support for pupils who have statements of special need is good.

16 The teaching of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English is good. All teachers are aware of their needs and work well with the specialist teacher to help them progress. Provision is carefully targeted and consistent support enables pupils to achieve well. The support is often directly targeted at the most able pupils to ensure that they achieve their full potential. The EAL support teacher models accurate pronunciation when supporting groups without interrupting the flow of the lesson. Class teachers value the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and encourage them to share their different experiences; for example, a Year 2 child recently returned from India was encouraged to share his photographs and memories during a class assembly on special places. He was obviously thrilled, he smiled throughout and other children listened very attentively to his contribution.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 37 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5 (13 %)	23 (62%)	8 (22%)	1 (3%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

The curriculum

The breadth of curricular activities and opportunities for enrichment are good. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very inclusive and all pupils have equal access to all that the school has to offer.
- A good range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities and clubs enriches the curriculum.
- Teachers' curriculum planning is good.
- Provision for pupils with SEN and EAL is good
- There is poor access to the school for disabled pupils and adults.

Commentary

17 The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are covered. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned and in Year 1 to 6, the national literacy and numeracy strategies are well established. All teachers make intelligent use of National Curriculum guidance to plan work across all subjects.

18 The school is committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes the development of pupils as well rounded individuals. This is reflected in the wide range of planned first-hand experiences that enrich pupils' learning, for example, visits to Selly Manor, Shugborough Hall, the local Sikh temple and Lichfield Cathedral add relevance and interest to pupils' study of history, art and religious education and give a range of purposeful writing opportunities. The school makes good use of local expertise particularly sports coaching, the local sixth form, the public library and music support when pupils have the opportunity to play a musical instrument and to join the local youth orchestra. A wide range of extra-curricular clubs is available including rugby, football, cricket, netball and an art club.

19 The school is very inclusive and makes good use of highly skilled teaching assistants to support pupils with SEN. The school meets its statutory duties to all pupils with statements of special need and the provision specified in the statements is implemented effectively. Pupils who are the early stages of English language acquisition receive structured and well-planned support from the EAL support teacher and class teachers.

20 From the good start in the nursery, the school places emphasis on pupils' personal development. As they move through the school good attention is paid to education about relationships and pupils are taught about the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse. The Life Education Bus, for example, was used to develop this understanding. Pupils learn the importance of consideration for others and to take responsibility as members of the community.

21 There are sufficient well-qualified teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Resources have improved since the previous inspection and are now good overall. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, although there are some old and unattractive buildings and a particularly poor temporary classroom. Some areas of the school, particularly the Year 6 unit, have very poor or no access for the disabled and this means that the school's stated commitment to inclusion cannot be not fully implemented.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of the pupils and supports them well. The procedures for seeking and acting on pupils' views are very good.

The main strengths and weaknesses

- Relevant staff are trained in child protection systems and procedures.
- School teaching and support staff know their pupils very well.
- The school provides a high level of support and guidance as pupils' progress through the school.

Commentary

22 Child protection systems and procedures are very effective and all staff in the school know the identity of the reporting person. Relevant staff training in child protection has also taken place. The school teaching and support staff provide a very high degree of welfare and pastoral support to individual pupils. The school monitors pupils' academic performance and personal development both formally and informally and steps are taken to identify any problems with a range of strategies, including the use of good individual education plans for pupils with an entitlement to SEN help. School meals staff have a very good knowledge of the few pupils who have special dietary requirements. The Site Manager and cleaning staff help to maintain the school in a good and safe condition.

23 In the classroom, teachers and support staff know their children very well and are quick to observe any personal difficulties exhibited by pupils and to take appropriate action. Pupils spoken to during the inspection confirmed that they feel safe at the school and that teachers and support staff are very approachable if they have any problems. The school operates a very good first-aid system for minor accidents and medical files and parental consent forms are kept on all children who may need occasional medical administration. Regular fire drills are carried out and appropriate records are maintained. The school also carries out appropriate health and safety audits of the site and is proactive when considering possible risks on external trips out of school.

24 Pupils have plenty of opportunities in personal, social and health education lessons and circle time to talk about themselves and to develop their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils' personal development is further enhanced through the provision of both classroom and individual targets to which pupils are expected to work. The school acknowledges pupils' achievement through the praise given to them in the classroom and, more formally, in regular sharing and presentation assemblies. All teachers listen to pupils' views and the school council gives pupils a good voice in school developments.

25 The very high level of child protection, welfare and pastoral support for pupils at the school, together with the very good procedures for promoting pupils' personal development and well being, have a very positive impact on their learning and achievement.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is mostly good. Links with the local community are very good and with other schools they are good.

The main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of parents and children like the school.
- The school is proactive in attempting to strengthen parental links further
- The school utilises the community and other schools very well to support the curriculum.
- A small minority of parents do not support the school as exemplified by the high rate of unauthorised absence.

Commentary

26 A significant majority of parents who attended the meeting or returned the questionnaire are very supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. Parents feel that the school is much improved since the last inspection and that their children like school and are making good progress. However, a few parents expressed concerns over pupils' behaviour and in perceived inconsistencies in school/home communication.

27 The information provided by the school through the prospectus, annual report to parents and via regular and well-designed newsletters is of a high standard. The annual academic reports to parents are also good and they include specific target areas for pupils' development. The school arranges three parental open evenings each year during which time parents can speak informally to staff about their child's development. The school also sends out occasional questionnaires to parents to seek their views and members of the governing body have arranged to have parental surgeries although these have not been well attended.

28 Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs are appropriately involved in annual review meetings and the school seeks the views of parents and carers for reviews of individual educational plans.

29 There is a good Friends of the School Association which provides additional and much appreciated support to the school. Additionally, the school's senior managers work hard to develop school/home relationships, exemplified by the operation of an open door policy by which parents are welcome at any time to call in for an informal chat.

30 A number of parents are occasional visitors to the school to provide very welcome classroom support and to assist with external visits and extra-curricular activities. All parents have been invited to enter into a home/school agreement, which is designed to promote improved communication between the school, parents and children. Parental attendance at school concerts, celebrations and sports days is good and during the inspection about 20 parents attended a special Year 6 presentation assembly following their recent visit to Lichfield Cathedral.

31 The school also makes very good use of the local environment to enhance the curriculum. The school has very good links with the community and regular field trips are made to study the local and wider environment including a recent five-day residential visit by Year 5 pupils to Bryntysilio Outdoor Pursuits Centre. Reception children have recently paid a visit to the Severn Valley Railway and those in the Nursery have been to Dudley Zoo. There are also very good cultural links for Year 5 children who visited Birmingham Museum to study Egyptian art in addition to paying a visit to a Sikh Temple. Very good use is also made of links with the adjacent St Giles Church and ministers often preside over school assemblies. Year 6 pupils enjoy taster lessons in their prospective new schools and Year 7 teaching staff visit the school to provide information about the new schools and to answer pupils' questions.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school continue to develop well. The headteacher is a competent leader and good manager. Governance is strong and effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school development plan is well focused on raising standards and further improving the quality of teaching and learning
- Key subject leaders are developing their role well
- There is a need to consolidate developments and ensure that they are implemented consistently
- The finances are managed well and channelled into key priority areas

Commentary

32 The headteacher and senior management team have recognised the importance of the criticisms made at the time of the previous inspection and now provide competent leadership. The headteacher has successfully raised staff morale after what has been a difficult time for the school. He has worked hard and successfully to maintain the good ethos in the school. There is no complacent acceptance of average standards and there is a clear commitment to further improvement from all staff. The headteacher has been on a number of appropriate leadership courses and established a more assertive role that now includes input from more key people. This has provided a clearer and shared view of the way forward. This heightened sense of direction and more democratic style are well reflected in the improved school improvement plan which embodies a clear and appropriate set of priorities.

33 Key subject leaders now provide a strong steer to the development of their subjects and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. Together with the headteacher, they are much more involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning in their subjects. This has improved their overview of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and enabled them to devise appropriate action plans to address any issues. The effects of these improvements in the leadership of the school are beginning to feed through into improving standards, higher pupil achievements and better teaching and learning. In order to maintain the gradual rising trend in standards and pupils' achievements, more remains to be done to consolidate the good initiatives coming through and to ensure that subsequent monitoring by the headteacher and subject leaders focuses rigorously on the implementation of agreed approaches. There are not enough opportunities for teachers to observe the good and very good teaching in the school.

34 The management of the school is good. Analysis of pupils' performance in national tests has been developed well and gives the school a good picture of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. The information is used well to track pupils' progress, target key areas for development in the curriculum and identify groups of pupils and individuals requiring additional support. The management of SEN is good. The SEN coordinator meets regularly with class teachers to reflect upon pupils' progress and formal planned meetings involving the headteacher and teachers ensure provision is appropriately matched to need. Systems for keeping and updating paperwork are well organised and readily accessible. Good use is made of outside agencies such as the psychological, behaviour and health support services to the direct benefit of the pupils.

35 Performance management is well established and linked well to in-service training and the needs of the school. There is good support for staff new to the school. Day-to day management operates effectively and procedures are clear. This diverts the more routine management tasks away from the teachers allowing them to devote the maximum amount of time to their teaching.

36 The governance of the school has improved markedly since the previous inspection and is now good. The governors are developing their strategic role well and are passionate about the school and the improvements that have been made, while recognising that there is still work to done. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and act as a supportive, critical friend. They are much more adept at analysing performance data and holding the school accountable for what it achieves. There are appropriate policies for all required aspects of the school's work, including racial harmony. There is good understanding of best value principles in most respects. The governors compare the schools' national test results with those in similar schools. They are more adept at challenging the senior management and apply the principles of competition when tendering for work in the school. While the school has been proactive in consulting parents, for example, there has been a governors' surgery and school questionnaire, the response has been disappointing.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	832,440
Total expenditure	797,691
Expenditure per pupil	2,983

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-3,500
Balance carried forward to the next	31,249

37 Finances are managed well and linked effectively to priorities in the school development plan. Financial input from the DfES and financial and consultative support from the local education authority have successfully underpinned many of the developments taking place in the school and given valuable support to the headteacher, senior managers and key curriculum leaders.

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

38 The good provision identified at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained and has improved in certain key aspects. Children are admitted to the Nursery part-time in the September and January of the year following their third birthday. They transfer to the Reception class full-time in the September of the year in which they attain their fifth birthday.

39 On entry to the Nursery class the attainment of most children is well below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. It is below average in the personal, social and emotional development and the creative and physical aspects of learning. Despite the good teaching and learning and effective progress in all areas of learning in both the Nursery and Reception classes, most pupils are unlikely to reach the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical understanding and knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children are on course to meet the expected goals in personal, social and emotional development and creative and physical development.

40 The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and there is a stimulating learning environment that captures children's interest effectively. The teacher, nursery nurse and support assistants work together well as a team linking the areas of learning effectively in order to make learning meaningful for the children. In all areas of learning there is effective use of resources to help understanding.

41 Induction procedures are good and involve useful home visits by staff, induction days in school prior to children starting in the Nursery and Reception. Good information packs are distributed to parents to inform them of routines and how they can support their children's learning at home.

42 Assessment procedures are good and information is used well to plan activities that are appropriate to individual needs. In Nursery and Reception good reports on children's progress keep parents well informed. Children are prepared well for work on the National Curriculum. There is a good partnership with parents that supports learning well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children develop confidence and enthusiasm for learning
- Teaching is consistently good and the children achieve well
- Classroom routines are well established
- Personal, social and emotional development underpins all aspects of learning

Commentary

43 The staff work hard and effectively to help children, whatever their needs, to settle quickly into classroom routines. This develops their confidence and provides a strong foundation for co-operative and independent learning. Children develop a secure understanding of rules and what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They quickly learn the importance of listening to others and speaking at appropriate times. They are taught to take turns, for example, when sorting animals into groups as part of a Noah's Ark project in the Reception class. In the Nursery, children take turns to share musical instruments and playground apparatus. Staff use praise well to stimulate positive attitudes to learning and children are keen to

please them. In both the Nursery and Reception class staff take every opportunity to develop this aspect of children's' learning across all topics.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and make good progress in early reading and writing skills
- Role play is used effectively to develop speaking and listening skills

Commentary

44 In both the Nursery and Reception staff take every opportunity to develop children's speaking and listening skills. All children are encouraged to talk about matters of immediate interest, for example, in the Nursery children take turns to take the class teddy bear home and then talk about what he did. In the Reception class well-focused questions from the teacher encourage increasingly detailed responses from the children. Role-play is used well to develop speaking and listening, for example, in the 'farm shop' in the Reception class. In both the Nursery and Reception class there are listening centres where children are encouraged to follow instructions and listen to stories. There is a good range of early reading books and children are encouraged to handle them correctly and treat them with respect. Staff encourage children to look at pictures and guess what might be happening. They know a number of traditional tales and recount the main features of the story. Writing tables provide good opportunity for children to write letters and simple stories. With adult support and word lists to help them, the more able children write recognisable sentences about things they have done. Despite good teaching most children, however, have difficulty reading and writing all but the very basic common words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is effective and leads to good achievement
- Basic number skills are reinforced well especially through practical work
- A wide variety of activities are provided to help children learn

Commentary

45 The staff have a good understanding of how to develop early mathematical skills and include a wide range of activities to promote learning. The children enjoy learning rhymes and counting songs. Most are able to count to at least ten and to sort objects into sets. The 'farm shop' provides good opportunities for children to use coins to buy and sell items up to 10p. Staff promote the development of an appropriate mathematical vocabulary and provide practical activities to develop simple addition. Children recognise simple two-dimensional shapes. They understand the concept of 'more than' and 'less than' and comparative measures such as 'more than', 'longer' and 'shorter'. The more able pupils are developing a good knowledge of time and can tell the time to the hour. Most children have difficulty in applying their knowledge to simple problem solving activities and have difficulty recognising patterns and relationships.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of experiences that develop children's knowledge and understanding well
- Many children enter the nursery with a very limited knowledge of the world around them

Commentary

46 In both the Nursery and Reception, the teachers plan a good range of activities and experiences to enhance the children's knowledge. The adults ask good questions to stimulate the children's curiosity and interest. They know about the human skeleton and names of the main parts of the body. They are aware that water turns to ice when put in a freezer and that a microwave oven will cook food. They use a variety of appropriate computer programs and are able to control the mouse in order to move images around the screen, for example when dressing a teddy bear. The home corner provides good opportunities for the children to act out real life situations. This helps to develop their speaking skills well. Most pupils recognise common farm animals. In a themed area on holidays, children learn about distant locations and how they differ from their own environment. They can name the different parts of a flower such as the petals and stem and have a basic knowledge of the needs of plants. Children are beginning to gain an awareness of the past and words associated with the passing of time. Children know, for example, that the story of Noah's ark happened a long time ago. Children's poor literacy skills have a detrimental effect on their ability to ask questions about why things happen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outdoor provision enables children to explore and gain confidence on a variety of apparatus
- Art activities provide good opportunities for pupils to develop cutting, painting and sticking skills

Commentary

47 In both the Nursery and Reception the teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children and plan a wide range of activities to promote physical skills. This includes developing hand eye co-ordination in the classroom, such as when completing jigsaws and creating patterns on pegboards. The good range of outdoor activities enables children to develop co-operative skills and to develop strength and determination. In the hall children show a good awareness of space and follow instructions well. Children run around energetically, run, jump and exercise their bodies such as when walking, running and skipping. There are good opportunities to ride bicycles and toy cars. Children respond well to music as a stimulus in drama. Malleable materials, simple tools and construction materials are readily available to help children develop control over smaller movements.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children achieve well
- A wide range of equipment is provided for children to develop creative skills

Commentary

48 Children respond well to opportunities for imaginative play such as pretending to be a shopkeeper and a customer in a farm shop. This provides good opportunities to enhance speaking and mathematical skills. The teachers and support assistant are good at helping the children to use their imagination. Children have many opportunities to develop their creative skills through art, music and construction activities working individually or with others. Children enjoy painting and collage work associated with the story of the Three bears and the hungry caterpillar. Pupils use paint confidently to produce pictures of gingerbread men and penguins. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, the

children have good opportunities to play a range of untuned percussion instruments to accompany the songs they know from memory.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is becoming increasingly effective and leadership of the subject is good
- Drama is well used to support writing and speaking and listening skills
- Overall standards in English have improved but are below average by the end of Year 6
- Standards in reading by the end of Year 2 are well below average but pupils do much better in writing
- Literacy skills are used well to support work in other subjects

Commentary

49 Standards at the end of Year 2 show marginal improvement on those achieved in the last set of national tests, although they remain average in writing and well below average in reading. There has been a gradual shunting up of pupils at the margins of the various levels. In Year 6 standards have improved on the 2003 National Curriculum results when they were well below average. Standards, although below average in this year's Year 6 have improved because recent improvements in teaching have had a positive impact on pupils' standards and progress. Across Years 1 to 6, teaching in the lessons seen was mostly good and pupils achieved well.

50 In the work seen during the inspection, there was no significant variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Pupils who have SEN and the minority ethnic pupils at the early stages of English language acquisition are supported effectively and achieve well. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are well represented in the above average groups. The good work of the EAL teacher has had a marked effect on the achievements of all EAL pupils, including the more able.

51 Throughout the school, teachers work hard to ensure that pupils have good opportunities to develop skills of speaking and listening. By the end of Years 2 and 6, however, standards in speaking are below those expected nationally, although listening skills are in line. Teaching and learning in these aspects is most effective in Years 2, 5, 6 and in parts of Year 3 /4. Pupils have frequent formal and informal opportunities to discuss their work with their partners. Drama is used well through the school to promote speaking and listening; for example, in one Year 3 /4 class pupils took on the role of a book character's conscience and a lively and interesting debate followed about what course of action he should follow. In these classes children listen to each other attentively because teachers constantly insist that they respond thoughtfully to each other's comments. The above average pupils in Year 6 are able to describe events and convey their opinions clearly, for example, during the preparation for a class assembly. A significant minority of pupils are restricted by a limited vocabulary and, consequently, their ability to communicate effectively is hampered.

52 Despite marginal improvement since the 2003 results, standards in reading by the end of Year 2 remain well below average. The above average pupils read accurately, but when asked questions about what they have read they struggle to recount key events in the text. Teaching of reading uses nationally agreed planning, but it is not always accurately matched to children's ability. In Year 2 there is a strong culture of reading and pupils are enthusiastic about books and stories and change their reading books as and when they need to. In classrooms books are not always displayed in an attractive and appealing way and book areas are often messy. The reading 'buddy' system, where older pupils hear infant aged children read 2 to 3 lunchtimes a week, is helping to improve children attitudes to reading and some children described how their reading has improved. The older pupils, both boys and girls, act as very good role models for the younger children and are very enthusiastic about the scheme.

53 By the end of Year 6 standards in reading are close to the national average. Pupils enjoy reading and above average pupils talk knowledgeably about the work of a range of authors. A Year 6 pupil was, at the time of the inspection, reading a complex book about the suffragettes and spoke with passion about her interest in the subject. Despite the current disruption due to recent building works Year 6 pupils can use the library system well to find texts and information. They enjoy helping out in the library.

54 Attainment in writing at the end of Year 2 is in line with the national average but below average by the end of Year 6. Improving writing skills, particularly those of boys, is a current priority of the school. Teachers make good use of the drama for writing project, story plans, writing frames and termly targets to give a structure to pupils' writing and this is bringing improvement. However, the full impact of these innovative projects is yet to be fully evaluated. All classrooms have displays of "tips" for effective writing and children use these well during writing lessons. The school has rightly focused on improving pupils' extended writing and this has had a positive effect on achievement in Year 2. The most able EAL pupils achieve well in their writing as a result of the careful targeting by class teachers and the EAL support teacher.

55 Pupils in Year 6 have good opportunities to write in a good variety of styles, including stories for young children, publicity leaflets, instructional writing, and poems. Teaching is good and teachers strive to find purposeful and interesting stimuli for writing; for example, a trip to Lichfield Cathedral was well used to prepare written texts for an assembly presentation and to write thank you letters to group leaders. Overall, however, the work scrutiny shows that standards of grammar, handwriting and punctuation are not yet high enough.

56 The leadership and management of the subject are good. The two coordinators have a clear view of the strengths and needs of the subject and are enthusiastic. Their teaching provides a good model for others to learn from.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

57 Pupils have a good range of opportunities to use their reading and writing skills in other subjects. They write extensively and for a range of purposes in subjects such as religious education, design and technology and history: for example, white boards were well used in Year 2 to record Jesus' thoughts and speech following the story of the Paralyse Man.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory** but is improving well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership of the subject is strong and effective
- Standards are improving, particularly in pupils' use and application of mathematics
- Standards are not yet high enough, particularly by the end of Year 2
- Teaching in the lessons seen was good and reflected the teachers' enthusiasm and growing confidence

Commentary

58 Standards are improving across the school. In last year's national tests standards were in the bottom five per cent in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6. In this year's Year 2 they remain below the national average but are now comparable with the national average in Year 6. In the 2003 national tests many of the pupils were at the lower levels of the National Curriculum with very few reaching the higher levels. Indicative information from the 2004 tests and a scrutiny of work over the past year shows that there has been some success in improving the standards for pupils at the margins of the various levels. This has been more marked by the end of Year 6 where about three-quarters of the pupils are working at the national level 4 with about a fifth working at the higher level

59 Leadership of the subject is good and has been a key factor in recent improvements. The subject leader, who has been in post for two years, has done well to raise the profile of the subject. His teaching provides a good example for others. Over the past year, improvement in mathematics has been a key priority in the school and a much-needed emphasis on investigative mathematics has been fast tracked with all teachers. This has included good in-service training; for example, there has been good support from local education authority consultants, problem solving workshops and training on target setting techniques. Good analysis of pupils' performance in national and school based testing and more effective assessment and target setting generally have identified the right areas for development and helped teachers match work more accurately to the different needs of the pupils. These promising initiatives are coming through in the improved teaching and during the inspection much of the teaching was good with some very good lessons. Many of these changes are, however, not yet embedded in the teaching and have not been evaluated to find out what works well and what is not so effective. The subject leader is aware of this and has plans to follow this through. There are not enough opportunities for teachers to see other teachers teaching and this is a missed opportunity to further improve teaching across the school.

60 All teachers provide good coverage and balance of work across all the elements of the mathematics curriculum. They follow the National Numeracy Strategy which has given the teaching good structure and provided opportunities for pupils to work effectively as a class, in small groups and individually. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and have high expectations of the pupils. In the most successful lessons, teachers model processes well and match the level of difficulty in the work to the different abilities in the class. The opening whole class sessions to improve pupils' mental mathematical skills are proving effective and by the end of Years 2 and 6 most pupils have a reasonably accurate and speedy recall. Good questioning techniques are developing pupils' ability to think more deeply about their response and to share the different strategies they use to solve a problem; for example, in a Year 2 lesson the teacher asks a pupils; 'Tell us all how you worked out your answer?'

61 Despite the good emphasis now being placed on investigative mathematics, most pupils have difficulty seeing which numerical operation is needed to solve a problem. Pupils' understanding of place value (how the position of a number affects its value) is insecure by the end of Year 2. The

poor mathematical understanding of most pupils when they start school is one factor that leads to the slow development in this key aspect of the subject. In the scrutiny of work, however, it is also clear that some teachers are not using structural apparatus enough to help develop and consolidate pupils' understanding. An understanding of place value is developed reasonably well in Years 3 to 6 and by the end of Year 6 is satisfactory for most.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62 There are some good links with other subjects as teachers' expertise and confidence in teaching mathematics grows. Pupils' skills in measurement offer support to work in design and technology, their understanding of symmetry results in some good quality pattern work in art and design and numeracy skills help pupils with investigative work on computers. Data handling skills, including the use of tables, charts and graphing offer effective support for work in science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good teaching in Years 3, 4 and 5
- Although standards of attainment are below the national average, they are improving
- The subject leader has identified key priorities for improvement and has improved resources well
- New assessment procedures are not yet making a sufficient impact on pupils' progress
- Scientific enquiry and investigative work remains the weaker element of the science curriculum

Commentary

63 Standards in science are below average in Years 2 and 6. They were well below average in the 2003 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 but have improved this year. Improvements have been the result of more rigorous analysis of past achievements and pupils' work. Pupils demonstrate reasonable scientific knowledge and understanding across all aspects of the science curriculum. However, there are still elements of underachievement in scientific enquiry due to a past lack of direct teaching of investigative skills. This limits the rate of pupils' progress. Teachers and teaching assistants give good support to pupils with SEN and EAL. Consequently, these pupils make good progress.

64 By the end of Year 2 standards remain below the national average but are comparable with those in similar schools. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils are presented with a range of opportunities to extend their scientific knowledge. Pupils in Year 2 accurately use vocabulary in their work on circuits and identify everyday objects in the home that require electricity to function. Pupils in Year 1 successfully apply their knowledge of birds and fish to explain why these creatures are suited to the environments in which they live. The average and below average pupils have difficulty applying their knowledge in scientific investigations, which places limitations on their overall achievement.

65 By the end of Year 6 standards are below average, although pupils' achievement is satisfactory in relation to their Year 2 results. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils receive a balanced scientific curriculum. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 demonstrate a good understanding of the properties of materials. They classify materials well, effectively distinguishing between gases, liquids and solids. They are able to explain the different structures of the three groups. Pupils in Year 6 correctly name

the main parts of a plant, and accurately describe their purposes. In an experiment on shadows, pupils in Year 6 applied data handling skills acquired in mathematics effectively to produce line graphs of their results. Weaknesses in the ability of pupils to apply what they know to an investigation still impinge on pupils' achievements.

66 Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good teaching in Years 3, 4 and 5. Throughout the school, teachers plan and prepare well, and good quality resources are easily accessible for pupils. Classroom management and relationships with pupils are good with good opportunities made for co-operative work. Where teaching is good, teachers give clear explanations, set clear expectations and have good subject knowledge. They expect pupils to use accurate scientific vocabulary and ensure good curricular coverage. For example, in a good lesson in Year 5, pupils accurately identified key variables in their construction of a fair test. Through skilful teacher intervention, they justified their thinking and developed their own experimental planning well. In Years 3 and 4, good use was made of the school grounds to enable pupils to gain first hand experience of animal habitats. The recent emphasis on investigative work is not consistent or established strongly enough across the school.

67 Assessment systems are developing well but have not yet had sufficient time to impact on pupils' learning. Marking is accurate, although written feedback explaining to pupils how they can improve is inconsistent. Analysis of past results has led to increased emphasis on areas identified for improvement.

68 Subject leadership is satisfactory. The subject leader has worked hard to develop the science curriculum and is developing further the use of data to set targets for pupils' achievement. She has successfully supported colleagues with their subject knowledge and use of resources, and has undertaken a variety of professional development courses to improve her subject management skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved well since the previous inspection; they are average at the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6
- Teaching and learning are good
- Computers are used well to support other subjects, particularly English and mathematics
- In-service training has improved the expertise and confidence of the staff.
- The coordinator is committed and knowledgeable and has a good vision of how to take the subject forward.

Commentary

69 The whole school commitment to improving provision, particularly with regard to the development of the computer suite and class based data projectors has improved standards well since the previous inspection.

70 In Years 1 and 2, pupils access a variety of programs that support their work in English and mathematics. Year 1 pupils use the mouse and keyboard satisfactorily to explore work on their local environment linked to geography. They change font and letter size successfully and change from lower to uppercase letters when writing text.

71 In science work, Year 2 pupils word process work on growing seeds. They access a number of mathematical programs to support their number skills. Year 3 pupils create birthday cards combining both text and graphics and Year 4 pupils select different fonts when importing art pictures to make invitations to a party.

72 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use ICT well to control a sequence of events related to traffic lights. Year 5 pupils write carefully prepared empathetic protest letters about child labour. This develops their geographical and literacy skills well. Year 6 pupils input text confidently for a presentation on Litchfield Cathedral transferring information rapidly and accurately. They manipulate font sizes, layout of text and import pictures from floppy disc with ease to produce quality outcomes. Pupils in Year 6 have greatly benefited from access at least twice weekly to the computer suite as well as to class-based machines. They have good awareness of the potential of a digital camera and access a variety of CD-ROMs. They interrogate Internet sites successfully to support work across a range of curriculum areas.

73 Teaching and learning are good overall and particularly good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have good subject knowledge and have worked hard to extend their skills and expertise by attending a good number of internal and external training events. They use the most recent national guidance well to ensure the required curriculum is well covered. The recently acquired class based data projectors have rapidly become a significant part of the class ICT culture and good use is made of them by teachers to extend pupils' knowledge and experience. For example, projecting objects onto a large screen enhances Year 5 work on the Sikh religion. Pupils with SEN and EAL are well supported and make progress equal to others in the class. Assessment is recorded as achievement on personal files and logbooks of Internet sites are carefully maintained.

74 Leadership in the subject is strong and effective. The coordinator has enthusiastically embraced new technology and enabled other teachers to fully participate and contribute to the developing and using of the current good resources. He has a good vision and the necessary personal expertise to develop the subject further.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75 Computers are used well to support work across the curriculum with good examples in science in Year 2 and 3. Across the school, pupils access art programs to enhance and illustrate their word processing texts in poetry, story and factual writing. They use a good range of CD-ROMs and Internet sites to support work in history and geography. Year 5 pupils design bridges in design and technology work and Year 6 pupils use digital cameras when creating art on a Tudor theme. They produce accurate line graphs recording changing shadow lengths in science.

HUMANITIES

76 During the inspection no lessons were seen in history and geography. It is not, therefore, possible to make a secure judgement on provision in these two subjects. Evidence was gathered from discussions with pupils, a scrutiny of past work and discussion with subject leaders. On the basis of this evidence the work seen in the two subjects was similar to that expected for pupils' ages.

77 In **history** in Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of famous people and events in history. Pupils in Year 2 are able to talk about the fact that Guy Fawkes 'planted a bomb and tried to kill the king'. They learn about changes over time by comparing old and new toys. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to use a variety of historical sources to gain information. In Year 6, for example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about a visit to Selly Manor where they explored the lives of the Tudors in more detail. In Year 5 pupils wrote a report from the viewpoint of a child living during the Second World War showing good understanding of life during the war. This was well supported by a visit to Shugborough Hall.

78 In **geography** by the end of Year 2, pupils have gained early experiences of mapping from a bird's eye view through drawing sketches of an area of the church grounds. This topic was also used to develop the skill of expressing views on the local environment. Teachers use the field trip to Wales well to develop pupils' skills of geographical enquiry and to improve pupils mapping skills. Work in pupils' books shows a rather superficial coverage but discussions with pupils indicate a satisfactory level of understanding of the subjects covered and a keen interest in both subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus
- Pupils build up a good knowledge of their own and other religions
- Assessment systems do not yet systematically track pupils' achievements
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development

Commentary

79 By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding exceed the expected levels but most pupils' below average literacy skills limit their overall achievement. On the basis of a scrutiny of pupils' past work and discussions with them, it is clear that knowledge and understanding is not developed as systematically in Years 1 and 2 as in Years 3 to 6.

80 Teaching is good overall. Teachers celebrate the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and in the work covered and lessons seen great value was placed on the different religions represented in the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and as a result pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6, develop an in-depth knowledge of Sikhism, Islam and Christianity. Throughout the school pupils demonstrate an accepting and increasingly understanding attitude to the beliefs of others; for example, during a lesson about the creation pupils explained that different religions believe different things about how the world came to exist. One Hindu child commented that Christians believe this but his own religion did not. Those around him quite happily agreed with this. The Year 6 work seen indicates that pupils are developing positive personal qualities and attitudes as a result of their learning about other religions; for example, they are aware that people are entitled to freedom and men and women should have equal opportunities. In the less effective lessons and the one unsatisfactory lesson, teaching lacks sufficient challenge for the above average pupils.

81 Leadership and management are satisfactory. The committed co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure the requirements of the local syllabus have been adopted across the school. Good use has been made by school staff of locally available expertise, for example, through visits to the local Sikh temple and Lichfield Cathedral to enhance the learning of pupils. There is a recognised need to develop assessment procedures in order to monitor pupils' progress and build more effectively upon what pupils already know.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

82 One lesson was observed in art and design and one in music. It was not possible to see any design and technology lessons. It is not, therefore, possible to make a secure judgement on provision in these three subjects. Additional information was gained from pupil and staff discussion, scrutiny of work on display and in pupils' books. Pupils were heard singing in assemblies. In design and technology and music the work seen was similar to that expected for pupils' ages and in art and design, the work was generally better than expected.

83 In **art and design** there is a good range of work produced in a variety of media across the school. In the good lesson observed in Year 6, pupils produced some good work in connection with a visit to Lichfield Cathedral. Pupils had gained inspiration from what they had observed to produce, for example, good quality three-dimensional models, representations of stained glass windows and collage work.

84 Pupils in Year 2 have developed good colour mixing techniques when creating shades of colour by adding various quantities of white paint to primary colours. Art and design work is linked well to other subjects, for example, pupils in Year 5 have produced good collage work depicting the stages of a river in connection with a geography project and pupils in Year 6 have used computer generated faces as a base for painting portraits in the style of Tudor people in a history topic. The art club offers pupils a good range of additional work, for example, in embroidery, painting and collage.

85 In **design and technology**, a scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that the skills of designing, making and evaluating are being systematically developed. Pupils in Year 1 have investigated the various types of bread and produced a simple plan for making bread. They have used their writing skills to produce a description of the process. Pupils in Year 2 have designed and made a variety of puppets and produced stage-by-stage instructions. They have designed and made their own seed packets after examining commercially produced examples. The work involved them in testing and evaluating their finished packets. Some good work using computers was seen in Year 5 where pupils had generated designs for a bridge on the computer, produced labelled diagrams and built bridges to a design brief with art straws.

86 In **music**, pupils sing well, enthusiastically and tunefully, and maintain a good rhythm. Older pupils receive specialist teaching in playing a variety of musical instruments. Class teachers take additional music lessons. In the one lesson seen pupils achieved well and reached the standards expected for their age, due to the good teaching of the class teacher who encouraged all pupils to participate. Planning indicates that the full range of experiences is provided. Opportunities are provided for pupils to perform for others and to take part in whole school assemblies. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory and contribute to the range of opportunities provided.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of activities, including extra curricular activities, is provided.
- Lessons are well planned using a whole school scheme.
- The use of outside specialist sports providers (including parents) linked to a national programme is helping to improve standards.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and try to do their best.

Commentary

87 Three lessons were observed during the inspection focusing on games skills and athletics. In these lessons standards were similar to those expected nationally. Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN and EAL, achieve well. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to go swimming and about three-quarters of these attain the national 25 metres distance level by the time they leave. Many achieve well beyond this level. Opportunities for adventurous outdoor activities of a physical nature are provided for older pupils on yearly residential visits to other centres. The school has successfully competed against other local schools in a range of sports linked to a 'Sports coordinator programme'. This has enhanced opportunities in physical education well by providing specialist sports coaches from the near and wider community.

88 In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory except when it was taken by a specialist coach. On these occasions, the teaching was good. All lessons are effectively planned and have a consistent and appropriate structure of warm up activity, skill development and cool down sessions. Teachers are actively involved in lessons and give appropriate demonstrations and model good technique. They make good use of the performance of individual pupils to demonstrate what they have achieved. Pupils are enthusiastic and try to do their best. They give good positive encouragement and support when evaluating other pupils' performances.

89 Pupils in Year 2 show appropriate ability in developing and repeating a series of simple sequences. They move around the hall in a controlled way showing due regard for space and other pupils. They are aware of the effect of vigorous exercise on their bodies, listen well to instructions and show appropriate skills when throwing, bouncing and catching balls with a partner. Year 4 pupils cooperate well when working in groups to test and improve their athletic skills in running, jumping and throwing. They use their mathematic skills by carefully timing and measuring performance. Year 6 pupils benefit from a specialist basketball coach and as a result of good teaching make good progress in their ability to bounce, pass and shoot.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

Personal, social and health education

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal and social development is planned as both a discrete activity and within the general curriculum
- Pupils are successfully taught to feel positive about themselves and to respect the differences and similarities between people
- Activities raise pupils' self-esteem and prepare them well for responsible citizenship

Commentary

90 Pupils achieve well in their personal and social development, which reflected in their good attitudes, behaviour and enjoyment in learning. Circle times (when pupils sit together in a large circle and discuss feelings and issues) and specific PSHE lessons build pupils' confidence well and help in the development of their speaking and listening skills. At these times, pupils are able to share their thoughts about topics such as friendship, respect for the beliefs of others and to talk about the good things that have happened to them. They also provide opportunities for pupils to share any concerns they may have. In a good PSHE lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils acquired a good understanding of the work of UNICEF when studying the life of a poor child in an underdeveloped country. Pupils developed a sense of empathy with his difficulties and understood how lucky they are in comparison. The lesson helped pupils recognise the role of charity in society. Pupils in Year 2 learn about the importance of looking after pets and the importance of conservation. Teachers make good links with other subjects such as religious education and science in these activities. Projects in science on issues such as healthy eating develop a good understanding of the importance of diet. There is a sensible and sensitive approach to sex and drugs education.

91 The school provides good opportunities for pupils to have a say in the life of the school. The school council shows pupils how they can elect a representative to speak for them and provides an opportunity for those elected to develop an early idea of citizenship and corporate responsibility. The 'buddy' system - an older or more able pupil acts as a mentor for another pupil - is very successful in further developing the idea of corporate responsibility.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
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	4
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
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).