

INSPECTION REPORT

TIDBURY GREEN SCHOOL

Solihull

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104065

Headteacher: Mr K J Davies

Lead inspector: Mr F Carruthers

Dates of inspection: 27 – 29 April 2004

Inspection number: 258208

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	351
School address:	Dickens Heath Road Tidbury Green Solihull West Midlands
Postcode:	B90 1QW
Telephone number:	01564 823189
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Ravenhill

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a larger than average primary school serving both a rural and a suburban population, drawing many of its 351 pupils from much further afield than the local village. Many pupils come from the suburbs of south Solihull and others from neighbouring counties, such as Worcestershire and Warwickshire. Approximately 90 per cent of pupils are white British and other ethnic groupings include Chinese, Black Caribbean and Asian. Very few are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language and the predominant languages of these pupils are Cantonese, Spanish and Gujarati. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals and levels of social deprivation among families are below average. There is an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, which are for mainly specific learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, autism and speech, language and physical difficulties. Levels of pupil mobility¹ are average overall but increasing among younger age groups since the opening of a new school in a village nearby. The attainment of the children on entry to the nursery is average. Extended day care is available for children at the school. The headteacher retires after 22 years' service at the school at the end of the term in which the inspection took place. Before the inspection began, a new headteacher had been appointed.

¹ The proportion of pupils who start at the school at times later than the reception year or leave before the end of Year 6.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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8864	P Clifton	Team inspector	English History Music
17907	M Bowers	Team inspector	Science Geography Special educational needs
21910	G Longton	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communications technology Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the school is **satisfactory**. Pupils' achievement is generally good but infant-aged pupils make only satisfactory progress. The quality of education is good overall, as is the quality of teaching, though this is not consistent across the whole school. Leadership, management and governance are **satisfactory** and the school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching and learning are good in the nursery, reception and junior classes so that the children make a very good start to their schooling and pupils do well in the junior classes.
- Higher attaining pupils do not do as well as they should in the infant classes.
- Provision for supporting pupils' personal development, including their attitudes, attendance, behaviour and punctuality, is a strength of the school.
- Monitoring of the performance of the school by senior staff and governors is unsatisfactory.
- Teamwork among all staff helps to promote the pupils' learning well.
- The school promote the arts very well.
- Links with parents, the community and other schools are good.
- Governors do not challenge the senior staff of the school sufficiently well.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall. Standards have risen broadly in line with the national upward trend. There is now more effective provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and procedures to assess how well pupils are doing have improved. However, the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils in infant classes is not good enough and there is still no effective programme for monitoring teaching and learning. There have been good improvements made to the accommodation, including innovative features for pupils to enjoy in the school grounds.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	C	B	D
mathematics	C	D	B	D
science	B	E	B	C

*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.*

Pupils' achievement is generally **good**. For instance, children make good progress in the Foundation Stage so that by the end of the reception year, almost all have reached the levels expected of children at this stage of their schooling. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in the mixed-aged infant classes and standards at the end of Year 2 have been adversely affected by staffing difficulties and pupil mobility² in recent years. Standards are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged and too few reach standards that are above the expected Level 2. Pupils' progress is generally good in junior years and standards are above average in the current Year 6 in mathematics and science and broadly average in English. Last year,

² Pupils who start at the school at times later than the reception year or leave before the end of Year 6.

standards were above the national average in all three subjects but standards have fluctuated over the last few years, as illustrated in the table above. Pupils' attainment in art and design, design and technology and religious education is above average in the current Year 6. Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are **good**. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well. A small number have emotional and behavioural difficulties and these pupils are handled well by the staff. Levels of attendance are well above average and punctuality to school is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall but this is not consistent across the whole school. It is good for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teachers and support staff work together as a team and the pupils acquire skills and understanding of subjects well. Teaching and learning are satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Learning in one of the mixed-aged classes has been adversely affected by unavoidable teacher absence and there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum that the school provides is good and is enriched by imaginative projects such as those in the arts. The school's care for the welfare of the pupils is very good and procedures to support and guide pupils are good. Links with parents, the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. There is a balance of significant strengths and some weaknesses. Senior managers and all staff have a good commitment to doing the best for pupils, especially in relation to their personal needs, but monitoring how well the school is performing is unsatisfactory. The governing body complies with all statutory requirements and shows strong support for the school. It has limited awareness of how the school is performing, however, and does not challenge senior managers sufficiently well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The great majority of parents consider that the school is good. They say the school does well in helping to settle the pupils in and making them become mature. A significant minority of parents have concerns about the level of challenge in the work set, the behaviour of a few pupils and the consistency with which homework is given. Inspectors found that the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils in infant classes is too low and there are inconsistencies in the setting of homework across classes. They consider the behaviour of pupils with emotional difficulties is handled well by staff. Pupils have positive views of the school and appreciate efforts that the school has made to make playtimes and lunch times pleasant for play and relaxation.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils and make better use of writing in other subjects in the three mixed aged, infant classes.
- Implement an effective programme of monitoring of the teaching and learning.
- Develop the role of the governing body in challenging the senior managers and holding the school to account.

In addition, the following should be included in the school's action plan:

- Improve the level of detail in the school improvement plan.
- Develop skills of writing in the reception year.
- Consolidate the use of homework.
- Use pupils' skills in ICT better in other subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is generally **good**. Pupils achieve well in Years 3 to 6 and reach standards that are average in English and information and communication technology (ICT), and above average in mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage.³

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6 because of good teaching.
- Higher attaining pupils are not achieving well enough in Years 1 and 2.
- Children get off to a very good start in the nursery and reception classes.
- Attainment in art and design, design and technology and religious education are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Commentary

1. The school's test results in recent years have shown that standards at the end of Year 6 have been broadly in line with the national upward trend. Last year, results were above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Boys' performance has been similar to boys nationally, and they have attained higher standards than girls in mathematics but lower standards than them in English. In general, boys and girls in this school have performed better than boys and girls nationally. Results at the end of Year 2 have declined in recent years, especially in writing, mathematics and science. Both boys and girls have been performing below the average of boys and girls nationally in these subjects. Their attainment in reading has been above the national average.
2. Children achieve well in the well-resourced and well-planned Foundation Stage. Progress is particularly good in personal, social and emotion development, mathematical and physical development. Children achieve well in aspects of communication, language and literacy, such as speaking, listening and reading. In writing, there is good encouragement of the children to make marks and start to write sentences but attainment is average by the end of the reception year and higher attaining children could be achieving better. Children's achievement is good in knowledge and understanding of the world, and in creative development. Almost all attain the goals expected of children at the end of the reception year and attain above them in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical and physical development.
3. Pupils' progress in the mixed Years 1 and 2 classes is satisfactory and there are several reasons why it is not better. The school is experiencing a falling roll because of the opening of a new school in a nearby village. This has had a significant impact in the infant classes where pupils have left to join the school. Several were higher attaining pupils. In addition, there is an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2. These factors mean that

³ The Foundation Stage in this school consists of the nursery class and the two reception classes.

the range of attainment in the current Year 2 has been altered. Unavoidable staff absence in one of the three mixed aged classes has also had an adverse impact on continuity of provision and on standards this year. While these factors partly explain the below average standards evident in Year 2, there is an element of underachievement, especially by higher attainers, that is unsatisfactory. Writing skills are not being extended well enough, the reading scheme is being administered with too little flexibility for higher attainers, and in mathematics and science, the teachers' planning is not challenging the higher attainers sufficiently well. These are key areas for improvement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (15.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.6 (13.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.5 (15.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is generally better and this is reflected in standards at the end of Year 6, which are above average in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology and religious education. The reasons for better achievement and higher standards in this school are good teaching and learning as well as very good provision, as in the arts subjects. Standards are average in English by the end of Year 6 and pupils are on target to attain the appropriately challenging targets set by the school. Whereas standards in writing are good because of good teaching, attainment in reading is only satisfactory and some pupils express too little interest in reading widely.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (27.0)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.9 (26.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.9 (27.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 56 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties achieve well because teachers have the necessary skills and techniques to respond to their needs and are guided by clear individual education plans. Skilled learning support assistants have formed positive relationships with these pupils so that the pupils are included in almost all classroom activities. Pupils who are physically impaired make very good progress and achieve well. Their support equipment is in good condition and the adults who work with them are adept at transferring them from specialist seating equipment to free standing apparatus. Consequently, they are fully included in classroom activities, often making good contributions to debate and discussion. Other pupils make good progress overall in literacy. The school has identified pupils with special educational needs in elements of mathematics but it does not provide education plans in this subject. The practice of grouping pupils by prior attainment in mathematics ensures that challenging levels of work are provided and extra adults are available in each year group to support these pupils. However, the lack of plans does not give the teacher the opportunity to work with pupils on small incremental steps to help them gain the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding.

6. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their classmates. The very few at the early stages of learning English as an additional language receive only limited specialist support but most make good strides in their learning once they have settled in to school. The school makes good provision for welcoming these pupils and those that remain at the school are among the higher attainers by the time they are in the oldest age groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance and punctuality are **very good**. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are **good**. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is well above the national average for primary schools and the majority of pupils are consistently punctual.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and this makes a positive contribution to their learning.
- Behaviour in and around the school is good and pupils get on well with each other.
- Challenging behaviour is handled well and a good scheme of rewards and sanctions are in place.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted well particularly in aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

7. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are rarely late. The educational welfare officer carries out monthly analysis of attendance rates and parents provide very good support by promptly informing the school if their child is ill.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.6	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

8. Pupils respond well because of the very good relationships they share with the staff. They have positive attitudes to school, settle swiftly down to work and particularly enjoy classroom discussions. They work hard and listen carefully to their teachers. Pupils are well behaved. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year. Staff have high expectations for good behaviour and pupils respond accordingly. The behaviour policy is consistently applied and a good scheme of rewards and sanctions is in place. Instances of bullying or harassment are rare, but pupils know they can turn to an adult for help and support if necessary. A minority of parents expressed concerns about behaviour but no bullying or challenging behaviour was observed.
9. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and enhances their personal development. Assemblies, acts of worship and opportunities to discuss concerns and feelings in class provide good opportunities for pupils to think about their own feelings, to develop empathy and to share their thoughts about the world around them. Pupils learn about a wide range of faiths in religious education and develop understanding of and respect for the feelings of others.

10. Social and moral development is promoted very well. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and develop a good sense of personal responsibility as they learn about moral issues and choices. They are encouraged to work together co-operatively in lessons and support each other's learning. Pupils get on well with each other and the adults. Older pupils support the youngest in the dining hall and playground and act as mentors for children in the reception classes. Many take on duties as monitors and carry them out sensibly and reliably, providing good role models for their fellow pupils. The school council provides a good opportunity for pupils to learn what it means to be an active citizen and to develop communication skills.
11. Pupils' cultural development is good and race equality is promoted effectively. Educational visits in the local area encourage pupils to think about community issues. Through the *Creativity Project*, religious education lessons and visits to cathedrals, mosques and synagogues, pupils learn about life in the wider world and about cultural traditions in Britain and elsewhere. Book weeks and instrumental tuition also enable pupils to widen their cultural experiences.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good overall** and there are strengths in all aspects of provision.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 3 to 6. It is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Procedures to assess how well pupils are doing are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use a good range of teaching methods that are planned well, and this leads to a high level of interest from the pupils.
- Higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not sufficiently challenged by the work set.
- Teaching assistants and support staff provide good support to help pupils learn more effectively.
- Positive relationships in classrooms encourage pupils to be involved in lessons.
- The use of homework is inconsistent.
- Assessment is used well in some subjects but not in others.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	7 (12%)	36 (64%)	11 (20%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. Overall the school has a good team of teachers and support staff, who are committed to their pupils and work very hard on their behalf. This is recognised by pupils and parents alike who feel that teaching is a strength. The school has a very happy working atmosphere. When

teaching and learning are good, pupils achieve well. Satisfactory teaching and learning lead to only satisfactory progress, as in Years 1 and 2. Continuity in teaching has been adversely affected by changes in staffing and an unusually high number of maternity leaves.

13. Examples of excellent or very good teaching were observed in the Year 5 and 6 classes.

Example of outstanding practice

In a science lesson with pupils in Year 6, excellent planning connected how animals are adapted to their environment with the development of predicting, hypothesising and carrying out a fair test. Whole-class discussions identified how a camel has adapted to its environment. Many pupils suggested that the animal's large foot area prevented it from sinking into the sand. Trays of sand and 1000gm and 500gm weights of different surface areas were readily available, enabling the pupils to measure the same weights of different surface areas to see how much they would depress the sand. When they realised the amount of depression was minimal, pupils decided to use lengths of wooden dowelling with a 1cm square base area and re-run the experiment by balancing the 1000gm weight on top of the wood, recording how far it pushed into the sand, then increasing the surface area to 2cms squares and 3cm squares. Pupils identified the factors relating to the test, controlling them and allowing the variable factor to be changed by equal increments. Pupils used ICT to draw up tables of results and create graphs to analyse their findings. They worked very well together, for example delegating a pupil with physical disabilities to operate the keyboard because 'she was the quickest typist'. Following the initial explanation, the teacher and the learning support assistant took on the role of scientific advisors, circulating the class to involve pupils in discussion, raising questions and making suggestions. The lesson was drawn together at the end to enable pupils to share their findings and the teacher to introduce examples of other animals that had adapted to their environment.

14. Occasionally, teaching is very good. For example in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, in which the pupils were grouped by prior attainment, the teacher had high expectations of what the pupils were able to achieve and used resources well to make the work interesting and extend pupils' learning. Consequently, pupils showed high levels of interest, the rate of learning was good and pupils' achievement was high in relation to their prior learning.
15. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. The level of challenge in the mixed age classes is not always as high as it should be. This was a weakness in the unsatisfactory lesson observed and is an important aspect for improvement. A further factor influencing the quality of teaching in one of the mixed age classes has been staff absence. The organisation of pupils into three parallel, mixed age classes is currently not supporting the achievement of higher attainers, because planning does not put sufficient emphasis on challenging them.
16. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very effectively and classrooms are orderly working environments. A strength of the behaviour management strategies is in the very good relationships between staff and pupils. Support staff are well deployed and make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in the school, especially to provision for pupils with special educational needs. When working alongside teachers in lessons they are

sensitive to the needs of individuals. They also provide effective support for individuals and groups of pupils who need extra help in order to improve their skills.

17. Time is mainly managed well in lessons. For example, pupils move quickly and quietly to their sets in mathematics lessons. Pupils say that lessons are interesting. One of the main reasons for this is that teachers constantly encourage pupils to do their best. Little time is wasted in lessons because they are well organised, well resourced and pupils are clear as to what is expected of them. Pupils are very involved in lessons and in several lessons in the junior classes, the teachers so engaged pupils that they were completely engrossed in what they were doing and did not want to stop. An example of this was in a Year 6 ICT lesson, when pupils became absorbed in finding information from the Internet to use in their project on mountains. They made rapid progress in learning techniques and were pleased with what they were achieving.
18. The effectiveness of the use of homework is variable. Teachers report that it is often quite difficult to get pupils to return completed work in time. The impact of homework is not consistent across the school.
19. Systems to assess how well pupils are doing are in place and working well in the Foundation Stage and in mathematics and science. Teachers know what pupils can and cannot do and they use the information to help them to plan and set targets for pupils. A new system of assessment in English has just been introduced but has not yet had sufficient time to become effective. Systems are not so well developed in other subjects. Teachers have clear objectives for lessons and in most classes these are shared with pupils so that they have an idea of what they are going to learn. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously and their evaluative comments are encouraging.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. It meets all statutory requirements and pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have equal access to activities. Opportunities for enrichment through clubs, working with outside agencies visits and visitors are good. The accommodation is very good and organised very effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in the nursery and reception classes is good.
- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs.
- The programme for personal, social, health education, including citizenship, is inclusive and planned well.
- Curriculum enrichment through support for learning outside the school day and participation in the arts is very good.
- The learning environment provides a good stimulus and reinforcement for pupils' learning.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop writing and ICT across the curriculum.

Commentary

20. The school has continued to build on the progress identified at the last inspection. The nursery and reception classes have implemented fully the Foundation Stage curriculum and children have good opportunities for talking, discovering and structured play in a rich and varied environment. The school now fully complies with the requirement to hold a daily act of worship. These are held with reverence, giving pupils time for reflection and meditation.

21. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to all aspects of the curriculum. Those with statements of special need receive the support they require. These pupils are usually taught alongside their classmates and there are very effective and carefully planned opportunities for them to work in small groups with skilled learning support assistants. This improves the pupils' confidence and helps them to gain further knowledge and understanding and to apply literacy skills. Although pupils experiencing learning difficulties in mathematics receive effective support through the practice of forming groups or sets according to their current levels of attainment, their targets are not identified on individual education plans and consequently it is difficult to track their ongoing development. In other situations, the plans are very good working documents enabling all staff to continually check pupils' progress. The strengths in the school's provision are found in its work with pupils with physical disabilities, autistic spectrum disorder and emotional or behavioural difficulties.
22. Curriculum planning is good in Years 3 to 6 and very good in art and design, religious education and in the nursery and reception classes. However, often in Years 1 and 2 insufficient opportunities are provided to continually challenge higher attaining pupils. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not apply their writing skills to their learning in other subjects sufficiently well. Whilst good use is made of the ICT suite, the use of ICT in the classrooms and to support learning in other subjects is not systematically developed, although there are some good examples in science, geography and in work with pupils who have special educational needs.
23. Through personal, social and health education, the school promotes well the skills necessary for pupils to become good citizens. Pupils express their opinions through the elected school council and there are good opportunities in many lessons to promote the pupils' personal development. This includes being aware of emotions and relationships in the arts and drama, and sex and drugs education. Pupils show respect for the views of others and are aware of the needs of their peers.
24. The school provides good opportunities for enrichment. Residential visits are organised regularly for older pupils and all years visit places of educational interest and cultural significance. These activities extend pupils' learning. A wide range of extra-curricular activities successfully extends pupils' creativity. Particularly successful initiatives include their involvement in arts projects, drama productions and visits to art galleries and museums. A full range of sports activities is organised often by outside agencies.
25. The accommodation is very good and well maintained. The learning environment is richly displayed and welcoming, prompting pupils to enhance their expectation of themselves. Classroom displays celebrate pupils' successes and emphasise cross-curricular links in their learning.

Care, guidance and support

The arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are **very good**. Pupils receive **good** support, guidance and advice. Involvement of pupils by seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know their pupils very well and promote their academic and personal development successfully.

- Very good procedures are in place for induction into the nursery.
- Pupils have a voice in the school and are listened to.

Commentary

26. The school provides a safe and caring environment. Pupils are supervised well around the school building where established routines ensure their welfare and safety. Potential hazards are identified and resolved. The school also provides out-of-school care clubs for nursery and older pupils, which ensure that they have a safe and productive learning environment until their parents collect them at the end of the day. Arrangements for child protection are very good and all staff receive regular training including teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors.
27. Staff have a high level of concern for pupils' well-being and they know their pupils very well. Pupils who are in need of additional support are identified swiftly. Although personal and social education is still developing, it is taught discreetly in assemblies and lessons such as religious education, science and *Circle time*. Health professionals and the police support some of these sessions. Older pupils also negotiate their targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy with their class teachers to enable them to assess their progress and identify what they must do to improve their work.
28. Very good induction procedures in the nursery and into the reception year help the children to settle quickly. Visits and meetings are arranged so that the children can meet their teachers. Personal and social values are established and home visits by the teachers and their assistants enable the school to assess the needs of each individual child.
29. The school and Year 6 class councils meet regularly to discuss issues and ideas of interest to pupils. This provides a good forum for pupils to express their views and make suggestions about aspects of school life. They know their views are taken seriously by the adults and are often acted upon.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school maintains **good links** with parents. Links with the community and other schools are **good**. These strengths have a positive effect on pupils' achievements.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive very good quality information about their children's progress and the work and life of the school.
- There is a good degree of mutual support between parents and school and a good amount of consultation with parents.
- Good links with the community enrich the curriculum and contribute well to pupils' personal development.
- There are very good links with the two local high schools, which aid transition into secondary education.

Commentary

30. Overall, the quality of information for parents is very good. The prospectus, the governing body's annual report to parents and regular newsletters provide all the key information and

news that is required. Parents receive very good information about the curriculum and what their children will study each year. For example, workshops have been provided to explain the National Primary Strategies for literacy and numeracy. The pupils' progress reports are of a high standard. They contain all the required information and targets to inform parents how their children can improve their work.

31. The school actively listens to parents' views. For example, parents' views were sought about the behaviour policy, mixed age classes and school uniform. Parents note that they feel comfortable approaching the school if they have any concerns or complaints. Parents provide voluntary help with school activities and the school association raises a considerable amount of additional funds. The majority of parents hold the school in high regard but a minority have expressed concerns about the behaviour of a minority of pupils, the level of challenge in work in infant classes, and about homework. Behaviour was seen to be good but the inspectors confirm that the level of challenge in work is not high enough and homework is not always used well or consistently given throughout the school.
32. The school's strong links with the local community and good use of community resources make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of the wider context of their learning. For example, the school entertains the community with concerts and distributes Harvest gifts. Educational visits and outside visitors such as from the clergy, building companies, environmental schemes and local businesses support pupils' academic learning.
33. Strong links with two local high schools help to ensure a smooth transition from primary to secondary education. There are induction visits by Year 6 pupils, high school staff provide some 'taster' lessons before transfer, and there are curriculum links to promote continuity of learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. Governance is sound.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides a strong lead to promote core values of kindness and consideration.
- The governance of the school is sound, although the governing body provides insufficient challenge to improving standards.
- Recent training and changes to subject leadership are improving standards.
- Support for teachers through monitoring is unsatisfactory.
- School improvement planning is not sufficiently robust.
- Financial management is good.

Commentary

34. The headteacher is a good role model for staff and pupils, encouraging core values of kindness and consideration, which are central to the school's ethos and threaded through its work. The school offers a secure learning environment and there is mutual respect between pupils and teachers. Pupils' creative development is strongly fostered by the headteacher and senior staff. The headteacher and governors value the work of all staff.
35. The governing body is united in supporting the school. Committees are well structured and governors are very committed to the school's success. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and particularly the need to raise the levels of attainment. Their role in monitoring the effectiveness of the school has, for some time, and still is underdeveloped. As a whole, the governing body has provided insufficient challenge to school management, particularly in relation to standards of attainment.
36. There is a strong commitment to the professional development of staff. A new initiative based on how pupils learn has been well planned and is supporting changes in subject leaders' responsibilities. In-house training has been particularly successful in improving teachers' skills and understanding. This is particularly evident in ICT, the Foundation Stage and science. Changes in subject leadership are effective and have led recently to a much sharper focus on raising standards and improving provision.
37. The school has been too slow in implementing a programme for monitoring teaching. Therefore, the school's evaluation of its own strengths and weaknesses has not included an important element. As a result of this, the teachers have not received sufficient feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of teaching. This was a key area for development identified in the last report which has not been implemented. Progress here has been unsatisfactory.
38. The school improvement plan identifies the key areas for development and supporting activities. Its development involves staff of the school appropriately. However, as a tool for improvement it is underdeveloped. Targets within the plan do not have a sufficiently direct link to standards, and monitoring and evaluation responsibilities are not explicit. There is insufficient detail to enable the governing body to track progress.
39. Financial management of the school is good. The school has held significant reserves in the past whilst pupil numbers were increasing. Current reserves are approximately £8000. The headteacher and governors are fully aware of the need to manage a reducing budget because of the impact of the opening of a new school nearby.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	843,915	Balance from previous year	59,397
Total expenditure	865,872	Balance carried forward to the next	37,440

Expenditure per pupil	2,197
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PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good in the nursery and two reception classes.
- Leadership by the co-ordinator and teamwork among staff are major strengths.
- Children get off to a very good start in the well-resourced accommodation.

Commentary

40. Twenty-six children attend the nursery class in the mornings. Procedures to introduce parents and children to the nursery and the reception classes are very good. The attainment of the children on entry is wide, as measured by the school's own assessments in consultation with parents, and overall is broadly average for three year-olds. After a year, almost all transfer to the reception classes and are joined by children who have attended alternative nursery settings in the wider locality. Forty-two children are in the two reception classes.
41. Children have a very good start to their schooling in the very spacious and well-resourced accommodation and make consistently good progress in all areas of learning. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator heads up a very strong team of teachers and teaching assistants. Her leadership is very good. The temporary teacher covering a maternity leave in the nursery has made a good contribution to the teamwork evident in the nursery. The quality of teaching is good throughout the Foundation Stage. Sessions are well planned and the topics that are taught link the various areas of learning imaginatively. Interactions between all staff and children are very good. The children's attainment is assessed regularly and helps the staff to group children and plan the work. Classrooms and corridor spaces are very attractively decorated with children's work and key language and mathematical displays.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to develop very good levels of independent and co-operative behaviour.
- Attainment in this area of learning is above average by the end of the reception year.
- Routines that promote the children's independence and help the staff to monitor what the children are learning are very good.

Commentary

42. Progress is very good in this area of learning and the children's attainment at the end of the reception year is above average. From the start, the children in the nursery are encouraged to be independent and choose the activities they want to do during the morning. When having their snack, they serve themselves and tidy away afterwards. They sit and chatter to one another while doing so and play co-operatively very well in the role-play areas. The few children who

have more difficulty coping with these demands are given very good support by the nursery staff. In the reception classes, a very good system of cards identifying *zones* in the classrooms (for instance for writing or mathematics) prompts the children to record what 'jobs' they have done during a session. By this, they are made aware of what they have achieved by the end of the session. Staff can take note of patterns in the children's behaviour and so encourage individuals to visit those zones they frequent less often. Through well-established routines such as this, the children's level of independent learning is promoted very well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff interact well with children to encourage their speaking and listening skills.
- Strategies to familiarise the children with letters, words and books are good.
- Children are encouraged from early days to write in the writing and role play areas but by the end of the reception year, the attainment of most children is only average and could be higher.

Commentary

43. Children achieve well and attainment by the end of the reception year is above average in speaking, listening and reading. Interactions between children and staff are of good quality, with staff always asking questions and helping the children to reflect on what they are doing. Children are given many opportunities to enjoy stories, read quietly in book corners and take books home to enjoy with their families. They use listening centres and computers to follow and listen to favourite stories. In the nursery they become familiar with the sound that letters make through a focus on a 'letter of the week'. In the reception classes, provision continues to develop the children's awareness of letter sounds and the classrooms are attractively displayed with key words to consolidate the children's learning. They read in groups with the teacher in short sessions of *guided reading*. By the end of the reception year, most are enjoying simple books and are beginning to recognise a good number of everyday words. Children in the nursery are encouraged to write using a variety of mark makers in the role-play areas and writing area. For instance in the outdoor area, the children visited the *DIY shop* and 'filled in' application forms for store cards. These good routines are built on in the reception classes and the children are encouraged to have a go at writing simple sentences, for example a letter of apology from the Big Bad Wolf. However, many children require a lot of help and few are completing sentences of good length. This aspect of communication requires further improvement.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff plan to teach mathematical concepts very well through play and role-play.
- Children learn about counting and numbers well through rhymes and songs.
- Small group teaching in the reception classes is very effective.

Commentary

44. Teaching and learning are very good and the children achieve very well so that the attainment of almost all the children is above average by the end of the reception year. Planning is particularly effective and staff make very good links between mathematics and the topics taught. For instance, children in the nursery deal with money at the check-out when they buy goods from the *DIY shop*. In the reception classes, a good range of visual aids such as number lines and 100-squares helps the children to identify numbers above ten, to count forward and backward and to begin to add and subtract single-digit numbers together. Most children have a good understanding of numbers to 50 and many count successfully in tens. Staff use games effectively to play with small groups of children, teaching them concepts such as shape. Higher attainers identify shapes, such as cylinder and cuboid, and can sort them into two and three dimensional sets and by colour. The children begin to understand odd and even through finding out about house numbering.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Topic work promotes the children's understanding of the world very well.
- Outdoor and indoor areas are used effectively to develop children's awareness.
- Good sessions in the ICT suite develop the children's skills well but computer resources in the nursery class require updating.

Commentary

45. Children make good progress because of the well-planned curriculum and attainment is above average by the end of the reception year. At the time of the inspection, much learning was taking place about houses, building materials and moving house. In the nursery, the children were enjoying buying different tools and equipment from the *DIY shop*. In the reception classes, the role-play area was given over to a very well-resourced *Estate Agents*, with plenty of opportunity for the children to sell property and take customers to 'look over' them. Construction equipment both indoors and outside was available for the children to build, and pairs of children were observed building castles and towers. The *shady shack* in the outdoor area provided an excellent opportunity for the children to re-enact parts of the story of *The Three Little Pigs*. In the computer suite, reception-aged children illustrated the story using a computer programme to confidently click, drag and drop items from the *word bank* as they made a colour picture, of which they were justly proud. In addition, there are computer and laptop workstations in classrooms and children use the machines well, either independently or supervised by adults. The machines in the nursery are old, however, and have limited scope for learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The accommodation provides very good opportunities for the children to develop skills.
- Classrooms are very well resourced for promoting the children's skills of manipulation.

- Teaching lessons of physical education in the school hall are very good.

Commentary

46. Children make very good progress in this area of development and all children are achieving above expected levels by the end of the reception year. The accommodation is very spacious and well planned for the children's needs. Both year groups have designated outdoor areas that are well stocked with appropriate large wheeled toys and play equipment for the children to enjoy. As a result, the children quickly become very skilful pushing, pulling and pedalling the toys around specified areas of the grounds. They build using large blocks and waste material, and indoors they construct a variety of models well, using skills of cutting and sticking. Staff in the reception classes teach lessons of physical education very well in the school hall. Lessons are very well planned and staff manage the children very well, so that they make good progress and learn new skills. As a result, the children display good levels of skills controlling balls by rolling, bouncing, passing and kicking.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff display the children's art work well, making the classrooms and corridors vibrant.
- Good opportunities to enjoy role-play help the children's development.

Commentary

47. Children make good progress and attainment is average by the end of the reception year. All areas of the Foundation Stage unit are attractively decorated with children's work and this encourages the children to have pride in their work. Pictures illustrating topics on *Noah's Ark* and *Moving house* form interesting displays and include colourful examples of children's pictures, using paint, materials, crayon and chalks. Some of the work, however, is based on outline templates and this restricts the opportunities for children to develop skills of line and form. In both age groups, there are good opportunities for the children to play imaginatively in well-resourced role-play areas. These are set up outside as well as indoors and the children benefit from the many interactions that take place with the staff when they involve themselves in the play activities.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 but overall, standards are not high enough.
- Although progress since the last inspection has been weak, the capacity for improvement is good.
- Writing standards in Years 1 and 2 are too low.
- The teaching of writing is good in Years 3 to 6.

- The use of the reading scheme is insufficiently flexible and so pupils are not always reading books of sufficient challenge.
- The school provides a secure and positive learning environment for all pupils.

Commentary

48. Overall, achievement from Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. In Year 2, standards in reading are below average, and in writing they are well below average. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. There is underachievement, particularly with the higher attaining pupils but the progress of average and below average pupils is satisfactory. Standards in Year 6 are average and the school is on track to meet the challenging targets set for pupils. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' achievement is at least satisfactory and some pupils achieve well.
49. The standard of writing in Years 1 and 2 is the key area for improvement. Although basic skills in writing are taught effectively, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length. Writing skills are therefore not sufficiently practised during creative writing. In addition to this, teachers' expectations for writing are not transferred to other subjects. For example in history and science, the vast majority of writing is filling in single words or completing simple worksheets. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieved well during a lesson in which they found rhyming words and then produced a class poem. Some writing activities are insufficiently challenging for the higher attaining pupils and writing expectations are not consistently high.
50. Writing is taught well in Years 3 to 6. In Year 3, teaching successfully engages pupils' imagination and they achieve well. In Year 6, the pupils are being taught good strategies to enable them to take responsibility for their own learning and increase independence. This is enabling them to understand how to improve their work. There are good examples of pupils marking each other's work. Guidance to support editing is very effective.
51. The school's strategy for reading is providing pupils with the skills to read text confidently and fluently. Less confident readers use pictures and letter sounds to help them understand or decode words. Reading skills are practised on a regular basis in school and at home, and reading records are carefully kept. However, there is a significant proportion of pupils who say they do not enjoy reading. There is a rigid adherence to the school's reading scheme and pupils do not have any say in the books that they are given to read. This inflexibility is not helping pupils to develop good reading habits or encourage preferences for authors and different styles of writing. Many pupils, however, use the very well stocked library to choose reading books to take home.
52. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution in helping these pupils with their work either by prompting to listen and pay attention in class, or by working with specific groups. Although pupils' listening skills are broadly satisfactory and improve as pupils move through the school, there are a few pupils, mainly boys, who do not pay enough attention. Pupils' speaking skills are average.
53. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Strengths in the teaching arise from a foundation of good planning which targets specific skills to be improved. Teachers have good pupil management skills and are well organised. Occasionally they have to work hard to achieve a good pupil response. One example of very good teaching in Year 5 involved the teacher retelling a story using short written notes. This captured the imagination of the pupils. Weaknesses in teaching are because expectations about what the pupils can achieve are too low. This adversely affects both the quality and quantity of pupil's work.
54. The reshaping of responsibility for literacy in the school has improved the subject leadership and management, and these are now satisfactory. In the short time that these new arrangements have been in place, good progress has been made. A new action plan identifies several areas for improvement. An analysis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses

from end-of-year tests has provided each class with clear targets for literacy. Recent training has been effective. However, the monitoring of teaching is unsatisfactory and this was a key issue for action identified in the last report. Information and communication technology is underused as a tool to support learning in the subject. Progress since the last inspection has not been good enough.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

55. Pairs of pupils talking together are positive features in many lessons and the promotion of speaking skills is generally good. Pupils' language is developed satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. However, writing in other subjects is underdeveloped. In Years 3 to 6, there are good opportunities for discussion and writing at length.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average and most pupils achieve well.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 are below average and new initiatives in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to produce improvement.
- Planning and teamwork ensure similar coverage and range of tasks in each year group.
- The National Numeracy Strategy has now been well implemented, especially in the oral and mental starter to lessons.
- The subject is well led by the numeracy co-ordinator.
- Good assessment systems are now in place and are used well to plan future work.

Commentary

56. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is below average. There is still a need for more challenge in these classes, especially for the higher attaining pupils. Inspection evidence indicates that although there are definite signs of improvement in the standards achieved, pupils in Year 2 will still be below the expected national average by the end of the year.
57. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making at least satisfactory progress and in Years 5 and 6, achievement is particularly good. Standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils develop skills in all aspects of the subject, with particular strengths in number and work on shape, space and measures. Teachers constantly set pupils practical examples to help to develop their mathematical understanding. Pupils often use data to aid their calculations. They are adept at displaying results of science experiments using handwritten or electronic graphs and charts.
58. In all lessons observed across the school during the inspection, the teaching was at least good and in two lessons it was very good. However, where there have been staffing changes during the past year, the quality of teaching has not been as consistent. The strengths of teaching include carefully planned lessons with clear learning aims; teaching which captures pupils' interest and enthusiasm, encouraging pupils to feel secure, and to contribute with no fear of failure; clear explanations that ensure all pupils know what they have to do; and a very good emphasis on the development of mathematical language.

59. Support for pupils with special educational needs or those with lower levels of prior learning in mathematics is good. Teachers recognise that some pupils need an easier starting point for independent work. Teaching assistants provide good support for these pupils but would benefit from having individual education plans to guide the work step-by-step. Work is marked conscientiously and comments provide clear pointers for improvement.
60. The subject is well led and managed. Some new ideas about the teaching of mathematics have already been implemented in the mixed Years 1 and 2 classes but have had insufficient time to make an impact. Assessment is good and is used well to influence future plans and to decide grouping arrangements for mathematics. Resources are satisfactory, well organised and readily available in all classes. Information and communication technology is not yet used sufficiently in mathematics lessons in the classroom.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. The use of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum is satisfactory. For example, graphs are used in science to present results, computer programmes are used to draw shape patterns and coordinates are used in geography lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and more advanced learners are suitably challenged.
- Higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Specific technical language is taught well in Years 3 to 6.
- Good use is made of ICT and mathematics in these years to enable tables of results to be used to construct bar charts and graphs to analyse data but these aspects are not systematically developed in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils are taught to organise scientific investigations well in Year 3 to 6.
- A formal assessment system is in place and is rigorously applied in Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

62. Pupils in Year 2 attain below average standards in science. Teachers' assessments in 2003 indicated that standards were well below average with no pupils achieving the higher standard. Pupils in Year 6 are in line to achieve very high standards with almost all achieving the national standard and six out of ten pupils achieving the higher level. This is because of the careful lesson planning that links investigations with the introduction of new scientific knowledge. No differences were observed between the achievement of boys and girls or those with special educational needs. However, lesson planning in Years 1 and 2 does not include more challenge for the higher attaining pupils. All pupils do the same task and this restricts the opportunities for these pupils to achieve at more appropriate levels.
63. In lessons seen, teaching was good and on one occasion excellent. It was consistently good in Years 3 to 6. In good lessons, the teachers' subject knowledge was good and planning showed a clear focus. Consequently, pupils learned well, showed interest and enthusiasm for the

subject and concentrated hard. In all the lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, teachers provided good opportunities for pupils to plan their investigations and carry out their own experiments. There is a good emphasis on the correct use of specific vocabulary, which ensures that pupils fully understand scientific terms. There is good consistency in the way that pupils record their work. Good use is made of visiting experts who present exciting slide shows, which helps pupils to recall their previous learning. This constitutes good revision practice.

64. Although no lessons were seen in science in Years 1 and 2 because of timetabling arrangements, the analysis of pupils' work and discussions with both pupils and staff indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Because of falling rolls, classes in Years 1 and 2 have been reorganised into mixed age groups. This has resulted in a widening of levels of achievement and pupils' maturity. The lesson planning for this range of attainment is not sufficiently effective to respond to the requirements of the higher attaining pupils and this is an area for improvement.
65. Since the last inspection, improvement in provision has been satisfactory. There has been a steady improvement in standards, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs now make better progress. Overall, subject planning identifies year-on-year progression and good emphasis is placed on the introduction of scientific vocabulary. Better links with other subjects have been forged, particularly in geography, mathematics and ICT. Accurate identification of pupils' knowledge through the use of such techniques as mind mapping encourages pupils to assess their own levels of scientific knowledge. Ongoing assessment procedures following the completion of projects have been introduced. Although the subject co-ordinator continues to monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work, there has been no ongoing monitoring of the teaching of pupils in mixed age classes. The co-ordinator has identified this need and has included it in her subject development plan.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is much better than it was at the time of the last inspection.
- Pupils have made rapid strides in their achievement.
- Teachers are now much more confident about the areas of ICT that they need to teach.
- The school is now able to teach a full and wide curriculum because resources are so much better.
- Subject leadership is very good and has given dynamism and impetus to improvement.

Commentary

66. Pupils now achieve across a very broad range of work in the subject. This includes the achievement of higher attaining pupils, some of whom work at a level above that expected for their age. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 6 confidently demonstrated their computer skills with *Power Point* presentations linked to their work in geography on mountain ranges in the world. Pupils show great enthusiasm for work with computers. Pupils in Year 5 confidently used a programme to prepare a sequence of instructions which would activate a zebra crossing.

67. Teaching and learning are good. Tasks are well matched to their prior attainment and teachers and support assistants provide good support. A particular success of the school is its creative approach. For example, there is very good use of digital cameras to record work throughout the curriculum. Since the last inspection, teachers have become enthusiastic about teaching the subject and now demonstrate a good level of skill that acts as a strong stimulus to pupils' learning. The school is making very good use of its computer suite. It is a good facility that contributes greatly to achievement.
68. The very good leadership of the subject has contributed a great deal by overseeing very good training and good provision of software to complement the provision. The school has made a very significant improvement since the last inspection and standards are much higher. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. In one lesson, taught by the subject co-ordinator, it was very good. This good teaching makes a strong impact on pupils' achievement. The full curriculum for the subject is taught, resources are now satisfactory and subject leadership is very good. There has been a very strong response to the key issue of the last inspection requiring improvement in ICT. Assessment is in the early stages of development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. Satisfactory use is made of computer skills in other subjects, especially when pupils use the computer suite. The use of ICT in English and mathematics lessons in the classroom is underdeveloped. Computers are widely used throughout the school to help pupils with special educational needs.

HUMANITIES

Geography and **history** were only sampled during the inspection. Few lessons were seen in either subject and no firm judgement on the quality of teaching is possible. In geography, pupils in Year 6 make rapid progress in gaining knowledge and understanding, for instance about mountainous regions. They develop good research skills using atlases and reference books. Very good use is made of the Internet enabling pupils to gain more information about the physical features of the mountainous regions throughout the world. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 accurately compared their own locality with a seaside resort. They know what is found by the seashore and talk about the various physical features, such as cliffs, the beach, the harbour, pier and lighthouse. However, higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and do not, for example, study photographs of beaches to draw a simple map, or compare their time spent on holiday with life at home. In history, pupils in Year 6 compare life in Victorian times with that of today. Their work includes a comparison of the different types of houses, education and different toys. They write about what it would have been like then. There is good use of timelines and key dates are identified. Pupils in Year 2 sequence key events in the life of Florence Nightingale. The sample of work in infant classes, however, is limited. The programmes of study are planned sufficiently well in both subjects to ensure that pupils study a full range of geographical topics and the subject is organised effectively to ensure that parallel classes follow the same programme.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is above average by the end of Year 6.

- The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Staff in infant classes make good use of class books to record pupils' work.
- Lessons are planned well and make good use of resources and visits.

Commentary

70. Pupils make good progress and by Year 6, show a good awareness of the customs and beliefs of the world's major faiths. They display sympathy with wider issues, such as Human Rights, and a keen interest in how the various faiths view subjects such as the After-life. In their written work, pupils in Year 5 show maturity of thinking in evaluating the Cross as a symbol of reconciliation. Attainment by the end of Year 2 is broadly average. For instance, pupils in Years 1 and 2 understood the sacredness of the Qu'ran, admiring the beauty of its binding and inscriptions, because the class teacher presented it to the class in a very sensitive manner.
71. Only a few lessons were observed during the inspection so no overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning is possible. However, it was evident that the subject is planned well and teachers expect pupils to be thoughtful in discussing topics. There are good opportunities to extend the pupils' skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. This was evident in lessons and in a sample of pupils' work, where, for example, pupils write an account of sacred stories and persuasive letters about the suffering of people in the world today. Staff in Years 1 and 2 record the pupils' work imaginatively in large topic books containing the work of all pupils. This strategy helps the pupils to feel that their work is valued. Class books are very attractively presented and displayed, making them seem special to the pupils, reflecting the way people of different faiths view their sacred texts and artefacts.
72. The school has maintained the good quality of provision found at the last inspection, despite changes of staffing and subject leadership. The new subject leader has a keen interest in developing the subject, including piloting a system of assessing pupils' progress, and has begun to monitor standards and coverage of the locally agreed syllabus. The subject contributes very well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Very good links are made with the arts when pupils visit places of worship, such as Coventry Cathedral, and explore themes through art.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design, design and technology and **music** were only sampled during the inspection. It is clear, however, that provision in the creative arts is a strength of the school. Not only are the subjects well managed, planned and taught rigorously but the school takes part in several cross-curricular projects, involving other schools and institutions, that cover art, drama, dance and music. In one project, pupils in Year 3 were using art as a stimulus for music. They explored a range of sound using percussion instruments and evaluated each other's work. They listened well to each and responded enthusiastically to questions posed by the teacher. They were beginning to explore repeating patterns of music. In another project, a different class of pupils in Year 3 wrote, designed and presented their own dramatisation of a children's story the class were reading. The quality of their work was of a high standard and included artwork, music and dance, as well as drama.

Subject planning is completed to a high degree of sophistication, exploring links between content and pupils' emotional and personal development. In art and design, pupils use sketchbooks to develop their ideas. These were used very well in a very good Year 5 lesson, in which pupils explored their reactions to Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*. They found out about the background to the piece, which linked closely to their work in history on World War II. They examined parts of the picture and

compared their effectiveness with photographs of wartime air raids. They used a variety of media, including charcoal, chalks, and fine and felt tip pens, to compose their own artwork. Standards of work seen in art and design, and design and technology are above average, because of the strong emphasis given to exploring these subjects by the enthusiastic staff. Visually, corridors and shared spaces throughout the school are quite stunning. Topics involving the design process are thoroughly researched and investigated. The end products, as for instance in the model sports cars made by pupils in Year 6, are proudly completed with an eye for detail and finish.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching across a wide range of activities.
- Provision for teaching gymnastics and enrichment through a wide variety of sports clubs are strong features.
- The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership.
- The school receives good support from parents.

Commentary

73. Overall, standards are average and pupils achieve well across a varied range of activities. They develop their skills in dance, games and gymnastics well. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take part in a national scheme which promotes skills in athletics, and most pupils are keen to take part. Swimming is arranged for Year 3 pupils and by the end of the course most pupils can swim the distance expected of pupils by the end of the junior years. Many pupils are proficient swimmers by the time they leave the school. In gymnastics, Year 6 pupils were observed working with poise, control and creativity in their floor work. They were very confident when planning their sequence of movements into a linked programme. Pupils collaborated very successfully in order to appraise and modify their work. They used the space ambitiously, exploring and using different levels.
74. Teaching is good. Teachers and support staff offer good support to all pupils and especially to those who are physically disabled who play a full part in most lessons. The subject is managed and organised well by the knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. A new scheme of work and detailed planning ensure that the full range of physical activities is covered. Resources are good, well stored and used carefully with all safety issues understood.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This subject was only sampled during the inspection. The school sees pupils' social development as an important part of its work. The programme for personal, social and health education is good and includes work on diet, health, sex, drugs and personal safety. It helps pupils to develop a safe and healthy lifestyle, gain confidence and interact positively with others. It is well supported by visits from outside agencies. All pupils are given good opportunities for taking on responsibility in their classrooms and the older pupils to take on responsible duties around the school. Many pupils apply in writing for positions of responsibility. The active school council has represented the pupils very effectively, being involved in decision-making that has, for instance, resulted in changes to school

uniform. This has increased their sense of public responsibility. Personal, social and health education is successfully incorporated into many subjects including science, art and drama. By way of the arts, pupils learn to develop their creativity through music, and harmony through artistic pattern. The recent long-term sickness of the subject co-ordinator, however, has prevented an action plan from being fully implemented.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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