

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PAUL'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Pendeford, Wolverhampton

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104382

Headteacher: Miss J Morris

Lead inspector: Mr Gordon Alston

Dates of inspection: 4 - 6 May 2004

Inspection number: 257918

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior and infant
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	196
School address:	Emsworth Crescent Pendeford Wolverhampton
Postcode:	WV9 5NR
Telephone number:	01902 558621
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev M Kinder
Date of previous inspection:	October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Paul's is a primary school that caters for pupils between the ages of four and eleven. It lies in the heart of Pendeford, a modern community development close to Wolverhampton. The school is smaller than average, with 196 pupils on the roll of the main school: 98 boys and 98 girls. Children arrive at school with the full range of ability levels. Overall, based on the school's own testing of children, the attainment in language and numeracy of a significant number of children on entry to the Reception class is below the expected level for children of this age. Pupils are organised into seven classes; no class has mixed age groups. The pupils come from an area that has signs of deprivation and above average levels of unemployment. Housing is a mixture of private and council dwellings, a number of which are owned by a Housing Trust. It is an area of about average mobility; for example, in Year 6, 30 per cent of pupils did not join the school in their first year of education. The majority of pupils are white, although a small number come from Black Caribbean or Asian backgrounds. One pupil is at an early stage of acquiring English. This proportion is similar to that found in most schools. There are 16 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, which as a percentage is about average. Five per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs; the majority have moderate learning or behavioural difficulties, and two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. These figures are below average. In 2004 the school gained an award from Investors in People.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20794	Mr G Alston	Lead inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language
19740	Mr A Smith	Lay inspector	
30506	Mr R Bowers	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology
10611	Mr M James	Team inspector	Science Geography History Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This caring school is working hard to improve the satisfactory standard of education that it provides for its pupils. School improvement slowed down in 2003 due to the ill health and subsequent absence of the headteacher. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 where the teaching is good. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching and pupils' achievement are satisfactory. The vast majority of pupils enjoy school, have good attitudes to work and behave well. The headteacher, with the support of dedicated members of staff, provides good leadership. Management is satisfactory. As a result, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Standards in reading and writing are above average in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is good and pupils achieve well.
- Standards in science are below average in Year 6.¹
- Pupils' abilities to solve problems or answer mental type questions in mathematics are weak throughout the school.²
- The school provides very good opportunities that help pupils to develop well socially and morally. As a result the vast majority behave well, form warm relationships, and work hard.
- At present, the monitoring of teaching is not sufficiently rigorous or regular enough and this is reflected in the inconsistency in the quality of teaching across the school.³
- Procedures for checking and recording detailed information on what pupils know, understand or can do are unsatisfactory in most subjects.⁴
- Pupils benefit from the very good links the school has with parents and the good links with the community and other schools.

There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. National test results have improved in English in Years 2 and 6. The good quality of teaching has been maintained in Reception and improved in Years 1 and 2 but not in Years 3 to 6. In addition, the strengths identified last time have been maintained. In relation to the key issues identified, pupil achievement in science and information and communication technology is better, but still needs to improve in science in Year 6. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the role of coordinators whose job descriptions are now in place. All statutory requirements are now met. The illness and absence of the headteacher in 2003 slowed down the planned programme of improvement during this period.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Overall, pupil achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Reception year with levels of ability below those expected for their age. They achieve well and most are on course to attain the nationally agreed early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. In Year 2, standards are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics and science. Pupil achievement is good in Years 1 and 2. In Year 6, standards are above average in reading and writing, average in mathematics and below average in science. Pupil achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special

¹ The need for action is already identified in the school development plan

² The need for action is already identified in the school development plan

³ The need for action is already identified in the school development plan

⁴ The need for action is already identified in the school development plan

educational needs, those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those learning English as an additional language achieve well based on their prior learning. Standards seen in English are good in Year 2 and Year 6. However, pupils' mental and problem solving skills in mathematics and investigative skills in science are not as good as they should be. In information and communication technology, in Years 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is average. The development of pupils' personal qualities is good. The school provides a very good range of experiences for pupils' moral and social development and a good range for their spiritual and cultural development. As a result, relationships are very good and the vast majority of pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are good. Pupils enjoy their school and although attendance is below average, punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory but is inconsistent across the school. Teaching is good in the Reception year and in Years 1 and 2 and pupils learn well. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching is satisfactory and pupils learn satisfactorily. The good support that pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language receive helps them to learn well. Higher attaining pupils learn as well as other pupils. English is taught well with a good emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory, but mental strategies are not taught effectively and pupils have limited opportunities to apply their knowledge in everyday, practical situations. The way the school has organised its curriculum provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning experiences. Good links to the community and very good links to parents aid pupils' learning. The caring environment the school provides encourages the vast majority of pupils to try hard with their work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership provided by the headteacher is good. However, management is not as strong and is satisfactory. The committed headteacher, supported by a hard-working staff, has a clear picture of where the school needs to improve. The school is beginning to establish clear management systems in order to check effectively not only how well the school is performing but also the impact of any action plans that have been implemented to bring about required improvements. The governing body is effective, especially in its role as a critical friend, and supports the school well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school. They are pleased with the progress their children are making, the teaching and how caring the teachers are. The vast majority of pupils enjoy school, like their teachers and feel they have to work hard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure the quality of teaching is consistent across the school by improving the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6.
- Improve pupils' skills in planning investigations in order to raise standards in science by the age of eleven.
- Bring back the rigour and the regularity to the checking of the quality of teaching through observing lessons.
- Improve pupils' abilities in mental arithmetic and problem solving in mathematics across the school.
- Implement more effective systems to check on what pupils know, understand or can do in subjects other than English.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement overall is satisfactory. It is good in English and satisfactory in mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Standards in English are above average and in mathematics they are average at the ages of seven and eleven. In science, standards are average at seven and below average at eleven. The standards pupils attain in information and communication technology are average in Year 2 and Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good in English.
- Achievement in mathematics and science is satisfactory but not as good as in English.
- Children get a good start in the Foundation Stage and achieve well in their learning.
- Children enter with skills that are below the expected level but by the time they enter Year 1 most will reach the levels expected for their age in all six nationally agreed areas of learning.
- Throughout their time in Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make good progress and, by the age of seven, standards are above average in reading and writing.
- Throughout their time in Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and, by the age of eleven, standards are above average in reading and writing.
- Standards in science are below average by the age of eleven.

Commentary

1. Overall standards have risen in national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 in English since the last inspection. In mathematics, standards have risen in Year 2 (but not as significantly as English) but fallen in Year 6. There are a number of reasons why this is so:
 - the major focus for improvement since the current headteacher took up post (three years ago) has been English where training, resources and assessment have all been features of an implemented action plan;
 - in the last 12 months, monitoring of mathematics has clearly identified where improvements are needed;
 - it is only recently that involvement with outside expertise has developed an action plan aimed at raising standards in mathematics;
 - the new ideas being introduced have not had sufficient time to impact although standards in Year 1 are above average;
 - the quality of teaching is better in the Reception year and Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6 and as a result pupil achievement is better in those classes.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.9(16.4)	15.9 (15.7)
Writing	15.6(14.9)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.7(16.6)	16.5 (16.5)

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

2. The table above shows that in 2003 standards in Year 2 were well above the national average in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics. When compared to those in similar schools they were well above average in writing, above average in reading and average in mathematics.

3. The table below shows that in 2003 standards in Year 6 tests were above the national average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. In 2003 standards in English were improved as they have generally done so since 2001. The school has brought about these improvements effectively through in-service work with consultants aimed at identifying specific areas for improvement. The school is also ensuring a stronger focus on spelling and handwriting, purchasing new resources and providing pupils with more time for writing. This has impacted well on standards. The picture is of falling standards in mathematics and science. The school is aware of this and had action plans in place to improve this situation. There is evidence of improved standards in Year 6 but the new initiatives have not yet had sufficient time to impact fully.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8(27.7)	27.1(27)
Mathematics	26.0(25.4)	27.1(26.7)
Science	27.2(27.3)	28.9(28.3)

There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. When children start school in the Nursery class, test data show that their knowledge, skills and understanding are very variable. For the last few years the overall profile has been below the level expected for children of this age in most areas of learning. Children have particular difficulties in the areas of communication, language and literacy and number. They get a good start in the Foundation Stage year and this helps them to achieve well. As a result, the vast majority are likely to attain the national expectation in all areas of their learning by the end of the Reception year.
5. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve well because of the good provision made for all areas of their development. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, who are especially well supported by teaching assistants. Higher-attaining pupils also do well and respond well to the challenges they are set.
6. A knowledgeable infant team leader monitors the classes well, ensuring there is continuity in practice and a good quality is maintained. The good achievement is also linked to good teaching. Well-planned lessons with interesting tasks that take account of pupils of all abilities are central to this teaching. The very good relationships between staff and pupils makes pupils feel valued and cared for. As a result, they try hard with all the tasks they are set and show great interest in all activities. This has produced standards at present that are above national expectations in reading and writing. Standards in mathematics and science are average. Although pupils have good computational skills their mental and problem solving skills in mathematics are not as strong. Similarly, their skills in planning scientific investigations are not as high as their scientific knowledge. Standards are about the nationally expected level for pupils of this age in information and communication technology.
7. Pupil achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 because:
- overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and is not consistent with the good quality found in other stages;
 - recently a lack of regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching by the headteacher has prevented her from identifying how the teaching could be improved;
 - the turnover of pupils in these classes (especially lower attaining pupils and pupils with behavioural difficulties going in and out of the school impacts on achievement;
 - the junior coordinator does not have the same significant impact on the management as that found in other stages across the school.

8. Standards at present in Year 6 are above national expectations in reading and writing. Standards in mathematics are average and in science they are below average. Although pupils have good computational skills their mental and problem solving skills in mathematics are weak. Similarly, their skills in planning scientific investigations are weak. Standards are about the nationally expected level for pupils of this age in information and communication technology.
9. The school has made a good effort at introducing the National Literacy Strategy. Careful monitoring in English has enabled the school to modify the strategy to meet the needs of its pupils. This has impacted well on standards. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has not been as successful. However, recent monitoring has identified weaknesses in pupils' mental skills and problem solving skills, and a planned programme to address these areas has been implemented. Pupils' literacy skills are not given sufficient emphasis and further developed in other subjects in both infant and junior classes. There are few opportunities for them to write at length for different purposes in subjects other than English. Likewise, there are too few opportunities for reading for information across subject areas. In subjects other than mathematics, appropriate use is made of pupils' numeracy skills to classify, compare and measure. Examples were seen in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, and science. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in practical, everyday situations in mathematics lessons.
10. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. Class teachers and teaching assistants assess their needs and progress and draw up and monitor the individual educational plans. This close cooperation and frequent reviews of their targets contribute significantly to the good progress made by these pupils. A small number of pupils do not have English as their first language and one of these pupils is new to the English language. Overall, the progress of the pupil who is at an early stage of English language acquisition is good. Teaching assistants and a specialist teacher provide strong support, and other pupils are always happy to help. Gifted and talented pupils' needs are met through the challenging tasks that are provided in lessons and the good opportunities which they and other pupils have to take part in out-of-school clubs, particularly in sport and music. Throughout the school, girls and boys perform similarly. Higher-attaining boys and girls do equally well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good** with some very good elements. Pupils enjoy their school and although attendance is below average, punctuality is good. These findings are in general an improvement on the previous inspection apart from the levels of attendance, which have fallen slightly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very eager to be included in learning activities, particularly in Reception.
- The quality of relationships is very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and provision for social and moral development is very good.
- Although the school tries hard to make parents aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality; attendance is slightly below the national average.

Commentary

11. Pupils' good attitudes make a positive contribution to their attainment and levels of achievement. Across the school they settle quickly in class and are keen to be included in the learning activities due to the high respect staff have for them. They confidently share ideas because their responses are valued and self-esteem is consistently promoted. Pupils appreciate the challenging tasks put before them, for example:

- in a Year 3 history lesson they eagerly participated in preparing a Roman banquet;
- in a Year 1 science lesson, pupils were fully engaged in investigating a growing bean shoot.

- Throughout the school, pupils show clearly that they know the differences between right and wrong and show a good regard for the property of others and the school environment. The vast majority of pupils respond well to school rules and are undoubtedly aware of the consequences of their behaviour. Their understanding of what constitutes appropriate behaviour is established at a young age and makes a major contribution to this very orderly community. However, at times a very small number of pupils who have significant emotional problems disrupt lessons. The school tries hard to support these pupils through difficult times. The school places a high priority on moral development. A whole school policy ensures staff members have a consistent approach to promoting this aspect and equally high expectations. There have been no exclusions of pupils from the school in the past year.
- Relationships within the school are very good and enable all pupils to learn and achieve effectively. The mutual respect, which is clear between pupils and adults who work with them, is a strong motivating factor. Members of staff provide very good role models in demonstrating how relationships are initiated and sustained. In response, pupils work and play constructively and show sensitivity and concern for the feelings and values of others when, for instance, sharing their work in plenary sessions. Pupils relate very well to visitors, offering natural courtesy and genuine politeness and interest. Pupils of all ages enjoy responsibilities when asked to help with school routines such as accepting responsibility as monitors and school council members.
- The opportunities for pupils to gather insight into beliefs and develop their spiritual awareness are good. The weekly assemblies, celebrating pupils' successes, are very beneficial in raising their self-esteem. The provision for moral and social development is very good. Moral issues are raised in assemblies and in circle time there are rich opportunities for class discussions.
- Pupils throughout the school show a considerable pride in being members of the school community and clearly enjoy being in school. They are both interested and involved in the wide range of activities that the school provides, both in lessons and out of school hours. Parents are vastly supportive of the school, and very happy with the values the school promotes. No racist or bullying incidents were seen during the inspection.
- Pupils with special educational needs are generally very positive and well motivated towards their work. This supports their very good rate of progress. On rare occasions, pupils whose barriers to learning are emotional and behavioural find difficulty in concentrating on lessons and meeting class expectations for acceptable behaviour. This does, at times, influence the common purpose within the classroom.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.6
National data	0.4

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

- Attendance rates have dipped recently and are now slightly below the national rates. The long-term absence through illness of one pupil has impacted on the attendance figures for the school. The school rigorously monitors attendance and punctuality and attempts in many ways to make parents and pupils fully aware of the importance of full attendance and punctuality. The number of holidays being taken during term time is a significant factor in current attendance data. The strong family ethos of the school gives rise to children being very happy to come to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Strengths include the care shown to pupils and the consistently good teaching in some classes. Further strengths are the very good links the school has forged with its parents and the good links with the community. Pupils receive an appropriate range of learning experiences. However, there is a need to improve the procedures the school uses to check on what pupils know, understand or can do in nearly all subjects and to ensure the quality of teaching is consistent between stages.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is **satisfactory** and the needs of all pupils are appropriately met. In the 29 lessons seen nearly all the teaching was at least satisfactory, and it was very good in ten per cent of lessons. In one junior lesson the teaching was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in Reception is good and has been maintained since the last inspection and it is good in infant classes where it has improved. However, although some good lessons were seen the overall quality of teaching in junior classes has not improved and is only satisfactory. As a result of the quality of teaching, pupils' achieve well in the Reception and Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. However, recently there has not been a sufficiently strong focus on improving the teaching through observing teachers and professional discussion. The headteacher has a clear plan to re-introduce this. Although there are procedures in place to monitor long term progress and set targets, the assessment and detailed records of what pupils know, understand or can do are unsatisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 29 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3	11	14	1	0	0

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality teaching in the Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to their education.
- The effective teaching in Year 1 and 2 builds well on past learning.
- There is not enough good teaching in Years 3 to 6.
- There are weaknesses in the teaching of mental mathematics and a lack of opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in everyday practical situations.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations in science.
- The procedures for checking on how well pupils are learning are unsatisfactory as there is a lack of detailed recorded evidence of exactly what pupils know, understand, or can do.

Commentary

18. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the Reception class is good. The teacher has a secure understanding of the social, emotional and educational needs of the children, and she plans a very appropriate range of activities. She has suitably high expectations of both work and behaviour, and this contributes to the good progress the children make. The teacher has a pleasant, helpful and encouraging manner with the children, and gives them much praise for their work. A suitable range of strategies is used in teaching the children, and most effective use is made of the large classroom space available. The pace of lessons is brisk, and all children make a full contribution. Procedures for recording how well children are doing are thorough, and the teacher and the Nursery nurse complement each other well in ensuring that the children are provided with tasks that are suitable to their needs.

19. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is good. A particularly strong aspect is the good teaching of basic skills, particularly literacy skills. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson the pupils were taught to spell common words and where to use capital letters. Pupils developed good skills in writing sentences that will help them with their story writing. Teachers use teaching methods that challenge pupils. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, the teacher got the pupils to divide groups of objects into sets. Pupils began to understand and use the vocabulary of division successfully. There is very good pupil management. For instance, in a Year 2 music lesson pupils were able to respond well to clear instructions and successfully explored long and short sounds using percussion instruments.
20. The teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory. In the best lessons the teacher's planning clearly links with previous work and tasks are interesting and challenging. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson the teacher asked the pupils, 'What is the difference between fact and opinion?' From the brainstorming that followed he then introduced a challenging task that involved pupils using their new knowledge in understanding a piece of persuasive writing. Where teaching is less effective, a common weakness is low expectations, for example, higher attaining Year 5 pupils quickly multiplied a set of numbers by two, five or ten and found the work too easy. Another weakness is where work not well matched to pupils' abilities. For example, in Year 3 the task of adding two, three digit numbers together using partitioning proved too difficult for lower attaining pupils and they did not understand how to use partitioning. This reflects weaknesses in the systems for checking on pupils' learning and using this information effectively in planning lessons. In addition, in a number of classes there are pupils who have emotional/behavioural difficulties, usually pupils who have joined the school in junior classes, and who at times hinder other pupils' learning. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, constant interruptions made it difficult for some pupils to concentrate well on the lesson.
21. Further areas for improvement are needed where the teaching fails to make good use of the skills that pupils have been taught because there is a lack of opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations in science. Not enough use is made of pupils' reading and writing skills across all subjects. Pupils are not given enough tasks that require them to use their mathematical knowledge and understanding in practical problem solving activities. These deficiencies restrict pupils' achievement in their ability to solve mathematical problems, plan scientific experiments and further improve their reading and writing skills.
22. Similarly, some skills are not taught effectively because in mathematics, the mental and oral starter has too narrow a focus of questions. Teachers fail to allow pupils to explain their strategies and questions are not differentiated. Little use is made of whiteboards to ensure all pupils are fully involved or for teachers to check on their learning. As a result, pupils are not confident or as competent as they should be in answering mental mathematical questions.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress towards their targets because planning reflects the targets identified in pupils' individual education plans. Teaching assistants who work with pupils with special educational needs are used very well in lessons to offer focused individual and group support. The support offered by these staff is very good as they have a good understanding of pupils' academic and emotional needs. The teaching of pupils with English as additional language is good because there is a strong emphasis on developing their speaking and listening skills. The very good relationships teachers have with their pupils give those who are new to the English language the confidence to join in class activities.
24. Although there are procedures in place to monitor pupils' progress each year and set targets, the assessment and recording of detailed information on what pupils know, understand or can do is unsatisfactory in most subjects. In English, teachers assess their pupils appropriately in all activities to highlight any areas of strength or difficulty. This information is then used well to plan work to meet the pupils' needs. Pupils are tested frequently in mathematics. This information is used as a means of checking their learning in infant classes but this is not well

used in junior classes. In other subjects, information about individual pupils' achievements is not sufficiently detailed or easily accessible to teachers. As a result, teachers do not have a clear picture of what pupils know and understand, and of the skills they have in these subjects. This reduces the security for teachers in planning the next stage of learning by building on the work pupils have learnt in the previous lessons. This was in evidence in less effective lessons where groups of pupils were not sufficiently challenged at times. Tracking systems are in place and show the progress that pupils are making towards the targets they have been set and whether this is good enough. These targets are reviewed to identify pupils who are not doing as well as they should. Reasons why these pupils are underachieving and ways forward for them are then discussed. This ensures that they all do as well as they should. All staff give pupils good verbal feedback on their work, and the marking of work is always helpful. It gives pupils a clear picture of whether they have learnt what was intended.

The curriculum

The provision of learning experiences for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**, and is **satisfactory** for pupils in Years 1 to 6. Extra-curricular provision is good, and that for sport is very good. The accommodation is good, and the overall quality of the learning resources is satisfactory. The curriculum has improved since the time of the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall provision made for English is good.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to use their own initiative in undertaking practical and problem-solving activities in mathematics and science.
- The provision made for children in the Reception class is good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Limited use is made of literacy and information and communication technology to support work in other subjects.
- The enrichment produced through extra-curricular activities and educational visits is good.
- There are an appropriate number of teachers and teaching assistants, and they complement each other well in supporting pupils.

Commentary

25. The range of learning experiences provided for children in Reception is good. Detailed plans are in place, which most successfully incorporate all the areas of learning that should be taught to children before they enter Year 1. Lesson planning is comprehensive, and the children have access to a wide range of interesting activities and experiences, both in the classroom and in the outdoor area. The classroom is well resourced, outings are arranged and the children are very well supported and encouraged by the teacher and teaching assistant. A rich, stimulating and varied curriculum is the result.
26. The range of learning experiences provided ensures the curriculum is broad and balanced for Years 1 to 6. All subjects are now carefully planned, and all statutory requirements are met. Improvements have been made since the last inspection in the provision for science and especially information and communication technology, and in the planning for nearly all subjects. However, there are inconsistencies in the planning for information and communication technology across classes. The school currently makes good overall provision for the development of English in the school, and this has contributed to the higher than expected standards now being produced. At present, however, limited use is being made of literacy, as well as information and communication technology, to support work in other subjects. Pupils throughout the school tackle practical and problem-solving activities in mathematics and science when given the chance, but little opportunity is provided for them to use their own initiative to plan and organise their own work. The lack of opportunities for more personal responsibility in these activities weakens pupils' overall subject knowledge. The

school makes every effort to involve pupils in the full range of schoolwork and activities. Overall, the school makes good provision for the equality of opportunity for all pupils, and in so doing allows them to achieve as well as they can. The school has a clear anti-racism policy that it applies when needed. There have been no occasions recently when it has been necessary to put the policy into practice.

27. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school puts a high priority on providing well for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and minority ethnic pupils. Teachers and all support staff are dedicated to the wellbeing and best interests of the pupils with special educational needs, and teaching has improved. Pupils receive a satisfactory curriculum, which is carefully adapted by staff to meet particular needs. Pupils now have improved individual education plans, and along with the introduction of clear, relevant and achievable targets, they make good progress towards achieving them. Although their standards are below the national expectation, they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, as do the gifted and talented pupils, because of highly effective support.
28. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, including choir, recorders, French, football, netball, athletics, mathematics and the very popular computer club. The range of activities for sport is very good. The school welcomes many visitors, including writers, storytellers, local clergy, police, circus performers and fire fighters, as well as drama and music groups. A wide range of educational visits is arranged to places such as Moseley Old Hall, Wightwick and Bantock House, and residential visits are an annual feature for classes throughout the school. The school also makes good use of the local area of Pendeford for various studies. These activities make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development, as well as enhancing their understanding and skills in different curriculum subjects.
29. The school's accommodation, overall, is good, and there have been most suitable improvements made recently, especially for children in Reception. Classrooms are generally adequate in size, and some extra work areas are now available for use by small groups. The library, information and communication technology suite and hall are put to suitable use. Outside play-areas are spacious, with quiet areas provided for the pupils who want them, as well as interesting activity areas for others. The main problem with the accommodation is the lack of storage space. However, members of staff overcome this well, managing to keep the school neat and tidy, and still making items readily available when they are needed. Rooms are clean and well maintained, and displays of pupils' work greatly enhance the learning environment. Resources are satisfactory in number and are of good quality. The school is suitably staffed by a dedicated and well-informed group of teachers and support staff. They complement each other well in providing for their pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for pupils' health and safety are **good**. They receive good support and guidance for their personal development. Pupils' views are valued and they make a good contribution to the life of the school. Pupils have very good relationships with adults in school. The induction⁵ arrangements for pupils are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good relationships between pupils and staff.
- The checking on pupils' learning is not consistent across the school and, at times affects the security of accurate academic support for pupils.
- There are good links with other schools for pupils' benefit.
- Child protection procedures have been significantly improved and are now good.

⁵ Induction refers to the arrangements for receiving new pupils into the school and helping them settle and make friends.

- The school is a very safe and secure for all pupils.

Commentary

30. The strong approach to care and guidance contributes very well to the welfare and security of all pupils. This plays a significant part in promoting confidence and good attitudes to learning. The school, as part of its personal development provision for pupils, has a strong focus on fostering pupils' confidence and happiness. Pupils feel very well supported and confidently discuss any concerns they might have.
31. The school has a strong family atmosphere that is beneficial to pupils' feelings of self-worth. All members of the school staff care a great deal for their pupils. The members of staff provide support, advice and guidance well because of their good knowledge of pupils as individuals and the quality of their checking of pupils' personal development. These relationships generate a very secure place to learn that positively embraces all pupils. The weakness in the school's system of checking on what pupils know, understand or can do, and using this information in planning tasks to match pupils' abilities, inhibits the value of academic input in supporting pupils, at times, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
32. The school places a high priority on the support for pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. The very good ethos that has been developed enables these pupils to be confidently involved in all aspects of school life. The school's strategies for identification of their needs are clear and well supported by consultation with other educational agencies and health services where necessary. The school has effective strategies for informing and consulting with parents. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties is well checked and this puts the school in a strong position to develop and use precise targets for the further progress of pupils.
33. Arrangements for children to enter school life are well planned and carried out sensitively helping them to settle quickly into a routine. These arrangements are crucial in developing the quality and depth of the trusting relationships between pupils and staff. An effective school council is now in operation. This has encouraged active participation in all aspects of the school.
34. The governing body has successfully adopted and adapted the local education authority's policy on health and safety. They carry out effective risk assessments, both internal and external. Child protection is considered as a high priority and those responsible are suitably trained. There are rigorous systems in place aimed at improving pupils' attendance and punctuality.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with its parents is **very good** and links with the local community are **good**. Links with and other schools and colleges are **good**. These aspects have been improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views about the school.
- Information to parents is very good.
- The school seeks to involve parents in their children's learning.
- There is an active Parent Teacher Association that supports the school well.
- Good links with the community and other schools enrich learning experiences for pupils and provide very good opportunities for their social development and awareness.

Commentary

35. Parents hold the school in very high regard. They were particularly pleased with their children's progress, teachers' expectations of work, that their children like school and the school's leadership and management. Parents described the school as a very happy place in which warm friendships exist between pupils, teachers and parents. Inspectors endorse these views. A small number of parents expressed a concern about bullying. Throughout the inspection, by observation and discussion with pupils and staff, the inspection team found no evidence of this.
36. The school has improved the quality of the information it provides for parents. There are regular and informative newsletters. Parents are given good information about the progress that their children are making. An effective feature is the three consultative meetings, with opportunities for parents, with their children, to discuss individual plans for learning and progress towards achieving pupil's targets.
37. Parents support the school very well. They know the school routines and expectations, including those for attendance, punctuality and behaviour. However, there are some parents who still take pupils out of school for holidays during term time. The school has a solid and well-trained core of dependable and regular volunteers who make a positive contribution to the quality of teaching in classrooms. The very active Parent Teacher Association raises funds that are suitably targeted and used beneficially to support pupils' learning.
38. There are good links with other schools in the area. Effective links with the community and a wide range of visits and visitors provide a good level of enrichment for the curriculum. They also support pupils' personal and social development as well as widening their experiences and giving them opportunities to learn about the needs of others. The school has strong links with the church through events such as the Harvest Festival. The chair of governors, who is the local vicar, is a regular visitor leading weekly school assemblies.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school by the headteacher is **good**. The senior managers, whose leadership is **satisfactory**, effectively support her. Management is **satisfactory**. Governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Through her vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations, the headteacher has created an ethos focused upon raising standards within a caring environment.
- The governors effectively challenge and support the school and focus strongly upon raising standards.
- The monitoring of teaching systems the school had developed have not taken place recently. Hence, there has been limited impact upon improving the overall quality of the teaching leading to inconsistencies across the school.

Commentary

39. The headteacher has a clear vision of what she wants to achieve at the school and knows what improvements are needed. With support from the senior staff she has developed a team who work hard, are committed to raising standards and who provide good care for all pupils. The headteacher, governors and all the staff are strongly focused on the school's principle of ensuring the needs of all its pupils are met. They have a keen desire to see that pupils achieve to their capacity in all areas of their schoolwork. All senior members of staff have clear roles within the school which they carry out effectively and with commitment.
40. Although there have been many improvements since the last inspection, the development of the school and the improvement in standards were hindered in 2003 by the absence through illness of the headteacher. During that time, the every-day management of the school was dealt with well by the deputy headteacher, but due to building issues and staff absences

initiatives were not fully developed and the impetus for improvement fell. Since the headteacher has returned to school, the implementation of systems designed to raise standards has again become the major focus.

41. The school improvement plan is based on consultation with staff and governors and effectively sets out school priorities for improvement. The system for performance management of teachers is appropriately in place and provides a good basis upon which teachers can develop their professional expertise. The system is not yet sufficiently embedded to have had a major contribution to raising standards. The system for data collection to show the progress of pupils is comprehensive and detailed and is used well by key staff and governors to analyse standards and set priorities for improvement. Previous to her illness, the headteacher and staff checked on how well the school was performing through lesson observations and looking at pupils' work and teachers' plans. This is not carried out at present by the headteacher, senior staff or by the subject coordinators. This is reflected in the inconsistencies in the teaching across the school. However, although there are plans to re-introduce these procedures in the near future some coordinators are new and do not have the required skills to confidently observe and give feedback on lessons.
42. The subject coordinators are keen to raise standards and several have attended training courses to improve their subject expertise and knowledge. They provide advice to staff, organise the curriculum structure and have started to monitor the progress of pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. An example of good practice and commitment is seen in English where standards have been successfully raised. In mathematics and science the implementation of current action plans aimed at raising standards has not yet had sufficient time to have an impact.
43. The school supports newly qualified teachers well through their induction period. They are provided with training and mentoring, with advice being available through the senior staff and the subject coordinators.
44. The governing body carries out its duties well and the governors are ambitious for the school to continue to improve. Many of the governors visit the school regularly and are very knowledgeable about it. Through their committees, the governors are involved in all aspects of the school. The committees meet regularly, are well organised and are kept well informed by the headteacher. The governors receive regular financial reports and are fully involved in all major financial decisions. The relationship between the governors and the senior staff is very positive. Over the last two years, the governors' role as critical friend has developed exceptionally well and the governors are much more rigorous in the questions they ask about standards. Their special 'achievement monitoring group' supports the governors in their endeavour to raise standards.
45. The quality of the financial planning and management is good. The systems are fully computerised and are effective. Budgets are set in accordance with statutory requirements, including finances set aside for pupils with special educational needs. Decisions about spending are taken following careful consideration by the governors and with the local authority and with the principles of best value in mind.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	489,525
Total expenditure	494,079
Expenditure per pupil	2,308

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	25,000
Balance carried forward to the next	20,784

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

46. The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**. Induction procedures and the range of learning experiences are good. The quality of the teaching is good and this helps the children to achieve well. The leadership and management are good, as is the behaviour of the children.
47. Children arrive at school with the full range of ability levels. Overall, based on the school's own testing of children, the attainment in language and number on entry to the Reception class is below the expected level for children of this age. By the end of the Reception year the majority of the children are working at the expected levels, and they have made good progress. The overall standards achieved by Year 1 are higher than at the time of the previous inspection.
48. The children receive consistently good teaching, with the teacher and the Nursery nurse complementing each other well in providing for them. The members of staff use assessment well to provide children with suitably demanding work, and a rich and varied range of learning experiences enhance children's achievement.
49. The classroom is large and well-equipped, with good resources and colourful displays of the children's work. This new classroom is a recent improvement. It is a warm, welcoming environment and the children clearly enjoy being there. Their attitudes are very good, they are happy and this helps them to learn well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are on course to reach the expected levels by the time they leave the Reception class and their achievement is good in this area of learning.
- Children have very good attitudes to their work and behave well.
- The children play well with each other and readily take turns.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, with many opportunities being provided for the children to develop their social skills.

Commentary

50. The children have settled very well into school life. They have learnt how to behave in school and be part of a social group. They are eager to explore new learning, and they are able to concentrate on work being undertaken. The children are prepared to work with other children, take turns and share fairly. They are able to move confidently around the classroom, and the school, and they ask for assistance where necessary. The adults know the children well, and they respond very appropriately to their individual needs by providing many opportunities for children to develop social skills through play and directed activities. The children are continually encouraged to be involved in a range of activities, and, where necessary, they are reminded about such things as sharing and politeness. As a result of the strong focus on this area of learning, the children achieve well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are on course to reach the expected levels in this area of learning by the end of Reception and are achieving well.
- The children are making good progress with their writing skills.
- Children show good appreciation of books, and enjoy reading.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, with adults talking with the children at every opportunity.

Commentary

51. All children pay close attention to their teachers, listening with interest and concentration to stories, poems and instructions. Some children are beginning to provide detailed spoken comments when asked. Children show a keen interest in books and they handle them with care. The majority of the class understand letter sounds and they are beginning to recognise a range of simple words which they readily read. They write their names with good control and many are starting to write short phrases. The teachers provide an interesting range of books to read to the children, as well as suitable opportunities to develop their speaking skills, both in front of the class and in the 'Cafe'. They are also encouraged to develop their writing skills through the provision of suitable activities, with particular attention being paid to careful letter formation.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are on course to achieve the expected level and their progress is good.
- Children's basic knowledge of number is good and they are increasingly confident in using mathematical language.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, with many suitable opportunities provided for counting and measuring.

Commentary

52. Most children can successfully count to ten, with many counting further. The majority clearly understand the idea of numbers, and most can count out an appropriate number of objects with confidence. In using water and sand, they understand such words as 'empty' and 'full', and in comparing size they are aware of 'big' and 'small'. Children successfully extend their mathematical vocabulary to name a variety of two-dimensional shapes. The work is well planned and carefully matched to the needs of the children. Many opportunities are provided for the children to count, often within practical activities, such as counting shapes or small figures. A good provision of resources, such as water, sand and number games and number lines, helps children develop their mathematical language and understanding.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to attain the nationally expected level by the end of the Reception year, and their achievement is good.
- The children's knowledge of the human body is good.
- Their skills in undertaking simple cookery activities are good.
- The children readily produce work on the computer.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good, with, for example, a wide range of practical activities provided for the children.

Commentary

53. Children can name the main external features of the human body, such as hand, foot and elbow. They are aware of the various human senses, and can explain the difference, for example, between tasting and smelling. Children have been provided with opportunities to work with food, and they have successfully made biscuits and sandwiches. All children have used the computer, and independently they have used the mouse to produce pictures, as well as to identify different letters. Children are provided with a wide range of experiences, such as looking at pictures and photographs. Their experience is extended in tackling simple experiments, being taken on trips around the school, using the computer and undertaking practical activities, such as working with food. The teaching assistant provides most effective help to the children in many of these activities.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to attain the expected levels by the end of the Reception year and they are achieving well.
- Children's skills in using and handling large and small items of classroom equipment are good.
- Their abilities with a range of larger outdoor play equipment are also good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good with adults readily demonstrating the required skills for the children.

Commentary

54. Children's skills in handling large and small items in the classroom are developing well, such as when they use construction kits and jigsaws or thread small objects onto a string. Children's manipulative skills are good. Malleable materials, such as playdough, are used successfully, for instance, when they make items such as small sea-creatures, and letters and numbers. They use construction toys with confidence, producing a range of houses and vehicles. They are also happy when further developing their skills through using the various wheeled-vehicles in the outside area. Both the teacher and the teaching assistant join in with the children, and demonstrate how to carry out different activities and develop various skills. A wide and varied array of activities is provided, and children are encouraged to 'keep busy' with them throughout the day. In particular, all adults are keen to emphasise the need for the children to carry out all activities safely.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are on course to achieve the appropriate levels by the end of the year. Their progress is good.
- The children's ability to produce a variety of pictures and models is good
- Their ability to use their imagination, both in producing pictures, and in taking part in role-play activities, is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good with the children being given an appropriate mix of directed activities and independence.

Commentary

55. Children confidently use a variety of paints and crayons, and they produce pictures both from direct observation as well as from their imagination. They have successfully produced, for example, pictures of themselves, and their ideas of sea-creatures. They have also shown some confidence in making three-dimensional items, and they have, for instance, successfully produced puppets and models of houses and robots. Children readily take part in role-play activities. Currently the home corner is in the form of a 'Cafe', and the children happily play the parts of owner and customer with equal enthusiasm. Through careful planning, the teacher ensures that all the children have opportunities to take part in all activities. Adults also encourage the children to develop their independence by arranging sessions when they are allowed to move from one activity to another when they are ready. They also make sure, however, that the children experience all the activities, and that help is always available when it is needed.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising throughout the school and pupils achieve well.
- The teaching is good and the increase in using 'whole texts' is improving pupils' interest in literature and provides a good basis for work during lessons.
- Members of the support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- There is limited development of literacy skills across the curriculum.
- There is limited use of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' literacy skills.

Commentary

56. Provision, standards and achievement have improved since the last inspection. Results for the 2003 national tests in Year 2 were well above the national average for reading and above average for writing. Standards in Year 6 were above average for reading and writing. Current standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average in both reading and writing. Pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic backgrounds are supported well when necessary and also achieve well. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

57. Standards in speaking and listening are average in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 listen attentively and respond appropriately to questions from adults. Pupils in Year 6 listen with concentration and speak confidently for example, when discussing capital punishment. Because pupils' skills of speaking and listening are at a lower level than those of reading and writing, the school is currently implementing a programme of improvement. Strategies that include the use of drama and role-play are being introduced to raise standards.
58. Standards in reading are good throughout the school. In Year 2, pupils read accurately and confidently, recognising their mistakes and correcting them. The additional support given to all pupils during each lunchtime break adds considerably to the provision. Reading records effectively allow teachers to record progress and communicate with parents. In Year 6, the pupils have continued to make good progress with their reading. They read and understand a range of texts and show an understanding of characters and events. They also show a developing ability to support their ideas with a range of selected information. Reading is accurate and fluent. The increasing use of whole texts as a basis for teaching literacy has stimulated pupils' interest in stories and books, as well as motivating pupils during the lessons.
59. Writing skills have improved considerably across the school. This is due to the implementation of the recommended lesson structure of the National Literacy Strategy and the development of teachers' skills through training. The use of a visiting storyteller and a poet stimulated pupils' interest in writing and, as a result, the school produced its own anthology of pupils' poems. Lessons now combine a range of opportunities for pupils' own writing, with exercises that allow pupils to learn specific skills. The support given to groups of pupils through an additional teacher in the classroom or through a teaching assistant adds significantly to the quality of the provision and allows all pupils to benefit from individualised teaching. Nearly all lessons are appropriately planned to meet the needs of all the pupils; this has a positive impact on pupils' achievement. In a small number of lessons, when learning is not as good, the work given is not well matched to the different abilities of the pupils.
60. Overall, the teaching is good. In the lessons seen it was always at least satisfactory, sometimes good and occasionally very good. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils were stimulated by the 'Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch'. The pupils were clearly fascinated by the story that was read well by the teacher and the needs of all pupils were accommodated through the good use of a teaching assistant. Lessons across the school are generally well planned and based upon the National Literacy Strategy. There is limited use of information and communication technology to support the teaching of literacy skills. The use of the 'booster' group sessions adds to the quality of the provision and provides good additional support for some pupils.
61. The subject leader has attended many training activities, sought advice from the Local Education Authority and led staff training. She leads the subject well and shows sound knowledge and understanding of the teaching of literacy through the National Literacy Strategy. She analyses test data well and knows the progress the pupils are making. Although she carries out some classroom observations and analyses teachers' planning, this is not done systematically or regularly and, as a consequence, the process lacks rigour and fails to make a significant impact upon the quality of teaching.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Pupils read, write, speak and listen across a wide variety of subjects. There is, however, no explicit link made between pupils' literacy skills and what they are requested to undertake in the other subjects. Pupils' learning is not further enhanced because teachers do not always clearly identify or at times are not aware of the literacy links with other subjects. They do not define explicitly the literacy objectives that could be taught or reinforced in these other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- New initiatives are beginning to help raise standards.
- There is good teaching of the basic skills of computation that helps pupils work out calculations successfully.
- The assessments carried out do not provide detailed information of what pupils know, understand and can do. As a result, work is not always well matched to pupils' abilities.
- The great enthusiasm that the vast majority of pupils show in their lessons impacts positively on their learning.
- There is not a strong enough focus on developing pupils' mental skills at the start of lessons so that they can answer mental questions with greater speed, accuracy and confidence.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge in practical, problem solving situations to improve their abilities to solve written problems.

Commentary

63. Pupils in Year 2 attain average standards. Pupils' skills in the key area of number are at the expected level. Pupils display good strategies for counting on in twos, fours and fives. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of place value and know the value of each digit in a three-digit number, such as 248. Pupils' achievement is good in number, but is less so in mental mathematics. Pupils' recall of number bonds and multiplication tables is weak. Average and higher attaining pupils still use their fingers when counting to solve mental questions. Similarly, due to the limited opportunities to use and apply their knowledge in practical everyday situations, their skills in solving problems and practical application are not as strong as their number skills.
64. Pupils in Year 6 also attain average standards. They understand coordinates in four quadrants, rotational symmetry and probability. They systematically add and subtract decimals to two places. More-able pupils round up decimals to three places and carry out long division confidently. However, pupils cannot competently calculate complex fractions or find equivalent fractions. Most pupils' skills in applying their mathematical knowledge in everyday practical situations or solving problems are weak. They do not answer mental questions quickly or confidently.
65. Standards have improved recently in Year 2 but have not improved in Year 6 since the last inspection. Weaknesses in the teaching have halted the raising of standards and are reflected in the recent decline at eleven. Results of national tests in 2003 were average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6. Trends over the past three years show an improving picture in Year 2 but a falling picture in Year 6. There is evidence that standards are improving across the school as new initiatives are beginning to impact. Some aspects of teaching are strong with good support for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language. This is the case for number calculations and data handling. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the teacher used a good range of resources to enable the pupils to find the areas of a good range of irregular shapes. By the end of the session their understanding was good. Teaching is not always effective in meeting the needs of all pupils. There are assessment procedures in place, which keep teachers informed and aware of how well pupils are achieving. However, these lack sufficient detail on what pupils can do to help teachers plan work for pupils of all abilities. Similarly, at times teachers in Years 3 to 6 do not use this information well in planning lessons. For example, in Year 3 the lower attaining pupils found the task of adding two, three-digit numbers by partitioning too difficult. Consequently, not all achieved well. Marking is supportive but does not always indicate how pupils can learn to improve. The vast majority of pupils have good attitudes towards their mathematical work.

They work with enthusiasm and are able to sustain their concentration over long periods of time when working independently.

66. Overall, the teaching is satisfactory. Where teaching is good, there are high expectations; for example, Year 2 pupils were asked to work out for themselves how to divide objects into equal sets and how this relates to multiplication. This not only benefited their understanding but also developed their speaking skills. There are weaknesses in the teaching of pupils' mental skills and in providing pupils with effective strategies to solve problems. This is because the quality of the oral and mental starter at the beginning of the lesson and the discussion at the end varies throughout the school. At times, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to describe and compare strategies and mental recall is restricted to too narrow a range of examples. Similarly, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use the knowledge they have gained in everyday, practical, problem solving activities.
67. The management of the subject is sound and is beginning to influence and support teaching. Due to concerns over standards, the coordinator has worked hard with the Local Authority's mathematics team. They have monitored teachers' planning, results of tests and pupils' work. As a result, the coordinator has gained a clear picture of strengths and areas in need of improvement. For example, problem solving and mental skills are now a focus for improvement. New initiatives are being introduced to address these areas. However, due to a lack of monitoring the teaching he does not have a clear picture as to whether new ideas are being implemented effectively by all staff. Formal assessment records of each pupil are kept and these are used purposefully to set group targets or individual targets that are shared with pupils. This motivates pupils well and provides parents with clear information on how they can help their children at home.

Numeracy across the curriculum

68. There is a satisfactory curriculum for mathematics. Across the school, work was seen that related to number, shape and space, measurement and the handling of data. Mathematical skills are used and developed appropriately in other areas of the curriculum. However, pupils do not use their skills in information and communication technology, for example to record and display data collected in surveys. The development of mathematical vocabulary in all classes makes a positive contribution to the pupils' literacy development. Pupils' reading skills are used to good effect in interpreting problems.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are broadly average at Year 2, and below average at Year 6. Based on their prior attainment pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
- Whilst standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection, improvements have been made in both organisation and planning, and in the progress made by the oldest pupils. Also, standards have improved since last year at Year 6.
- Teachers do not make enough use of assessment to provide pupils with work that is suited to their varying needs.
- Whilst practical activities are a regular feature of many lessons, teachers do not always provide pupils with enough opportunities to plan their own work.
- Pupils show good attitudes towards the subject.
- The coordinator has contributed well to the improvements evident in Year 6 since last year.

Commentary

69. At Year 2, pupils show an understanding of the subject that is similar to that expected for pupils of this age. For example, they successfully name the main features of the human body and a flowering plant. They are able to identify the factors needed to sustain life. They recognise and name common materials, and they successfully describe their various uses. They understand that pushes and pulls are examples of forces, and most explain the effects of different surfaces on the speed of objects.
70. At Year 6, where standards this year are below average, pupils carry out a range of experiments, using suitable equipment, making observations and recording their findings. However, few pupils are yet confident enough to select their own resources and organise their own experiment. This is contributing towards some pupils' lack of understanding of scientific ideas and principles. On the other hand, pupils readily explain many of the life-processes of humans, as well as discussing, for example, the importance and function of the heart, and they show some confidence when discussing aspects of materials. They understand the idea of forces, but some cannot always identify the direction of different forces. Although standards are below average they have improved from last year. This is because of the greater emphasis in lessons on practical investigations. Pupils' skills are improving but the new initiatives introduced have not yet had time to fully impact on standards by the time pupils leave the school.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons are suitably planned, with teachers throughout the school now making sound provision of practical activities. However, pupils are not yet given enough chance to plan and organise their own experiments. The teachers are particularly careful to use, and emphasise, the correct scientific terminology, which has a beneficial effect on the pupils' overall learning. Planning, however, rarely makes appropriate allowance for the provision of work for the needs of different pupils. Pupils are usually presented with the same activities, with the result that, on occasions, some pupils find the work too difficult, whilst others find it undemanding. The teachers have sound subject knowledge, and provide clear instructions and helpful demonstrations of the work that is to be undertaken. Teachers and teaching assistants support all pupils in turn, and this helps them all, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, to make satisfactory progress.
72. The vast majority of pupils show great interest in the subject, displaying good attitudes and enjoying the practical work in particular. They work hard, concentrate well and are keen to find answers to the problems set. The pupils' behaviour is good overall as they work well with other pupils in carrying out activities. They are aware of safety procedures and they usually produce their work neatly and carefully. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and most add useful comments of support and advice to help the pupils develop their work further.
73. The coordinator supports his colleagues well, when required, and his leadership is satisfactory. He is currently in temporary charge of the subject, but he has successfully started to address the issue of lower standards being achieved at Year 6. He has not had the opportunity to observe work in other classes but he is fully aware of the standards being achieved in the school. He is also aware that, to improve standards further, teachers need to ensure that they provide pupils with work that suits their differing needs and more demanding practical work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision, achievement of pupils and standards have risen considerably since the last inspection
- The development of the computer suite has enabled the school to raise standards.
- The teaching assistant assigned to teach computer skills makes a major contribution to the achievement of the pupils.
- There are inconsistencies in the planning between classes.
- Progress of pupils is not effectively recorded in all classes.

Commentary

74. Achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, is satisfactory. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils are achieving standards that are in line with national expectations. In Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of many of the uses of the computer and show a confident use of the keyboard and mouse. They are able to use word-processing programs to type words and sentences. They are beginning to collect data and present the information in charts and understand that a CD-ROM stores information. In Year 4, many can use a control program to make repeating patterns on the computer screen, are familiar with art packages to make illustrations and have experience of a digital camera. In Year 6, they can produce power point presentations, use a data-handling program to produce graphs and have experienced use of the Internet to search for information.
75. This represents good progress made by the school from the last inspection when the standards attained by the pupils were below average in Year 2 and Year 6. The improvement has been brought about through several factors. The completion of the computer suite in 2000 and the linking of some computers to the Internet have made significant contributions to the provision available for teachers and pupils. The decision to time-table the use of the suite so that the pupils can be taught computer skills by a specialist teaching assistant, while still leaving time for pupils to follow up their own study during lessons also contributes well. The skills and enthusiasm of the specialist teaching assistant who teaches computer skills to pupils throughout the school is a major factor in the successful raising of standards.
76. The school uses a national scheme of work that provides an effective, basic structure for teaching. Using this scheme, and working with the teaching assistant, some teachers plan very well with lessons centred upon what the pupils are required to learn during each lesson. Planning, however, is not consistent across the school and this has a negative effect upon the pupils' achievement. Similarly, some teachers record very well what individual pupils have learned and, therefore, can make accurate decisions about what pupils need to be provided with during the next lesson. This does not occur in all classes and, again, this hinders pupils' progress.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. Information and communication technology is sometimes used to support the learning of pupils in a variety of subjects and is occasionally used very well. In a Year 1 class, pupils used a computer program that showed how plants grow. Pupils then had to predict how the plant would grow, indicating which part of the plant was edible. Computers are, however, not used consistently in all classes to support learning in a variety of subjects. This is an area to be developed.

HUMANITIES

78. The evidence in **geography** is limited. The subject was not a focus of the inspection. In the **geography** lesson seen, in Year 2, the pupils produced a plan of the school grounds. The teaching was good, the pupils were very well behaved and the standard of the work produced was similar to that expected for pupils of this age. A study of teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work completed so far show that appropriate coverage is made for the subject during the year. For example, this year, pupils in Year 1 have successfully studied different types of houses and the materials from which they are built. Pupils in Year 2 have further developed and widened their knowledge of seaside places through following the journeys of 'Barnaby Bear'. Pupils in Year 3 have examined a range of climate conditions around the world, and those in Year 4 readily compare living conditions and life-styles in Pendeford with those found in Chembakolli in India. Pupils in Year 5 name important rivers and features of those rivers such as source and mouth and those in Year 6 have appropriate knowledge about mountains and mountain ranges. Pupils throughout the school show concern for the environment.
79. In **history** lessons, on aspects of Roman history in Year 3, and the Victorians in Year 4, the standard of pupils' work was in line with that expected for pupils of this age. The pupils' attitudes to the subject were good, and the teaching was satisfactory in one lesson and good in the other. Discussions with pupils on other aspects of the subject also showed a knowledge and understanding of the subject similar to that expected for pupils of their age. Pupils in Year 1 had a clear understanding of chronology, relating in particular to their study of household items and how they have changed. Those in Year 2 could talk in detail about aspects of the Great Fire of London, especially those relating to the role played by Samuel Pepys in recording events. Pupils in Year 5 had a clear understanding of many aspects of life in Tudor times whilst those in Year 6 have a sound knowledge about life in Britain since 1930, especially relating to World War II.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. One lesson was seen in **art and design**, two in **design and technology**, two in **music**, and two in physical education. It is not therefore possible to make a firm judgement about provision in art and design, design and technology, music or physical education.
81. Through **art and design**, pupils have experienced a wide range of materials and are taught the basic skills well. Six-year-old pupils study the use of color to symbolize warmth and cold and seven-year-olds use their residential visit to provide a focus for their paintings. By the time pupils are nine years of age, many have learned how to mix colours and use good brush technique to paint their pictures illustrating the changes to the countryside during springtime. Older pupils have developed good observational skills and have produced some good pictures of bird-feeders, made 'salt pots' decorated in the style of Clarice Cliff and show their understanding of perspective through their pictures. Discussion with pupils shows that they enjoy their art and design and are proud to show their work.
82. In **design and technology** projects there is a strong focus on the three key areas of design, making and evaluation in the teaching and learning. Strength is the way that pupils are focused on design and technology in the everyday world at the beginning of a topic. By the time the pupils reach the age of seven, they have experienced working with a variety of materials, measuring, marking and cutting paper, card and fabrics. Six-year-old pupils can follow and carry out simple instructions allowing them to make sandwiches. As pupils progress through the school, they investigate different types of photograph frames, design and make their own frames and have experience of a digital camera to provide the images. At the age of eleven, pupils work in teams, solving problems concerning structure of shapes and buildings. During one lesson observed, the eleven-year-old pupils worked very well together following a design and making a chassis for a wheeled vehicle. Although the teacher provided the basis of the design, the pupils worked with good attention to detail and with good measuring and cutting

skills. The pupils cooperated very well together, helping each other as required and showing a high degree of pride with their designing and making work.

83. In **music**, curriculum planning, which follows national guidelines, is effective in ensuring that pupils gain the full breadth of musical experiences by the time they leave the school. Pupils enjoy singing and show a good sense of rhythm as they move to music, play percussion instruments and sing. By Year 2 they are ready to learn how to make short and long sounds using percussion instruments. In Year 3, pupils are able to devise their own symbols to show loud and soft sounds. Although this was challenging, they showed an understanding of pitch and timbre. This was followed by an enthusiastic session of simple composition where pupils had to guess which of the sounds the notation represented. Singing in assembly is good. There are opportunities for some pupils to learn to play instruments; currently there is tuition for brass instruments and recorders. The coordinator has successfully maintained the profile of music in the school. School assemblies and productions provide opportunities for both instrumental and choral performance. The school choir entertains community groups.
84. In **physical education**, although two lessons were observed, only a small proportion of the overall programme was inspected. Consequently, there is no overall judgement on standards, achievement, teaching and provision. Nevertheless, in addition to the lessons, discussions were held with pupils.
85. In Year 6, standards in **gymnastics** are satisfactory. Pupils make good use of space; they move confidently and do well to incorporate jumps and balances into their movements. They control these movements well. Pupils have very positive attitudes and behave well. By the age of eleven, games skills are at the expected level. When practising throwing skills, pupils throw and catch adequately and accurately. Performance improved as they watched the highest attaining pupils going through the skills. Arrangements for swimming are satisfactory and most pupils achieve the nationally recommended standard.
86. The teaching in both of the lessons in **physical education** was satisfactory. One in a Year 5 class and a class with a mixture of Year 5 and 6 pupils. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are grouped in games lessons and follow a carousel type of organisation in order to experience different games with different teachers. In the lessons, the good levels of energy and enthusiasm shown by the teacher led to good attitudes and behaviour. A good knowledge and understanding of the subject meant that instructions were understood and followed and good performance by some pupils led to effective exemplars for the rest that raised expectations.
87. The coordinator for **physical education** is very enthusiastic, has brought a wealth of new initiatives into school; pupils are involved in many community activities, including links with local primary schools. In the curricular planning girls and boys of all abilities are given good opportunities to participate in an extremely wide variety of activities, more varied than is found in most schools. Activities are arranged both in and out of the school day. The residential visits for pupils in Year 6 give them very good opportunities for participating in outdoor and energetic pursuits. The subject contributes very well to pupils' personal development, especially their understanding of a healthy lifestyle and all aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision is carefully planned into the curriculum.
- The members of staff have strong commitment to the ethos of the school.

Commentary

88. The arrangements for personal, social and health education are good. The school has reviewed and incorporated these into the curriculum planning. The programme of work is taught through subjects. For example, the importance of a healthy diet is carried through direct and related subjects such as science and physical education.
89. The adoption of a clear policy and whole-school scheme of work ensure that knowledge and understanding are developed progressively as pupils move through the school. The introduction of a curriculum framework directs when aspects are to be taught and allocates teaching and learning time appropriately. This makes a major contribution to the quality of teaching and learning and represents improvement since the previous inspection.
90. The commitment of the staff to supporting this area, informally, ensures that pupils' learning is consistently reinforced in day to day interaction. This makes a significant contribution to the achievement of all pupils.
91. The provision is effective in the many ways in which pupils' attitudes, achievements, and self-esteem are valued and promoted. It contributes to pupils' knowledge and understanding of how many elements of the community, society and a democracy work. Aspects of a healthy lifestyle, including awareness of drugs and substances, health, safety and sex education, are well promoted. Circle time gives pupils opportunities for voicing their opinions and raising their concerns. The headteacher and staff have sought and acted on their opinions more successfully than is found in most schools.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
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	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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