

INSPECTION REPORT

WELSH HOUSE FARM COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103295

Headteacher: Mrs C Cowan

Lead inspector: Mrs J Ikin

Dates of inspection: 3rd - 5th November

Inspection number: 258338

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:	196
School address:	Welsh House Farm Road Quinton Birmingham
Postcode:	B32 2NG
Telephone number:	(0121) 464 4355
Fax number:	(0121) 464 2307
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr Michael Wallbank
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Welsh House Farm Community Primary School is a similar size to other primary schools with 196 pupils on roll, 106 boys and 87 girls. The area that it serves is mainly comprised of social housing. A distinctive feature of the school is that it includes resourced provision for 20 pupils who have autism or language disorders. Pupils in this provision come from the wider area of southern Birmingham. The school is also part of an Education Action Zone (EAZ) and is taking part in the national pilot project of an Intensive Support Programme (ISP) and the Excellence in Cities initiative.

The majority of pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage although a small number are from other white European backgrounds. A significant minority of pupils are from other cultural heritages, including mixed White and Black Caribbean, mixed White and Asian, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black British and Black Caribbean backgrounds.

Attainment on entry is well below average and many pupils have poorly developed language and personal and social skills and little experience of the world around them. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. These needs include autism, communication difficulties and moderate learning difficulties. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is about average. There is a very high mobility rate in the area and many pupils who start in the school's Nursery leave before they reach Year 6. About 68 per cent of pupils arrive at the school after the usual starting age and leave it before the end of Year 6. The number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is very high. The school has difficulty in recruiting teachers.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3349	Mrs J Ikin	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography
19426	Mr C Farris	Lay inspector	
28882	Mrs B Jones	Team inspector	The resourced provision for special educational needs
27826	Mr A. Parsons	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Special educational needs English History
14732	Mrs E Korn	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school where the achievement of most pupils is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. Pupils in the resource base achieve well. Very good leadership has resulted in good teaching and standards are improving. The school's capacity for further improvement is good because staff and governors are very committed to the school and share the headteacher's high aspirations for its pupils. It gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The leadership of the school by the headteacher and deputy headteacher are ensuring a very strong drive for improvement in standards.
- The school provides very good pastoral care; most pupils enjoy school and behave well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs in the resource base is very good; in the main school it is good.
- The school is developing its links with parents and the community well.
- The governance of the school is good.
- Standards in ICT are well below average and pupils do not achieve as much as they should.
- Assessment in English and mathematics is good but in other subjects it is unsatisfactory and pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own learning.
- The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes is good but in Years 1 to 6 there are weaknesses.
- Independent learning and creativity are not developed systematically across the curriculum.
- Attendance is well below the national average, although improving.

The overall improvement, mainly achieved over the last two years, is **satisfactory**. The headteacher has been successful in halting the decline in standards; they are beginning to rise in English, mathematics and science. The school's involvement in the Intensive Support Programme (ISP) has contributed to this. Most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection are being addressed. There has not been enough progress in information and communication technology (ICT) and art and design and the weaknesses in the curriculum are still evident. Attendance has also not yet improved enough. The school knows that more needs to be done and there are well-established plans for further improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is satisfactory overall.

Year 6 results

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those with similar prior attainment.*

The above table needs to be interpreted with caution because it does not take sufficient account of the presence of the resource base and the high pupil mobility rate at the school. The results of the Year 6 pupils who have been in the school from the Nursery show good achievement in English and satisfactory achievement in mathematics and science.

The inspection findings are that achievement is satisfactory in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 and in English, mathematics and science in Year 6, although overall standards are below average in these subjects. In information and communication technology standards are well below average and pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good and for those who speak English as an additional language it is satisfactory. Pupils in the resource base achieve very well. The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage is good although they do not reach the goals set for them by the end of the Reception Year because of their very low starting points.

Pupils have good attitudes to the school and good relationships with each other; behaviour is good. Their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.**

Attendance levels remain **unsatisfactory** although the school has many good procedures which are beginning to be effective.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

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

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching methods are imaginative and lead to a high level of interest from most pupils and there is good planning for individual needs.

The school provides very good care, guidance and support for pupils and its partnership with parents and the community is good.

The curriculum for English and mathematics is good; it covers all the requirements of other subjects, but not enough attention is given to important elements. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their own imaginative and creative ideas and the skills of independent learning. There is good support for learning outside the school day.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. Governance is good.

The headteacher has high aspirations, provides very good leadership and is supported very well by the deputy headteacher. There is a clear commitment to improving standards and good teamwork is a feature of the school. The management of the school is good with good systems for checking the school's work and planning for improvements; and financial planning is good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally pleased with the school. Pupils enjoy school and are mostly very happy. Both parents and pupils have said that behaviour has improved since the headteacher has been in post.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve standards and achievement in ICT.
- Improve schemes of work for subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Involve pupils more in assessing their own work and improve assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Develop pupils' skills of independent learning and creativity.
- Continue with the initiatives to improve attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children in the Foundation Stage achieve **well**, although most do not reach the goals set for them by the end of the Reception Year because of their low starting points on entry and weaknesses in their speaking skills.

Pupils in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6 **achieve satisfactorily although standards are below average in** reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 and **below average in English, mathematics and science** in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in the Nursery and the Foundation Stage as a result of a well structured curriculum and good teaching.
- More pupils are now reaching the level expected for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils although the results of national tests in Year 2 and Year 6 are well below the national average.
- Standards have started to improve in English and the school has rightly recognised that weaknesses in pupils' spoken vocabulary and grammar are hindering their progress in reading and writing.
- Standards have started to improve in mathematics, although more needs to be done to develop pupils' skills in using and applying their numeracy skills.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6 and pupils do not achieve as much as they should.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.5 (13.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	12.1 (12.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	13.8 (14.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	22.8 (23.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.0 (23.1)	26.8 (26.7)
science	24.8 (24.9)	28.6 (28.3)

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

1. On entry to the Nursery children's attainment is well below average. Their achievement is good in relation to these low starting points in all the areas of learning because of good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. About half of children do not reach the goals that are set for them in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical and creative development by the end of the Reception Year. They

reach the goals set for them in their personal and social development and have good attitudes for learning and in this respect are well prepared for their work in Year 1.

2. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the main part of the school is above the national average and well above when that number includes pupils in the special needs resource base. The impact of all pupils with special educational needs on the attainment test results in Years 2 and 6 has a significant effect on the overall results of the school and to some extent disguises the improving standards in the school. When these results are excluded from the data, standards are average when compared to schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals.
3. The results in the national tests for Year 2 pupils in 2003 were well below the national average for reading, writing and mathematics and below average when compared to similar schools. The results of teacher assessments for science were below the national average. In the same year, the results achieved in the tests for Year 6 pupils were well below average in English and in the bottom five per cent when compared to all schools nationally for mathematics and science. When compared to schools with similar prior attainment results were below average. All of these results include those of pupils from the resource base. When these results are removed from the equation then the figures are more favourable and show that more pupils than in previous years are achieving the levels expected in Year 2 and in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. This is a result of the school's focus on improving teaching and learning and the development of stringent monitoring and tracking procedures. The school's own data shows that Year 6 pupils who have been in the school since starting in the Nursery achieve well in English and satisfactorily in mathematics and science.
4. Inspection findings for English are that pupils' achievement is satisfactory in relation to their starting points although standards are below average in reading, writing and speaking and listening in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils do not have the range of vocabulary that they need to express their ideas and are not sufficiently clear about the difference between standard and colloquial English. These weaknesses transfer themselves to writing and also hinder pupils' understanding and appreciation of literature. The school has recognised this and is appropriately developing more opportunities to widen pupils' vocabulary and to develop their speaking and listening skills. Pupils develop a satisfactory range of strategies to help them decode new and unfamiliar words in Years 1 and 2. Progression in reading is hampered, however, because many do not read enough at home. Although the school compensates for this, for example, by older pupils hearing younger children read at lunchtime, there is scope to develop more opportunities for pupils to share books individually with a trusted adult at school. Pupils' skills of handwriting, spelling and grammar develop satisfactorily when they are the focus of lessons. However, when they are required to apply these skills to their other written work they find it difficult to remember and to reproduce simultaneously all the things that they have learned about good quality writing. Although pupils make satisfactory use of their literacy skills in other subjects of the curriculum the presentation of work is not as high as it should be.
5. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in mathematics although standards are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. The emphasis that the school places on number work has resulted in the majority of pupils handling mental mathematics and written calculations confidently and accurately. Their skills in applying their understanding in problem solving and investigations are weak and their skills and knowledge of shape, space, measure and data handling are not developed consistently. Pupils do not make sufficient use of their numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum.
6. Inspection findings show that pupils' achievement in science is satisfactory and standards are average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. They have improved since 2002. Pupils' skills in investigating and experimenting are not as well developed as they should be and this is preventing some pupils from achieving at the high levels.

7. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6 and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards have not improved enough since the last inspection because the school has not kept pace with curriculum developments and assessment in the subject is weak. Insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects.
8. Standards in religious education are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory in relation to the locally agreed syllabus. There is a well-planned programme of work which is in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils also benefit from well thought out assemblies which often draw on the themes and traditions of different religions.
9. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about standards and achievement in art and design, design and technology, music, physical education, geography and history.
10. Pupils with special educational needs in the main part of the school achieve well. They meet the targets set for them in their annual reviews and individual education plans. The school actively promotes the involvement of pupils in evaluating those targets and in setting new ones. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily and there is no significant difference between the achievements of pupils from different ethnic groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have **good** attitudes towards learning and their school life and they generally behave **well**. There is a **good** provision for pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** and they develop a growing recognition of the needs of others around them.

Attendance is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy their school life and most are well motivated to try hard.
- Most pupils behave well and their relationships with staff and schoolmates are very good.
- Staff work hard at eliminating bullying. The effectiveness of this is recognised by the pupils.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and feel that their ideas are listened to by staff.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to work independently.
- Although the school promotes and monitors it very well, pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

11. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and to school life in general which is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Most settle down to work quickly and without fuss and continue working even when not directly supervised. They are interested and responsive and enjoy their learning, particularly when the lesson is challenging. They work well on their own and in pairs or small groups. However, the school provides too few opportunities for them to develop the skills of independent learning.
12. Behaviour, both in lessons and around the school is generally good. The school has concentrated on eliminating bullying and improving the general standard of behaviour. As a result the school environment is now generally calm and settled. The pupils recognise and appreciate the benefits of these initiatives. Staff provide good role models and deal sensitively with pupils who find it hard to behave well, contributing much to the good relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Pupils also enjoy good relationships with their peers and are especially supportive of those who have disabilities. Responsibilities, such as membership of the school council, increase pupils' confidence and pupils appreciate having a part to play in the running of the school. Pupils are excluded only as a last resort and the experience,

together with the good support that they are given when they return to school, result in improvements in their behaviour.

13. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, which is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The curriculum for personal, social, health and citizenship education helps pupils to make the right moral and social choices as they grow in maturity. Special emphasis is given to the development of social skills and the enhancement of self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils' spiritual development is well supported through assemblies and religious education lessons and through the provision of experiences and images that stimulate and excite, as in an assembly when pictures of autumn colours evoked sounds of wonderment in the pupils. Pupils' cultural development is also good. They have opportunities to appreciate art and music, particularly in the resource unit. The religious education curriculum is very supportive with pupils learning about different religions and celebrating festivals such as Diwali and Eid. Clerics from different religions visit and some Islamic parents come into the school to talk about their religion.

14. Pupils with special educational needs, along with those pupils who are new to the school, are fully included and accepted into everything that goes on. The other pupils confirm the progress that they make in different lessons and talk about the help that they give to ensure that pupils who speak English as an additional language play a full part in the school. All pupils accept that at times some of their peers may need particular help or even to leave the classroom for a short period to regain their composure. The promotion of inclusion throughout the school has helped to develop a very positive approach to special needs and to children from other backgrounds that greatly enhances the school's overall ethos.

15. Attendance during the last reporting year was unsatisfactory. Unauthorised absence was very high. The figures were significantly affected by the extended unauthorised absence of a pupil and also by the very high pupil mobility. This latter fact, which is beyond the school's control, alone accounts for a seventh of the total absence. The school works very hard at promoting attendance and the many initiatives are having a good impact since the figures for the current year show absence at just over half that for the same period last year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	7.3
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	1.8
National data:	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi

No of pupils on roll
105
4
5
20
2
2
1
1

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
8	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean

3
8

0	0
0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

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

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching throughout the school is good as a result of the well-focused support and training that has been provided.
- Teachers use a range of well-planned strategies to ensure that all pupils are involved in learning.
- Classroom management and organisation is good, all the time available for learning is used well and good standards of behaviour are consistently promoted.
- Teachers and teaching assistants give good encouragement and support to individual pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn the skills of independent learning, to ask their own questions or to develop their own ideas creatively.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT in lessons to support work in other subjects.
- Assessment in English and mathematics is good but assessment is unsatisfactory in other subjects of the curriculum and more should be done to involve pupils in the evaluation of their own learning.

Commentary

16. The quality of teaching is good. This is a significant factor in the progress that pupils now make in lessons and the gradual improvement in the standards they are achieving. Teaching in the Nursery and the Reception class is good, with an appropriate emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and well planned opportunities for children to learn through play. The teaching of English, mathematics, science and religious education is good; the teaching of ICT in the computer suite was satisfactory. There is not enough evidence in other subjects to form a judgement about teaching and learning.
17. There is a well-planned programme of work which ensures that lessons build on what pupils already know. There is a particular emphasis on monitoring the progress of individual pupils and responding flexibly to their needs, particularly when they need additional help. This includes well-focused and effective support from teaching assistants and additional lessons outside the classroom.
18. Teachers have a good range of strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to learning. Work is matched well to pupils' different capabilities in English and mathematics, ensuring that pupils work at appropriately challenging levels. They use questioning well to ensure that all pupils, whatever their capability, are involved in lessons. Although teachers tend to use talking and listening as their main teaching style they also make use of pictures and visual clues as well as practical methods. Classroom displays of work in progress are used well to help pupils recall their work from previous lessons and so they are able to connect their new learning with what has gone before. Learning objectives are always shared at the beginning of lessons and this helps pupils to understand the purpose of lessons. More could be done to involve pupils in assessing their learning at the end of lessons however.

19. All teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and as a result an atmosphere of mutual trust has been created in which pupils grow in confidence and are eager to learn. Many pupils are reluctant to tackle new and unfamiliar work or to answer questions in whole class situations because they lack confidence in themselves. Teachers use a range of effective strategies to overcome this, for example, encouraging pupils to see mistakes as part of the learning process and by reward systems such as house points when they make a real effort. There is very good support and encouragement for individual pupils and good use is made of written comments in most English and mathematics books to help pupils know what they have to do to improve their work. It is not so evident in other subjects, however. On some occasions pupils are over dependent on the adults who work with them and they do not then develop the skills that they need to learn independently. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to ask their own questions, follow their own lines of enquiry and think creatively. Not enough use is made of ICT to support learning in other subjects.
20. Teachers make good use of all the time that is available in lessons. Pupils are very well managed and there is good preparation and use of resources to support pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are very well deployed to support the pupils who most need help and this makes a significant contribution to the progress that they make. There is very good communication between the teachers and their assistants and this flow of information ensures that pupils' work and progress is monitored carefully.
21. The school's behaviour policy is consistently applied and results in good behaviour in lessons because pupils know clearly what is expected of them. If there is any suspicion of an emerging difficulty, teachers and teaching assistants adopt a variety of strategies to deflect pupils, which are not only successful but ensure that the learning of others is not unduly disrupted.
22. The setting of targets and the well-planned use of support staff for pupils with special educational needs ensure that provision matches the identified needs of different pupils. All staff members are aware of the targets that different pupils are working towards. Staff are learning to adapt their teaching styles, in line with the school's current focus on this aspect of practice, whilst maintaining a clear focus on the new concepts and language that support the overall learning objectives. The school uses the advice of outside agencies to good effect in planning programmes and refining interventions. The agencies, in return, speak very highly of the positive response with which the school greets their support.
23. The school makes good use of the local authority's advisory service for pupils who speak English as an additional language. The needs of these pupils are met in lessons and this contributes to their satisfactory achievement.
24. The quality and range of assessments of pupils' progress and achievement are good for English and mathematics and very good in the Foundation Stage. Assessment procedures are in place for other subjects but they are not sufficiently systematic and they rely too heavily on the teachers' good informal knowledge of their pupils. Pupils are aware of the targets that are set for them in English and mathematics but their understanding of how they can improve is unsatisfactory and they are not as involved as they should be in the assessment of their own work. All statutory requirements are met for the assessment of pupils with special educational needs.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	7 (16%)	23 (53%)	13 (30%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

The curriculum

Curriculum provision is **satisfactory**. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for every pupil which meets all statutory requirements. It meets pupils' needs well in the Foundation Stage and satisfactorily in the rest of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good.
- The school has rightly prioritised the need to improve the English and mathematics curriculum but has not yet developed the curriculum for other subjects.
- ICT is not yet taught to a sufficiently advanced level and there is insufficient use of ICT to support learning in other subjects.
- There is insufficient planning for the systematic development of pupils' thinking skills and their skills of independent learning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the school is effective in ensuring that all pupils are included and have equal access to learning.
- There is good support for learning outside the school day.
- The accommodation in classrooms and shared areas is restricted but the school makes very good use of it.

Commentary

25. The judgements about the curriculum in Years 1 to 6 are similar those of the last inspection. The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception is good and has improved since the last inspection. The new co-ordinator has interpreted the national guidance well and crafted it effectively to address the needs of the children. There is a particular emphasis on developing the children's personal and social skills and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, which are taught through well-planned practical experiences which involve play and talk.
26. The curriculum for mathematics and English is good. It is well planned and regularly reviewed. The school has made effective use of the ISP project to harness expertise from outside the school and to develop its work. The expertise of the deputy headteacher and the mathematics co-ordinator also makes a significant contribution to the English and the mathematics curriculum.
27. There has been insufficient development of subjects other than English and mathematics. This is recognised by the school and included in the school development plan. A recent reshuffle of responsibilities has now ensured that all staff oversee their preferred curriculum areas and has improved their capacity to drive standards up across the whole school. One weakness is insufficient guidance to ensure the progression of ICT skills and their use to support learning in other subjects. There is not enough emphasis on the systematic development of pupils' skills of scientific enquiry and there is insufficient development of pupils' fieldwork skills in geography. The curriculum of art and design is not broad enough, there are not sufficient opportunities for three dimensional work, insufficient emphasis on art from different cultures and few opportunities for pupils to visit galleries. Although pupils are given opportunities to work on their own and with other pupils, the skills of independent learning are not systematically taught and pupils need more opportunities to develop their thinking skills, to ask their own questions and to follow their own lines of enquiry.
28. This is an inclusive school which meets the needs of all its pupils. The curriculum reflects the range of cultural heritages represented in the school well. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and all teachers and teaching assistants work hard to support their needs whilst ensuring that all pupils participate to the full in every lesson. The inclusive nature of the school supports its role in the community. There are good procedures to support pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who move into the area at short notice. As a result they are quickly and fully included into the life of the school. The school

meets the requirements of pupils' individual statements of special educational needs well and very well in the resource base. The school makes an enhanced commitment to special needs by the additional provision that it makes for those pupils with speech and language difficulties as well as other needs. The help and advice that it receives for particular pupils is well used but it is also used in more general programmes to support an even wider range of pupils. The needs of higher attaining pupils are met satisfactorily.

29. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. 'Circle Time' and social skills training both support pupils' self-development. There are policies for health and sex education as well as drugs awareness and they are regularly reviewed and revised. The new school council is popular with pupils and it has made a significant contribution to the quality of the school building because of the implementation of its ideas about improving the toilet facilities.
30. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that supports not only sports but also allows for drama, art and craft activities and homework. The support that these activities attract is good and parents particularly value them. The school makes satisfactory use of outside support such as visiting drama groups and storytellers and organises a range of visits to enhance the relevance of the curriculum.
31. Links with other local schools in the Education Action Zone are good. There is a good link with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer and there is new interest in making use of the facilities in that school to support the curriculum and to help prepare pupils for the transition to a much larger school environment.
32. Although the school site and the buildings are quite cramped, a great deal of initiative has turned the shared space available in corridors and hallways into a number of pleasant, if necessarily rather cramped, working environments. The delayed building work addresses these shortcomings as well as the poor provision made for pupils in the Nursery and Reception. The new building also improves disability access. The governors recognise the strength of the pupils' case for an enlarged sports area and are working to secure better provision when redevelopment of the local area begins. The provision of teachers and teaching assistants is well matched to the needs of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

33. Provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is **good**. The pastoral support provided is **very good** and pupils are happy and thrive well in a safe and secure environment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff look after the pupils very well and provide very good pastoral support.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good.
- Good health and safety procedures lead to a safe school environment. Child protection procedures are good.
- Pupils get good support when they start in the school, particularly if this is not at the usual time.
- The school involves pupils well in its work and is very active in seeking their views.

Commentary

34. The pastoral support provided is very good. The school is a warm and friendly place and provides the stability and support that pupils need. Consequently pupils are happy and secure and most enjoy their school life. Staff provide a high level of affectionate support and the good relationships that exist make it easier for pupils to talk to them about any worries they may have. Staff are kept well informed if any pupil is experiencing problems at home. Personal development of the pupils is promoted well through the curriculum, assemblies, special support in social skills and through the high expectations that teachers have of them. The provision of a breakfast club contributes well to pupils' well being.

35. The physical well being of the pupils has a high priority. Child protection procedures are thorough and staff are briefed as necessary on individual cases. Where appropriate, the school involves social services and other outside agencies. Class teachers are very aware of pupils' needs and any concerns are flagged up so that early support can be given. Health and safety is well managed. A teacher has day-to-day responsibility and, together with a governor, carries out regular safety inspections. Risk assessment is properly undertaken and emergency procedures are all in place.
36. Children in the Nursery class enjoy a smooth and confident start to their school life because of the special support given by staff. Pupils who start at times other than the normal are welcomed into school and are well supported by staff to enable them to become familiar with school routines as quickly as possible. Classmates help pupils to settle in and teachers quickly identify any specific needs that the pupil may have. Year 6 pupils also receive support as they prepare for their move to secondary school.
37. The school has a clear commitment to supporting every pupil. The headteacher models good practice in this regard and during the inspection made time available to work with a pupil, with special educational needs, who required some individual time with her.
38. The school is very active in seeking pupils' views and involves pupils effectively in its work. All classes are represented on the school council and the members of the newly elected committee take their responsibilities seriously. They are pleased to be consulted and involved in the school's work and take great pride in some of the improvements that have been made as a result of their suggestions.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with parents, with the community and with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have positive views of the education provided by the school.
- The school provides parents with good information about the school and about pupils' standards and progress.
- The school is developing good links with the local community and is supported by local businesses.
- The school is benefiting, through the Education Action Zone, from its links with other local primary schools.

Commentary

39. The headteacher and governors work extremely hard to ensure good links with parents and the community. As a result of their efforts parents are gradually becoming more involved in school life and the school is well thought of in the community. The response to the parents' questionnaire was good; nearly double that of the previous inspection. Parents have generally positive views of the school and its activities. They believe the school is well led and managed, with good teaching and promoting a positive work ethic. They see their children liking school and being well supported as they grow and develop. They feel the provision of out-of-school activities is good. The inspection findings entirely support these views. On a less positive note, about one in five parents who responded feel that behaviour in the school is unsatisfactory and that their child is bullied. The inspection finds that most pupils behave well and that the few who do not are well controlled by the staff. Bullying was not seen during the inspection and there are good procedures in place to minimise it. The pupils themselves say that bullying is much less of a concern than it used to be.

40. Parents receive good information about the school through the prospectus and the governors' annual report and there is a regular newsletter. Curriculum details are sent each term. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements but would be improved if more space were available for comment. Parents are provided with information on how to help their child at home. The school has sought parents' views via a questionnaire linked to a parents' evening and some of their suggestions have been acted upon. A recent new initiative is an 'Inspire' workshop in which parents undertake practical activities with their children and this was sufficiently successful for it to be repeated with other classes.
41. Parents of pupils with special educational needs learn about their children's progress towards achieving their individual targets on a regular basis. The annual reviews of statements of special educational needs take place according to a clear schedule and the school works hard to ensure that representatives from other agencies attend if required. They are appropriately organised so as to involve parents fully and to collect the ideas of the pupils. The governors' annual report for parents includes a section about the provision for special educational needs. Parents are very positive about the provision for these needs in the school.
42. Links with the community are given a high priority. The headteacher belongs to the committee of the Welsh House Trust and several of the governors are very involved at various levels in the community itself and a community liaison worker is now employed in school. The school organises courses for parents and other members of the community and there is a library in school with a good range of books, including a number in several minority languages, which are available to parents and other community members. The local church holds weekly Sunday services in the school hall and the vicar and other church workers take assemblies and support in class. Local senior citizens attend school productions and community lunches are planned. Links with business have resulted in a science and design and technology project – and more recently led to a marathon storytelling session with workers in the community reading stories to the pupils. The local further education college has sponsored football kit.
43. The school's involvement with the Quinzone Education Action Zone (EAZ) has led to good involvement with other primary schools. The school has taken part in joint activities such as 'brain gym' training and a book week and there has been shared professional development within the group. One of the schools enjoys 'beacon school' status and visits have been made to that and other schools to share and develop good practice in school operation and management. The school has sports links with other local schools and plays regular football matches. Induction procedures are satisfactory as are transfer arrangements for pupils moving on to secondary school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **very good**.

44. The leadership of the school by the headteacher is **very good** and she is given very good support by the deputy headteacher. The school is well managed and governance is **good**. The difficulties that the school has in recruiting staff, the high mobility rates and the low rates of attendance are all barriers to improvement but they are being tackled well by the senior management team.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the school by the headteacher is very good and she is given very good support by the deputy headteacher.
- The school's involvement in the ISP project has made an important contribution to the school's improvement.
- Everyone is encouraged to play their part in the running of the school and there is a strong sense of teamwork.

- Governors fulfil their role well and make good use of their individual strengths for the benefit of the school.
- School development planning is very good and procedures for checking the school's work are good.
- The school's budget is managed well.

Commentary

45. The leadership and management of the school are very good. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
46. The headteacher's commitment and determination to improve the quality of the education that the school provides has been a significant factor in halting the decline in the academic standards that was a feature prior to her appointment. As a result of a thorough review of the school's aims and objectives at an early stage of her headship she has successfully established a new image for the school based on her high aspirations for the school. Staff, parents and governors share a clear vision for the school and they work as a highly committed team as a result of the clear lead she has given. The deputy headteacher has been in post for a very short time but is already making a substantial contribution to the school's work, giving very good support in her varying roles, for example, as English co-ordinator and in monitoring attendance. She also sets a very good example by her own teaching.
47. The school's involvement in the ISP project is making an important contribution to the school's improvement and has ensured that teaching and learning is at the heart of the school's improvement efforts. As a result of their involvement and the increased high quality training they have received, all staff have improved their teaching skills and regularly take part in honest and open debate about how they can improve even further. Senior members of staff are dedicated to continually checking the effectiveness of the school's work and taking appropriate action to build on successes and eliminate weaknesses. No one is complacent and an atmosphere in which everyone is learning from each other is being developed. Consequently, the school's capacity for further improvement is good.
48. The delegation of roles and responsibilities ensures that leadership is evident at every level in the school community. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, are involved in the running of the school. They are given the time and training that they need to carry out their work and encouraged to develop their own ideas. Regular contact ensures that they understand what is expected of them and the importance of their role. As a result, there is a cohesive staff team, who work well together and who have a very good understanding of their role in the day-to-day work of the school and its longer-term improvement. They know that their work is valued and are highly dedicated to the school and its pupils. This has been a major factor in bringing about the recent improvements. The leadership and management of the resourced provision for special educational needs is good. In the main school the management of special educational needs, where the teacher is a recent appointment, is good. She brings a fresh perspective to the work of the school and a reflective approach to her role that are starting to raise interesting and challenging questions. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the special needs teacher are beginning to form a strong working relationship that builds on their skills and shared commitment to doing the best they can for pupils, whatever the nature and extent of their special educational needs.
49. Pupils are fully involved in the school's improvement efforts. The school council is regularly consulted and its views acted upon. As a result pupils take their roles and responsibilities seriously and feel a strong sense of pride in their school.
50. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and make a substantial contribution to the effectiveness of the school. They share a wide range of experience and expertise and use these combined strengths well for the benefit of the school. Committees and meetings are very well organised and attended and issues are rigorously debated prior to decisions being

made. Governors are involved well in monitoring and shaping the direction of the school. They have a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses and of the challenges that it faces.

51. Procedures for development planning are very good and ensure that everyone understands the main priorities for improvement, the time schedule and their part within school development. Clear foci for improvement are identified as a result of the school's good procedures for checking its work. Assessment results are analysed systematically and there are effective consultations with staff and governors. Parents and pupils are also consulted on some issues. Actions are carefully planned so that they are manageable and properly funded. There are very good links with the budget and success criteria and arrangements for checking the progress of actions are clearly identified. An effective feature is the sharply focused intermediate termly plans (RAP) which are reviewed regularly and enable the school to adjust its actions according to the progress it is making. The school's progress and the effectiveness of their agreed actions are reviewed termly and this ensures that the school's efforts are concentrated where they are most needed.
52. The budget is well managed and administered and the principles of best value are applied well so that the highest value is obtained for the lowest cost. All the monies that are available to the school are directed towards obtaining the best possible provision for the education of the pupils. The school makes good use of all its allocated funds for their designated purposes and links them closely to its priorities for improvement. The school augments its income effectively by using funding from a range of sources; for example, monies from the Education Action Zone are being used to improve home school liaison. The school's large carry over is to pay for the improvements in the school building.
53. Given the sound progress that the pupils make from their very low starting points on entry and the very good standards of care and welfare that the school provides the school gives satisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	865,750
Total expenditure	843,902
Expenditure per pupil	4,305

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	161,827
Balance carried forward to the next	21,848

THE SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCES BASE

Provision for pupils for pupils with special educational needs in the resource base is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make very good progress because of the high standard of provision, including opportunities for integration with their mainstream classmates.
- The resource base is very well led and managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator who sets a very good example by the quality of her own teaching.
- Pupils make good progress and benefit from the very good support by well-trained support assistants and close co-operation with health and educational agencies.
- Close contact is maintained with parents and there is thorough recording and reporting.

Commentary

54. The school has maintained the very high standards of provision for pupils in the resources base as reported at the last inspection. There are 19 pupils at present, mostly boys, from Reception age to Year 6. The school copes very well with the complex nature of their

particular needs, such as autism, speech and language delay, social and emotional difficulties, movement, learning and medical problems. Pupils have access to all areas of the curriculum and are either taught in the base classrooms or as part of the mainstream, depending on appropriateness. Good progress is evident throughout the age groups.

55. The resource base at present comprises two classrooms which are well equipped for pupils' differing needs. Younger pupils are taught mainly in their room to address particular problems of language and communication and social inclusion. Daily input into speech and language and social skills programmes is effective in promoting these skills. These pupils share experiences with mainstream pupils whenever possible and are included in general aspects of school life. Inclusion is based on individual needs and is entirely appropriate.
56. Standards of attainment are well below national levels in English, mathematics and science. Oral work is better than written work. Very good progress has been made by pupils to overcome language difficulties, with the invaluable help of daily speech and language programmes making a great difference in understanding of language and articulation of speech. Regular physiotherapy sessions and exercises in gross and fine motor control have greatly improved physical development, with pupils gaining control and showing improved co-ordination. Scrutiny of reports and work shows pupils make good progress against their individual targets.
57. The quality of teaching observed for younger pupils was very good. The experience and specialist skills of the teacher in charge are apparent, with high standards of understanding individual needs, expertise in planning, a stimulating delivery and good subject knowledge across the curriculum. Pupils were highly motivated to listen and respond and were well behaved. They showed gains in awareness of, for example, how to assemble parts of a puppet in design and technology, how to position the body to balance in physical education and how to search for clues to discover spellings in literacy. All gained success at their own levels. The base teacher of older pupils was not in school but scrutiny of work showed the thread of good teaching skills running through the work, with careful marking and advice for all written work. Pupils show care in presentation and willingness to improve. Classes taught by mainstream teachers where pupils were integrated showed good quality teaching, with understanding of pupils' needs and appropriate objectives, encouraging all pupils to participate. Learning support assistants give invaluable help to resource base pupils throughout the school and contribute greatly to their successful development.
58. The leadership and management of the resource base is very good. The teacher in charge, who is also the general co-ordinator for special educational needs, is very experienced and well trained. She is committed to the work and has the full co-operation of the second teacher of the resource base and learning support assistants. She works in close collaboration with all relevant personnel from the Health and Education Services, conducts regular in-service staff training and is directly involved in transfers and placements. All documentation is thorough, with co-operation from staff in the forming of individual education plans and target setting where needed. There is good contact with parents, who appreciate very much the work of the resource base. They are fully involved in annual reviews. Daily recording and regular reporting occurs. Monitoring and evaluation of progress and achievement is ongoing. Assessment is constructive and informs planning well.
59. The school has very good links with outside agencies to support their work. Speech therapy programmes are backed up well by the teachers. An occupational therapist is appropriately contacted when required and sets exercises for fine motor control which staff carry out. The physiotherapist visits regularly, monitors pupils' progress and sets tasks to practise. The teaching of social skills is emphasised extremely well. Pupils are very carefully introduced to acceptable patterns of behaviour and encouraged to take part in social occasions. Pupils have made vast improvements in this area of education, which enables them to be included more and more in school activities, including the school council. Music is used widely within the resource base and has a beneficial effect upon behaviour and attitude of mind.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage

Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good and has improved since the last inspection.

The quality of teaching is now never less than good and often incorporates features of different teaching styles that enable the children to respond in a variety of different ways. The accommodation issues noted in the last inspection remain but the evidence suggests that they will be addressed by the imminent new building programme.

Children start in the Nursery in the academic year that they reach four years of age. Although some children attend for either the morning or the afternoon session, an increasing number attend for both and this development is welcomed by parents and makes a good impact on the development of the children's skills. The work in the Reception class builds well upon the work in the Nursery and the unified records and planning make a significant impact on the children's learning. All adults act as very good role models and manage the children well. The ratio of staff to children is good and ensures not only that all children receive plenty of encouragement and stimulation but that all the different needs of the children receive the attention they require. The inclusion of all children is good. There is a particular emphasis in planning on three areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development. This emphasis reflects the main needs of the children very well as most children enter the Nursery well below the expected level for their age. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and assessment procedures are very good. The entire staff team work very well together both informally and formally and the scripts that guide the work of support staff are effective because they highlight the key learning objectives well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are curious and show an increasing confidence in working with other children by the end of the Reception Year.
- As a result of the positive responses that they receive from all the adults who work with them the children grow in confidence and enjoy learning.
- Behaviour is good and the children show care and concern for others as a result of the calm atmosphere and high expectations in the Nursery and Reception class.

Commentary

60. The children achieve well in their personal and social development as a result of the good teaching they receive. Most children reach the goals set for them by the end of the Reception Year. When they enter the Nursery they show little curiosity or desire to explore. As a result of the good encouragement they receive and the good range of activities that is provided they gradually begin to show an interest in what they see around them and develop the confidence to work alongside other children and to select the activities that they will take part in. They respond particularly well when activities are led by an adult, such as in cooking in the Nursery, when they concentrate well as they take turns to stir the mixture and to add ingredients. By the time they reach the end of the Reception Year the children want to find out things for themselves and are able to work well together, sharing equipment and materials amicably.

61. All the staff work hard to encourage the children and to give them a sense of the importance of learning and the value of their achievements. A particularly innovative strategy is the 'graduation ceremony', complete with academic gowns and certificates, that takes place when the children leave the Nursery. Behaviour is generally very good and all staff respond quickly to emerging problems and turn them into learning points. The very good role models set by the teachers and teaching assistants, encourage children to show care and concern for each other.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good attention is given to promoting children's early literacy skills.
- Most children listen well but they do not always have the confidence to make relevant comments on what they have heard.
- Children make insufficient use of spoken language when working alongside others and in the course of their imaginative play.

Commentary

62. The children achieve well because of the good teaching that they receive, although very few reach the goals set for them because of their very low starting points on entry to the school. The school uses a good range of strategies to promote children's communication, language and literacy skills. The '123 Books' that start every day in the Nursery encourage parents and carers to talk, listen and write with their children and staff model the ideas behind this initiative when they help to settle the children. The staff team take every opportunity thereafter, whatever the primary focus of the teaching time, to try and extend the children's ideas through careful questioning and the modelling of new vocabulary. Younger children are encouraged to try out new words for themselves and to build on what others say.
63. The children enjoy listening to books. For example they showed huge delight and surprise when a pop-up dinosaur appeared in a book and they immediately related it to the dinosaur den that occupied a key position in the Nursery classroom. However their memory for stories is poor and the staff have to reread books several times before the children are able to start sequencing ideas and answering simple questions about the content. The good progress that they make is evident in the positive response that older pupils in the Reception class show to books. Many have their favourite stories that they can recall. Older children make letters out of modelling material, enjoy finding new words that begin with a given sound and experiment with their own writing. In both the Nursery and Reception class the children find it very hard to use language to talk through their ideas, to make sense of events and to create imaginary worlds.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children learn to count and recognise numbers by the end of the Reception Year.
- Teachers work hard to promote mathematical language and early ideas about shape, space and measure.

Commentary

64. Children's achievement is good as a result of good teaching and opportunities for children to learn mathematical skills through a range of practical activities. However few children reach the goals set for them at the end of the Reception Year because of their very low starting points on entry to the school. Teachers plan a good range of counting activities throughout the day, for example, counting toy dinosaurs in the Nursery as children try to see how many they can balance one on top of another. Older children in the Reception class count out spoonfuls of porridge and count on to add them all together and use their own ways to calculate who has the most plastic building bricks.
65. There is good provision of a range of practical activities to help children to gain an early understanding of shape, space and measure. For example, opportunities to cook with an adult and to fill and empty containers in the sand tray, help children to develop an understanding of capacity and to use language such as 'more' and 'most' to describe what they see. The language of position and shape is used well by all members of staff in both classes and that use of language is echoed by older children when they learn to cut pictures to fit in with a collage they are making. The younger children learn to design stylised flowers that are based on regular shapes and the older children use the same ideas to make symmetrical flowers.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of practical activities is provided for children to find out about the world around them.

Commentary

66. Teaching is good and there is a good variety of opportunities for the children to explore the world around them. The frequent opportunities for children to explore new ideas are used very well by staff, so that children develop their skills in and the language they need to describe different situations and events. This results in children achieving well, although they do not reach the goals set for them by the end of the Reception Year because of their low starting points on entry. Children in both classes enjoy designing and making a range of objects using both construction kits and packaging materials. They particularly enjoy cooking and, with encouragement, explore the changes that take place in the mixtures as they add different ingredients, mix them together and heat them up in the oven or on the hob. Evidence from scrutiny of planning and pictorial records suggests that a very wide range of activities is planned throughout the year and that these activities are chosen to consolidate children's awareness of different seasons, festivals and to prepare them for the subject curriculum in school. There are appropriate opportunities for children to develop their understanding of the place where they live and of past and present in relation to their own lives. The children make satisfactory use of computers as part of their learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for children's physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor play area is too small to help children to develop their physical skills on a larger scale but there are well-advanced plans to remedy this situation.
- The school provides a good range of activities to promote children's manipulative skills.

Commentary

67. When children enter the Nursery many have poorly developed physical co-ordination. They make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in developing their manipulative skills as a result of the good teaching they receive. However, few reach the goals that are set for them at the end of the Reception Year. The lack of adequate outdoor facilities, as well as the limited indoor space for the Nursery, is unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. This restricts the opportunities that are available for children to develop their physical skills and co-ordination on a larger scale. However, the school has worked hard to provide a good range of outdoor equipment and children use tricycles and small games equipment with increasing control. Once the proposed building work has been completed the quality of this area of the curriculum is set to improve further. Children's manipulative skills develop well and they handle construction materials and tools, such as brushes and scissors, with increasing accuracy.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children enjoy exploring colour, shape and texture when working with different materials.
- Children make insufficient use of language in their imaginative play.

Commentary

68. Achievement in this area of learning is satisfactory and teaching is also satisfactory. Few children reach the goals that are set for them by the end of the Reception Year. The children enjoy exploring colour, texture and shape as a result of a satisfactory range of opportunities to work with paints and to make collages and prints out of different materials. They quickly learn to sing simple songs from memory. There are ample planned opportunities for children to develop their imaginative ideas in role-play, but more needs to be done to help them to expand their imaginative ideas and use new vocabulary to talk about them.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving; although they are below average in reading and writing in Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory in relation to their starting points.
- The school has correctly identified that pupils' limited vocabulary and grammar and their lack of confidence in expressing their ideas through speech is a barrier to achievement in English.

- Teaching is good but there is a need to develop greater consistency in marking more involvement of pupils in evaluating their own work.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their thinking skills and the skills of independent learning.
- The subject co-ordinator provides very effective leadership and management in the subject
- There is good use of assessment and data from test results to target improvement strategies.
- The use of literacy in other subjects of the curriculum is inconsistent and there is insufficient use of ICT to support learning in English.

Commentary

69. Although test results in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 and in Year 6 in 2003 were well below average, detailed in-school analysis shows that more pupils are now achieving the levels that are expected for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 than there were in previous years. This is because of improvements in teaching and assessment. The national data also shows that the school's Year 6 results for pupils achieving the expected levels are above average when compared with schools with similar prior attainment. Inspection findings are that standards in English are rising. The school has set challenging targets for 2004 and is on course to meet them. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The quality of the support available to them and the planned activities that address their particular needs are good. All pupils enjoy their work and they achieve satisfactorily in relation to their level on entry.
70. Pupils throughout the school listen attentively in lessons and have learned to observe the conventions of following instructions and turn taking. They are well behaved, follow closely what their teachers and other adults say to them and do their best to carry out their tasks. While higher attaining pupils show in their work that they have clearly understood what is expected of them, there are times when lower attaining pupils experience difficulties processing information and, as a consequence, their initial responses, whether spoken or written, do not always reflect what the teacher intends. The very good support offered to such pupils by teachers and by teaching assistants ensures that they are given the time and help they need to understand the nature of each task and to engage constructively in formulating their responses. Higher attaining pupils are able to engage in sustained discussion, talk about their day-to-day experiences, exchange formal and informal greetings and discuss aspects of their work. However, a significant minority of pupils lack the confidence that they need to express their ideas in discussions and are not sufficiently aware of the differences between their own colloquial language and standard English and do not have the skills that they need to adapt their speech to the needs of the listener. All pupils are taught and gradually acquire, the technical terms necessary to discuss their learning in English as they move up through the school, but few have a wide general vocabulary. This limits their ability to express themselves clearly and with precision in speech and in writing and reduces their ability to infer deeper meaning in the books they read. The school has recognised the need to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills and is putting into place a good range of strategies for this. The school uses guided reading activities to promote reading for understanding, which give the teachers and additional staff opportunities to listen to reading on a regular basis. However, there is scope to develop more opportunities for pupils to share and discuss books individually with a trusted adult. Pupils learn about different writing styles in the course of literacy but do not always apply their knowledge of grammar learned in more formal lessons, in the context of their own writing.
71. Teaching is good and there is good planning with clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils so that they understand the purpose of the lessons. The ISP project has enhanced teachers' confidence and extended their range of approaches and their use of different teaching styles. This, together with carefully planned tasks which are well matched to pupils' different needs, ensures that pupils build on previous learning and make progress in lessons. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and pupils have positive attitudes towards their work. Marking is variable. Teachers follow the new marking policy which is designed to close the gap between attainment in the school and the national standard but, as yet, the pupils

do not receive enough focused help, in language that they understand, to know what they need to do to improve further. There is also a need to involve pupils more in the evaluation of their own work.

72. There is insufficient guidance to support consistency in the development of pupils' thinking skills and their skills as independent learners. Although pupils have good attitudes to their work and concentrate well on tasks that are set, on occasions they are too dependent on the adults who are working with them. They then rely on them for help with things that they should be able to do for themselves and seek approval for work as it progresses because of their lack of confidence in themselves as learners. There is insufficient use of ICT to support pupils' work in English.
73. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a clear commitment to raising standards throughout the school and uses her non-contact time very imaginatively to support her colleagues. The use of the data that the school collects is impressive and this ensures that targets are finely tuned to the needs of the pupils. The co-ordinator moderates work across the whole school and makes detailed suggestions for all teachers and many individual pupils. This work is extremely supportive and well focused and is helping to ensure that the hard work going on in this subject makes a greater impact on the standards that pupils achieve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

74. Pupils make **satisfactory** use of language and literacy in the other subjects of the curriculum although standards of presentation are not as high as they should be.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average in Year 2 and Year 6 but pupils' achievement is satisfactory and there are signs of pupils catching up on the learning they have missed in the past.
- Pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge of number facts and can calculate accurately.
- Pupils' skills in problem solving and investigation and their understanding of shape, space and measure are weak.
- Teaching is good as a result of the school's involvement in the intensive school support programme.
- Pupils are developing positive attitudes as a result of a range of teaching strategies to promote their confidence in themselves as learners.
- The subject is well led and managed and good use is being made of assessment data to identify areas for future improvement.

Commentary

75. Standards are slowly but steadily improving as pupils gain in confidence and consolidate their understanding of basic numeracy skills. This is as a result of the emphasis that the school has put on improving teaching and learning in mathematics, improved assessment and tracking of pupils' achievement. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have a sound understanding of the basic mathematical terminology. In Years 3 and 4, average and higher attaining pupils develop their knowledge of number beyond 100 and this supports the development of their understanding of fractions and percentages in Years 5 and 6, where they have a satisfactory understanding of number facts up to and beyond 1,000. Where pupils achieve below the standards expected for their age it is because they do not always understand the meaning of mathematical questions, are unable to adopt a systematic approach to problem solving and find it difficult to record their calculations systematically. This is because their skills in searching for pattern, in logical

reasoning and in explaining their work are insecure. The achievement of pupils who have special educational needs is good in relation to their prior attainment as a result of work that is usually matched to their needs and the support that they receive from classroom assistants.

76. Pupil's knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measure is below the level expected throughout the school. This aspect of mathematics is not as consistently taught as that of number. Pupils demonstrate an increasing understanding of data handling in Years 2 and 3. However it is not yet developed to a sufficient extent in Years 5 and 6. This is, in part, linked to insufficient use of ICT to support learning.
77. Many pupils lack confidence in themselves as learners. They are reluctant to tackle work at a higher level because they think that if they do, they will fail. This is a barrier to their achievement and they are then reluctant to try because at least they cannot then fail. The school recognises this problem and teachers have established classroom environments in which pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils are encouraged to have a try, see mistakes as part of the learning process and to have the courage to say or ask a question if they don't understand. Success in learning is celebrated with taps on the back, rounds of applause or house points. Pupils respond well to this.
78. Teaching is good. A particular strength of teaching is the range of methods that the teachers use to help pupils who learn in different ways have access to learning. These have been developed as a result of the school's involvement in the ISP project. Wherever possible the teachers emphasise the usefulness of mathematics in real life situations and this helps pupils to see the purpose of what they are learning. In the best teaching good planning ensures well-structured and interesting lessons which help pupils to build upon what they already know. Where lessons are most successful the teachers draw on their own good mathematical knowledge to respond flexibly to pupils by asking questions that overcome misconceptions, encourage pupils to think for themselves and help them to develop their mathematical ideas. All teachers make good use of information in classroom displays to support and inform pupils' learning in mathematics. For example, previous work, done as a whole class is displayed prominently and this helps pupils to connect their learning in the lesson to what has gone before.
79. Mathematics is well led and managed by the subject leader who sets a good example by the quality of her own teaching. She analyses test information and has also observed teaching. As a result she has a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and uses this information effectively to inform future improvements.

Mathematics across the curriculum

80. Pupils use mathematics **satisfactorily** in other subjects of the curriculum. However, there are insufficient links to ICT, science, design and technology and geography.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving and although below average, more pupils are now achieving the levels expected in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Achievement is satisfactory overall but insufficient emphasis on the development of experimental science prevents some pupils from achieving at the higher levels.
- Teaching is good but there are weaknesses in marking and the involvement of pupils in evaluating their own work.

- There is insufficient use of ICT to support work in science and there are weaknesses in planning for progression and in assessment.

Commentary

81. An analysis of pupils' work and observations of lessons shows that pupils attain standards that are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents satisfactory achievement in relation to their starting points at the beginning of Year 1. The school's results in national tests have declined since the last inspection but the 2003 national tests show that standards have started to improve. Although they are well below average, more pupils are achieving the levels expected than in the previous two years. This is attributable to improvements in teaching. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a result of the good support that they receive. The achievement of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. Throughout the school there is a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to learn about living things, materials and physical phenomena. However, there is insufficient development of the skills of scientific enquiry.
82. The quality of teaching is good with a number of strengths which account for pupils' good progress. Learning objectives are shared with the pupils. This ensures a clear focus for lessons which pupils understand. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables them to give clear explanations and demonstrations and to ask questions which help pupils to think for themselves. Teachers use a wide range of resources and use practical methods which capture and hold the pupil's interest. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to ask their own questions and devise their own experiments. There are good arrangements for pupils with special educational needs to receive support from teaching assistants which ensures that they make good progress. The quality of marking in science is variable. Where it is best there are helpful written comments which acknowledge the pupils' efforts and also help them to improve their work. However, marking is often too general and is not used sufficiently to help pupils make progress. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in evaluating their own learning in science.
83. The school is aware of the need to improve the curriculum in science to ensure that learning objectives are rigorous in all year groups and that scientific enquiry skills are systematically taught. There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning in science. The school also knows that assessment in science is unsatisfactory because it is not sufficiently systematic. At present class teachers select the criteria for the half term assessments and these can change from year to year. The subject is soundly led and there are clear plans for the development of the subject. The co-ordinator makes regular checks on planning and on the standards that are being achieved and is developing her role by observing lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6.
- Pupils do not achieve as much as they should because of weaknesses in the curriculum guidance and assessment.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to support other subjects of the curriculum.
- The school has improved its resources.
- There is a new subject co-ordinator and a good plan to support further improvements.

Commentary

84. Standards are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6 and pupils do not achieve as much as they should in the subject. They have declined since the last inspection because the school has not kept pace with developments in the curriculum and assessment. The headteacher recognises this but she has needed to prioritise the school's improvement and ICT has not yet had a concentrated focus. The subject has not been totally neglected however. Resources have been improved considerably and a new computer suite is in place. All computers in the main building are networked and all classes have a regular time in the suite to learn specific skills. Pupils in Year 2 recognise that many everyday objects respond to signals and instructions and they are developing the skills that they need to work with text and images on screen. Pupils in Year 6 use ICT to help them to record, amend and present their work. They also, with support from their teacher and teaching assistants, use the Internet to find information to support some of their work, for example in history. They are not, however, working at a high enough level and do not yet have all the skills that they need to use ICT to control events, to present information in different forms, to collect and interrogate information and to exchange it with others.
85. Teaching in the computer suite is satisfactory. Teachers demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject and give clear demonstrations which pupils are able to follow on their own computer screens. They also give good ongoing support to individual pupils when they need it. The school has purchased interactive whiteboards to increase the efficiency of whole class teaching. The main weaknesses in teaching occur in the classroom where there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to apply the skills that they have learned in the computer suite in other subjects.
86. Although few pupils have computers at home and initially lack confidence when tackling new skills they quickly develop very positive attitudes in the course of lessons. They work hard and concentrate well, sharing ideas and equipment amicably.
87. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to her post and she has a clear vision for future development. There is already a development plan, formulated by the previous co-ordinator and this forms a sound basis for improvement. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum but individual elements of the subjects are not taught to a sufficiently advanced level and there is insufficient emphasis on data handling and control technology in Years 3 to 6. Assessment in the subject is unsatisfactory and does not give teachers the information that they need about pupils' progress. Pupils are also insufficiently involved in assessing their own work.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

88. Pupils' skills in using ICT across the curriculum are **unsatisfactory**. There is insufficient use of ICT to help pupils develop their skills and to support their learning in other subjects. In almost all lessons seen in classrooms, computers were either switched off or, when they were on, not used by pupils to support their ongoing work.

HUMANITIES

Religious education

The overall provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

The overall provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

- Teaching is consistently good and pupils enjoy their lessons and achieve well.
- The subject provides many opportunities for speaking and listening, a school priority.

- There is insufficient use of ICT.
- The curriculum needs further development and assessment is weak.

Commentary

89. Standards remain in line with the expectations of the City of Birmingham's Locally Agreed syllabus in Year 2 and Year 6, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. All the work pupils have recorded this year was scrutinised and the views of some Year 6 pupils were sought. Pupils are achieving well, particularly in the junior years. Many pupils start the juniors with little experience of a religious community, as demonstrated by some pupils in Year 3 who made comments such as "I trust nobody (outside the school)" and "the street is my community". The good progress that they make is clearly demonstrated by Year 6 pupils who respect each other and show understanding of the meaning and importance of community and of religious teachings to members of different faith groups.
90. Teachers are very knowledgeable and provide good role models, listening to the responses of pupils and showing respect for their views. They challenge pupils to think carefully and analytically, such as by asking them to identify the characteristics of their friends. Teachers make good use of posters, illustrations and artefacts to help pupils understand some of the customs and practices of the faith communities, where Muslim and Hindu faiths are studied. They then extend their pupils' understanding by using members of the faith groups to explain their customs, such as fasting during Ramadan and they enable all their pupils to learn how religion can help guide people's lives. Pupils achieve well, so that in Year 1 pupils state that they would pray to God for water, food and light. Teachers have good questioning skills and their main teaching tool is discussion, effectively promoting a school improvement priority in relation to pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language are involved, interested and able to participate in the learning because of the good support they receive. Visiting local church workers teach on a regular basis and make a significant contribution to the teaching of Christianity. A weakness in the teaching and in the overall provision, is the lack of use of information and communication technology.
91. There is no permanent co-ordinator and the headteacher is overseeing the subject. The curriculum is fully planned, but the school rightly intends to review this planning very soon and to enrich the curriculum in particular by visiting the places of worship of the religions studied. Assessment, identified as an area for development in the previous inspection, remains unsatisfactory. There is a policy of annual monitoring and evaluation of the subject. Apart from a lack of computer software the range of artefacts and other teaching resources for each religion studied are good and sufficient for the school's needs.

History

92. There is insufficient evidence to support a secure judgement about provision in history and so the subject was sampled only. One lesson was seen and a selection of pupils' work was scrutinised. The evidence from pupils' work suggests that standards remain as they were at the last inspection, broadly in line with national expectations.
93. During the one observation of a history lesson, Year 6 pupils enjoyed a video recording about life in the 1930's. They then had a variety of ideas about the significant changes in lifestyle since that time. The good use of a range of artefacts supported the development of pupils' understanding of these differences. In discussion the pupils showed an understanding about the limitations of video evidence and quite a good awareness of the primacy of contemporary records and artefacts. Despite this, assessment in the subject as a whole requires further development as it is unclear what impact any given topic makes on the development of pupils' historical understanding.

94. The co-ordinator for history is new but as a result of her audit additional resources for teachers are already available. These supplement the scheme of work and make lesson preparation more manageable. A range of different forms of writing supports the development of literacy. Even so spelling mistakes and grammatical errors are quite widespread which puts limits on the subject's contribution to raising standards overall.

Geography

95. There is insufficient evidence to form a secure judgement about provision in geography; the subject was, therefore, sampled. No lessons were seen and only a small selection of pupils' work was available. Other evidence was gleaned from looking at teachers' planning, pupils' records and reports and talking with pupils.
96. This evidence indicates that pupils' knowledge of places is satisfactory. Pupils can explain their own views about environmental change but their understanding about the views that other people might hold is weak. There are also weaknesses in their ability to suggest their own geographical questions and in their fieldwork skills.
97. Evidence for planning indicates that the subject meets statutory requirements. All elements of the subject are covered but not to a high enough level and there is insufficient emphasis on first hand practical study and on the use of ICT to support the subject. Assessment arrangements are unsatisfactory. There is an overuse of worksheets and work is not sufficiently matched to pupils' differing needs and capabilities. Although pupils who attain at the lower levels are supported by teaching assistants enabling them to have access to lessons, there is a considerable lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils who do not appear to achieve as much as they should in the subject.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

98. There is insufficient evidence to form a secure judgement about the quality of provision in design and technology, art and design, music and physical education. These subjects were, therefore, sampled.
99. Two lessons in **design and technology** were observed, one in the juniors and one in the infant resource base and consequently no overall judgement on provision can be made. The written work from last year's Year 2 shows that pupils have been involved in the full design process, such as when making puppets, but their evaluative comments are not of an appropriate standard for their age. No actual puppets, or other examples of items made by the pupils, were provided to make a secure judgement on standards in the making process at the end of Year 2 or at the end of Year 6. Year 6 pupils are enthusiastic and wish they had more opportunities to participate in this subject. The teaching in the special needs resource unit is very good. Teachers make links with language and music to reinforce learning, encouraging their pupils to formulate their own ideas and to evaluate their own work. As a consequence these special needs pupils achieve well.
100. No lessons in **art and design** were seen during the inspection so no overall judgement on provision can be made. However, evidence from pupils' work and work on display indicates that whilst standards are average in Year 2 they are below average in Year 6 and pupils do not make sufficient progress between Years 3 and 6. This is a considerable decline since the previous inspection, when drawing skills by the end of Year 6 were found to be well developed. Many of the portraits currently on display in Year 5 and are of a good standard. The newly appointed co-ordinator recognises that the curriculum is in considerable need of review. At present there is an underemphasis on three-dimensional work and art traditions from around the world and enrichment activities such as visits to art galleries rarely take place. A subject action plan is already developed and this has appropriate priorities. Monitoring of the subject is planned within the year. The breadth of the curriculum has declined since the previous inspection when a wide range of artists were studied and pupils experienced considerable clay

work. As part of its commitment to the EAZ, the school plans to be presenting work for an 'art gallery' during the academic year.

101. No specific **music** lessons were seen and so no judgement on provision or overall standards can be made. There is an emphasis on singing and this aspect of the curriculum is practised in music assemblies on a regular basis. The specialist teacher who comes into the school one day a week also teaches this aspect of the curriculum. In the infant singing assemblies the Year 2 pupils were not singing at the standard expected for their age, but the Year 1 pupils sing satisfactorily, with confidence and enthusiasm. The planned curriculum is satisfactory, covering all the elements of the National Curriculum but it needs further development into lesson plans. Resources are appropriate and a commercial scheme is available for the non-music specialist. The school has recently purchased associated tapes for each class. The opportunity to learn to play musical instruments was provided at the time of the previous inspection but is not available now. An enthusiastic co-ordinator has recently been appointed and opportunity for monitoring the curriculum is planned.
102. Two lessons were seen in **physical education**, in Years 2 and 6 and therefore no overall judgement on provision can be made. In the lessons seen, standards were around those expected nationally in a Year 2 dance lesson. In the Year 6 games lesson, teaching was very good and enabled the pupils to achieve well. Standards were good and pupils demonstrated good ball skills, co-ordination and body control. Pupils in the junior years have swimming lessons for half of every term in each year, which is good provision, but no standards in relation to swimming were available. The curriculum is well planned and all aspects of physical education are well balanced. The school's residential experience provides additional supportive activities such as orienteering. Many pupils are very keen to play football, playing most lunchtimes and in after school clubs and there is a school football team that competes against other schools. This practice contributes to the good body control and ball skills gained by Year 6. The football club is well supported by parents and the co-ordinator has organised a staff member and a parent to attend coaching courses. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and monitors the subject regularly although no evaluation reports or assessments of pupils' achievements were seen during the inspection. The EAZ partnership is to send a specialist sports teacher to support class teachers next term. The provision of the football club and the trained football coaches are improvements in provision since the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision for personal, social and health education is **good**.

103. Evidence from planning and discussions with pupils show that the school is effective in helping pupils to develop an understanding of their responsibilities towards themselves and others.
104. Pupils benefit from a well-planned programme of personal, social and health education. There is good attention to encouraging pupils to eat healthily and road safety is well covered. The attention is given to drugs and sex education at an appropriate level. Pupils also benefit from a whole school ethos which instils a sense of responsibility for themselves and for others.

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	5
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	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	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	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	3

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

