

INSPECTION REPORT

St Margaret's Church of England (VA) Primary School

Olton

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104089

Headteacher: Mr Mills

Lead inspector: Mrs E Linley

Dates of inspection: 8 – 10 March 2004

Inspection number: 260724

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 259

School address: Richmond Road
Olton
Solihull
West Midlands
Postcode: B92 7RR

Telephone number: 0121 706 5020
Fax number: 0121 707 2031

Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr A C Nicklin

Date of previous inspection: 12 October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Margaret's CE (VA) Primary School is an average sized primary school with nursery provision, situated in Olton, Solihull. The school serves a community that is characterised predominantly by privately owned properties. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are favourable and pupils' attainment on entry to the school is generally above average. Pupils transfer from the nursery into the reception class during the school year in which they are five years of age. However, a large percentage of pupils have joined the school at a later time than in their reception year. There are 272 pupils on roll including 25 nursery children who attend part time. Twenty seven pupils are from minority ethnic and cultural groups and the first language of 3.7 per cent of the pupils is believed not to be English; this is higher than in most schools. However, there are no pupils in the school who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. There are 4.8 per cent of pupils who are entitled to free school meals and this is below the national average. There are 29 pupils on the list of special educational need, of whom three have a formal Statement of Special Educational Need and these proportions are below the national averages. The school received an achievement award in 2000 and the Investors in People award in 2003. St Margaret's is also currently involved in a local education authority project on creativity in the curriculum.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27281	Mrs E Linley	Lead inspector	History, geography and music
9798	Mrs V Ashworth	Lay inspector	
27677	Mrs D Davenport	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, science, physical education and personal, social and health education
21585	Mr A Kingston	Team inspector	Mathematics and information communication technology
29686	Mr S Lord	Team inspector	English, English as an additional language, special educational needs, art and design and design and technology

The inspection contractor was:

Focus Education (UK) Limited
113 – 115 High Street
Uppermill
Saddleworth
OL3 6BD

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

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

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective and inclusive school. As a result of good teaching, pupils achieve well. Standards achieved in English among the eleven year olds are well above average. Literacy skills are very well developed and this is a feature of pupils' good written work in history at this age. Standards of attainment in mathematics and information and communication technology are above average and they are satisfactory in science. The school offers a good quality of education; its leadership and management is good and the school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's ethos for learning is good
- Standards achieved are good overall, although standards in science should be higher
- The quality of teaching and learning is good
- Leadership and management is good
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- The quality of care is good
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well
- Relationships throughout the school are good.

The school has developed well overall since its last inspection. Good progress had been made in raising standards in both English and ICT although standards in science have declined and are now average. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are much improved and are now good. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development has improved and is now satisfactory. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and pupils are provided for effectively both in lessons and in withdrawal groups; as a result, they achieve very well in relation to their capability. Teaching and learning is now good overall although the challenge for potentially more able pupils remains an area for development. Curriculum guidance has been updated and now supports teachers' planning more appropriately. Leadership and management have improved and are now good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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	A	A	A	B
mathematics	A*	A	B	C
science	A	B	C	D

Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals

Pupils' achievement is good. Attainment on entry is above average. Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage and the majority of children are likely to exceed the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of their year in reception. Pupils achieve well and in Year 2 they are achieving above average levels in speaking and listening, reading and writing and mathematics. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6 by which time standards achieved are well above national expectations in English and are above average in mathematics and ICT. The school has a proportion of pupils with English as an additional language, however, none are at an early stage of English acquisition. The pupils with English as an additional language have competence in English language skills comparable to that of their peers. Standards achieved in science by pupils in Years

1 to 6 are average but, given the pupils' capability, they should be higher. Pupils' achievement in design technology and physical education is satisfactory. During the time of the inspection insufficient evidence was available to judge provision and standards achieved in art and design, history, geography and music.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory overall and this demonstrates improvement since the last inspection. The ethos of the school is good and this promotes the good relationships that exist throughout school. Staff have high expectations of pupils' conduct and as a result, pupils behave well. Pupils are positive about school life and they have good attitudes to learning. Attendance is well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. The quality of teaching is good overall; however, some teachers do not challenge the potentially more able pupils sufficiently to enable them to achieve their best and this is one of the reasons why standards in science are not high enough. Very good use is made of teaching assistants and they make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers use an appropriate range of assessment strategies to track pupils' progress; however, marking is not used consistently well throughout the school to aid pupils' next steps in learning. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum to develop pupils both academically and socially; it is enriched by a good range of learning opportunities. The creativity project is making a positive impact in Year 3, and as a result, effective links are being made between subjects. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who do not have English as their home language is very good. A good level of care is provided for the emotional and physical needs of the pupils. Information to parents is good overall and parents are very supportive of the school. Links with the community are good and with local schools are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is good and he is supported satisfactorily by key staff. The school's ethos is good and is underpinned by a clear vision for its future. The management of the school is good. Monitoring and evaluation of the performance of staff and the quality of education are good overall. Co-ordinators' roles are improving and now include appropriate strategies for self-evaluation. Governance is good. Governors show a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they are fully committed to supporting the school to raise standards.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents expressed very positive views about the school. A minority of parents had concerns about information from school relating to homework and inconsistencies between classes in its use. Particular strengths in homework practice were noted in Year 3 and the inspection team concurs with parents' views about the inconsistency that exists in practice between classes. Pupils have very positive views about their school. They speak enthusiastically about their friends and the activities they like. However, a significant minority of pupils indicated through questionnaires and in discussion that some of their lessons were not as interesting as they might be.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise standards achieved in science throughout the school by:
- improving the quality of teaching and learning by adopting a range of teaching strategies to increase pupils' involvement and interest and by ensuring that potentially more able pupils are sufficiently challenged
- reviewing and modifying as appropriate the length of science lessons to ensure pupils' interest is maintained.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards and pupils' achievement are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Among the eleven year olds, standards achieved in English are well above average and in mathematics and ICT they are above average
- Pupils of seven years of age achieve standards that are above average in reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics and standards that are average in ICT
- Standards achieved in science are average throughout the school and should be better when compared with pupils' achievement in other subjects and their capabilities
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well

Commentary

1. The table below shows that in the 2003 national tests for seven year olds, pupils' performance in reading and writing was above average. Performance in mathematics was well above average. In comparison with similar schools, standards were average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics.

Key Stage 1

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.9 (15.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.8 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.7 (16.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 58 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Key Stage 2

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.8 (29.7)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	28.2 (29.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.3 (29.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The 2003 national tests for eleven year olds showed that the standard achieved in English was well above average. Pupils' performance in mathematics was above average and in science it was average. The relative achievement of boys and girls in mathematics in 2003 showed that boys outperformed girls by a large margin. Inspection evidence shows that there are currently no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. In comparison with similar schools in 2003, standards were above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. The 2003 test results are replicated by the pattern of pupils' achievement found during the inspection; given the capabilities of the pupils, standards in science should be higher. The trend of improvement over the last four

years has been below the national trend and this shows the impact of higher than average levels of pupil mobility. However, it also reflects the need for greater challenge to be given to pupils in lessons, particularly in science, in order that all pupils have the opportunity to achieve their best.

3. Children start school in the reception class, many of whom have transferred from nursery, with above average levels of attainment. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage enables pupils to make good progress and the majority are likely to exceed the goals that they are expected to reach in the six nationally agreed areas of learning by the end of their year in reception. Pupils continue to make good progress in the infant classes and by the age of eleven the majority of pupils have achieved well.
4. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve very well overall. The early identification of problems and very effective support that the school provides makes a significant contribution to their overall achievement. Parents value the support provided by the school for pupils with special educational needs and recognise the significant impact this makes on their children's progress.
5. In English, standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 are above average in speaking, listening, reading and writing and standards achieved by pupils in Year 6 are well above average. This achievement throughout the school reflects an improvement since the last inspection. The school has a proportion of pupils with English as an additional language, however, none is at an early stage of English acquisition. The pupils with English as an additional language have competence in English language skills comparable to that of their peers. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is monitored and their achievement is in line with that of their classmates.
6. In mathematics, standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average and this position of good achievement reported at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. In science, however, above average standards reported at the time of the last inspection have declined and they are now in line with national expectations by the ages of seven and eleven. Inspection evidence shows that there are a number of reasons for the decline. For example, teachers do not consistently challenge potentially more able pupils to achieve as well as they might. This was reflected in the 2003 national tests when, in comparison with similar schools, the percentage of pupils in Year 6 achieving the higher levels was very low. Also, teaching styles in science lessons tend to rely on direction rather than significant pupil involvement and when lessons are very long, pupils lose interest and do not learn as much as they should.
7. In ICT, pupils' attainment has improved since the last inspection. In Year 2, standards achieved remain satisfactory, however, by Year 6 they are above average and this reflects good achievement. Insufficient evidence was available to make secure judgements on standards in art and design, history, geography and music. However, standards in design and technology and physical education are satisfactory throughout the school and demonstrate that pupils' achievement in these subjects reported at the time of the last inspection has been maintained.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **satisfactory**. Attendance and punctuality are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is good and the school deals very effectively with any form of harassment.
- Pupils are very willing to undertake responsibility.

- Pupils' attitudes to their work are good.
- The school works very well with parents to ensure very good levels of attendance.

Commentary

8. Pupils' good attitudes to school and to their work contribute well to their personal development, attainment and achievement. The pupils like school and enjoy learning. This positive attitude to work is encouraged from the moment the children come into the nursery. Equally, pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to learning and contribute well in lessons. The school is successful in building confidence and self esteem and pupils are aware of their actions on others. Pupils are very willing to take responsibility by performing small tasks or as the pupils get older by being playground mediators, house captains, or becoming elected to the school council.
9. The school sets high standards of behaviour and pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is impacting well on achievement. Pupils generally behave well towards each other and parents agree that school deals quickly and very effectively with any inappropriate behaviour. Most pupils have a good understanding of their responsibilities within the school community and the importance of self-discipline is promoted well. As a result, relationships are good throughout the school. Pupils are respectful of those who come from different cultural backgrounds and the school is free from racism and other forms of harassment. Pupils say that physical bullying was once a problem, but they now feel that this has largely been stopped.
10. There is a comprehensive spiritual, moral social and cultural policy showing the development of provision this includes planned acts of worship to which local clergy contribute appropriately. Pupils have opportunities for a range of activities through the curriculum; for example, visits to the theatre, a residential experience for Year 6, charity work and the moving experience of 'Snakes and Ladders' that involved many members of the school's wider community. The pupils are developing their social skills appropriately. They are encouraged to collaborate, to listen to each other and to work as a team for example in games, as a house or as a school council.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/03 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	2.9	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

11. Attendance and punctuality are very good and this is an improvement on the last inspection. The school works very hard to promote good attendance and has very good support from almost all parents. The school takes a firm line on the authorisation of holidays in term time, which greatly assists the progress and attainment of all pupils throughout their time in school.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	219	3	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0

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

There have been no exclusions this academic year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good overall. Strengths include teaching and learning, provision for pupils with special educational needs, partnerships with parents and care and guidance provided for pupils.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good** overall. The quality of assessment of pupils' work is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use positive links across the curriculum to develop pupils' literacy skills and this has a positive impact on pupils' achievement in English
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good
- Support assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning
- Teachers do not consistently plan to challenge more able pupils and this has an impact on their learning and achievement particularly in science
- Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave and, as a result, pupils behave well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2 %)	7 (16 %)	23 (53 %)	12 (28 %)	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.

12. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Teachers plan effectively and work very well with teaching assistants to ensure that children's needs are met. Good relationships and high expectations of children's behaviour and effort is a feature of the Foundation Stage and children achieve well.
13. Teaching throughout the school is good overall. Where teaching was seen to be very good and excellent, teachers planned well to meet the needs of pupils in the class and consistently challenged pupils of all abilities to do their best. In these lessons, very good links were made across the curriculum, for example in Year 6 to promote pupils' literacy skills through history. As a result, pupils' literacy skills are very well developed. This is not a feature of all lessons, however, and pupils who are more able do not always achieve as well as they might. Similarly in some lessons, teachers do not use an effective range of strategies to stimulate pupils' interest and motivation. This was a feature of science lessons that generally lasted for a whole afternoon and were often very teacher directed with, in comparison, little pupil involvement. As a result, pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. Nonetheless, all teachers expect high standards of behaviour in lessons and about school. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
14. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well as a result of high quality provision, teaching and learning. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good support for teachers and assistants to ensure that pupils' individual needs are met; communication is very good and all staff work well together as a team. Regular assessment ensures that the work planned is sufficiently focused to enable pupils to make very good progress and with the aid of the effective work of classroom support assistants, ensures targets on individual education plans are met. Regular reviews of individual education plans and annual reviews of Statements of Special Educational Need give suitable, achievable learning steps that are used very effectively by teachers to support planning
15. The use of assessment is satisfactory overall. Pupils' achievement and progress are tracked carefully to set learning targets and pupils are aware of what these are. However, teachers do not always use this information well enough to plan work that challenges more able pupils sufficiently, as a result, they do not always achieve as well as they should. Similarly teachers' marking is of variable quality. There are some good examples of evaluative marking that supports pupils' learning, but this good practice is not consistent through school.

The curriculum

Curricular provision, accommodation and resources are all **satisfactory**. Opportunities to enhance and enrich the curriculum are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

- Planning does not always meet the needs of the different groups of pupils, particularly the more able pupils.
- The length of time allocated to science lessons is too long.
- The very good match of support staff to the curriculum impacts positively on pupils' learning.
- The outdoor play area in the Foundation Stage is underdeveloped
- Effective links have been established with the local education authority to promote creativity in the curriculum.

Commentary

16. The breadth of curricular opportunities is satisfactory, with national and local guidance used and adapted appropriately to support curricular planning and to meet the school's needs. All subjects are covered in adequate depth. Good emphasis is placed on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills, which are applied well to other curriculum areas. However, the school needs to review the time allocation for science lessons as the current full afternoon sessions are often too long to sustain pupils' interest. The creativity project recently introduced in a Year 3 class effectively links learning across the whole curriculum. It is beginning to develop pupils' independent thinking skills, alongside their artistic and literacy skills, by promoting learning through more creative activities. Its boost to pupils' confidence and the many opportunities for group work make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. Parents are very pleased with the learning opportunities provided for their children in Year 3 and the progress that they make.
17. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The very good attention given to the requirements of individual pupils ensures that they make very good progress throughout the school. However, the school is not totally successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to do as well as they can. The work planned for the more able, gifted or talented pupils is not always challenging enough and, as a result, these pupils do not always reach the standards of work of which they are capable.
18. The provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education is satisfactory. The school has recently introduced a scheme of work for teaching this subject but it is too early yet to assess its impact on pupils' personal development. However, there is a suitable range of activities both inside and outside the normal school day, which contribute satisfactorily to this. These include participation in after school clubs, which are not always well attended, inter-school sporting activities and the annual residential visit for older pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in performances both in and away from school, to work with authors and musicians and to learn to play musical instruments. These activities, together with a good range of visits and visitors to school plus for example, the creativity and the snakes and ladders projects, enrich the curriculum and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and to their overall progress and achievement. Transition arrangements are satisfactory and all pupils are suitably prepared for the next stages of their education.
19. Staffing levels are satisfactory and the very good deployment of teaching assistants and support staff enables pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties, to be taught in small groups and to receive more individual attention. This has a positive impact on their learning. Accommodation is satisfactory and well maintained and there is a suitable range of resources to enhance teaching and learning. However, the outdoor play area in the Foundation Stage has not been developed as recommended at the time of the last inspection. As a result, children do not have full access to the curriculum for physical development on a daily basis, for example, to work on large play and climbing apparatus and with wheeled toys.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is **good**. The school takes **good** care of its pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures for ensuring the welfare health and safety of pupils are good.
- Pupils have a good opportunity to have a voice in the running of the school.
- Very good relationships are established with outside agencies.

Commentary

20. This is a caring school where the teachers know the pupils well. All necessary checks, risk assessments and fire drills are carried out regularly. Routines for dealing with child protection are satisfactory, and those for first aid and accidents are well established and effective; five members of staff are now trained in first aid and this is an improvement since the last inspection. There are very good links with outside agencies which the school is quick to acknowledge. This is a strength of the school's work in support of pupils with special educational needs.
21. The pupils' pastoral and academic progress is well recorded in their personal files and monitoring is satisfactory. Pupils feel involved with their own learning and generally have a clear understanding of how they can improve. However, the use of marking to support this process is not consistent throughout the school and is, therefore, not as good as it could be. The use of circle time and the personal social and health programme are still in the early stages of development and access to well-informed support and guidance is therefore limited. However, many of the pupils who responded to the questionnaire were able to say that there is at least one adult in school in whom they could confide. The parents value the presence of friendship partners in the infant department, and the junior mediators. However, a minority of pupils are critical of the playground mediators who are occasionally reluctant to be identified and disturbed during playtime.
22. Induction arrangements into the nursery are good as they were at the time of the last inspection. Nearly all parents agree that there are good arrangements for their children to settle into school at the Foundation Stage and that their children are happy to come to school. The school makes satisfactory arrangements for those who join at a later stage.
23. Pupils are involved well with the work of the school through their class and school councils. The pupils have full ownership of the school council and it works very well. The elected members meet every two weeks to consider "how they can make the school a better place". They are allowed to co-opt additional members when required. They consider that the school listens to them well and respects their views and, whenever possible, will act upon them. As a result, pupils have a well-developed sense of pride and ownership of the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is **very good**. Links with the community are **good** and links with other schools are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive high quality information in relation to most aspects of school life.
- Information about homework and teachers' expectations regarding its completion are not consistent throughout school
- The school is very good at seeking and listening to parents' views and dealing with complaints.

Commentary

24. Parents are very supportive of the school. They are pleased with the high standard of pupils' behaviour and feel that any incidents that occur are handled appropriately and promptly. The school has an 'open door' policy whereby the headteacher is available both before and after school for consultations. Whenever possible all concerns are dealt with immediately. A complaints procedure is in place and this is well monitored by the governing body. Parents support the attendance policy very well and clearly understand what is required of them in the case of unforeseen absence. This partnership with school is reflected in the very good attendance figures.
25. The school provides very good quality information by way of regular newsletters, curriculum details given out either on an annual or termly basis and there are two parents' evenings to coincide with the issue of pupil reports. Some classes also provide their own additional information to parents; this good practice is not consistently applied across the school and parents have said they would appreciate it being the same for all classes. The pupil reports have improved since the last inspection both in format and content and show clear targets to be achieved in English, mathematics and science. The spring term interim reports give helpful, but brief, information on pupils' progress, attitudes and behaviour.
26. Although information to parents is very good overall, some parents feel that homework is not dealt with consistently across the school. Parents expressed concerns about homework at the time of the last inspection and inspection evidence supports parents' views this time. The giving and marking of homework and the use of homework books is still managed according to the class teacher and procedures are not consistent across the school. Despite this issue, parents are very happy with their children's progress, particularly of those children in Year 3 and where children have special educational needs.
27. There is a very active parents' association. It is a successful organisation, as demonstrated, for example, when matched funding from a business link was obtained for a project in which the school was involved. There are many parent volunteers and friends of the school who assist in lessons and on visits. This help is greatly valued and supports pupils' learning well. Views of parents are sought through surveys of suggestions made and considered carefully and carried out when possible. The literacy support class for parents and held in school each week, with the support of Solihull College, has been greatly appreciated.
28. The school promotes good links with the local community, for example with St. Margaret's church and other churches. Pupils sing carols for the elderly and distribute harvest gifts and are also involved in charity events. This partnership contributes well to pupils' personal development.
29. The school feeds into two main secondary schools and there are effective transfer arrangements in place. There are no taster lessons for Year 6 pupils, although sometimes the secondary teachers come into school to observe lessons and talk to pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher, management and governance of the school are **good** overall. Leadership of key staff is **satisfactory** and overall this is an improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is good
- Governors support the work of the school effectively
- The leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good.

- The co-ordination of science is underdeveloped and does not inform teaching and learning sufficiently well to raise standards.

Commentary

30. The leadership of the headteacher is good and of key staff is satisfactory. The leadership team, including the governors, is committed to the work of the school and staff respond well to the opportunities given to them to try out new initiatives and become involved in projects. Parents value the headteacher's open approach and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
31. Management of the school is good and this contributes well to the school's positive ethos. The roles of subject leaders have been strengthened and this is a significant development since the last inspection. Subject leaders, especially those responsible for English, mathematics and ICT understand and carry out their responsibilities well and with considerable enthusiasm. They have a clear vision for their subjects. Through a range of monitoring and evaluation strategies to support self-evaluation they have gained a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's work. The co-ordination of science is still being developed; recently introduced monitoring systems have not had sufficient time to impact on the quality of teaching and learning or subsequently to raise standards.
32. Special educational needs provision is a high priority in the school. The co-ordinator leads and manages this area very well, with enthusiasm and commitment. She works well with staff and external agencies to identify the needs of pupils and then conscientiously and very effectively manages the support programme that is put in place to aid pupils in their learning. The Foundation Stage is yet to be led and managed as a discrete part of the school. It does not have its own specialist co-ordinator who takes on the responsibility of ensuring that all aspects of its work are seen as an integral part of the whole school framework.
33. The school improvement plan is satisfactory and this reflects an improvement since the last inspection. Performance management targets are linked effectively to the priorities identified in the plan. Similarly, staff training supports priorities for action. Although self-evaluation of subjects is at an early stage of development, the school analyses data on pupils' performance and sets realistic, and, in the main, challenging targets for the school. However, extending the potentially more able pupils is an area that still requires further attention and this was noted at the time of the last inspection.
34. The governance of the school is good. Governors are loyal to the school, show good commitment to its improvement and are fully involved in decision making. Roles and responsibilities have been clearly defined and governors meet regularly to consider how best to support, lead and manage school improvement. There are regular monitoring procedures in place for governors to check the effectiveness of the school's priorities and, as a result, they are well placed to ensure that best value is achieved. Governors fulfil their statutory duties extremely well. The governing body have implemented a race relations policy and monitor its implementation effectively.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	570,897.22	Balance from previous year	45494
Total expenditure	584,420.29	Balance carried forward to the next	35304
Expenditure per pupil	2109.82		

35. Financial planning and monitoring are good. The headteacher and governors have a good understanding of the principles of best value and good use is made of the funds that are available, for example, to maintain staffing levels and provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs. These decisions are made to provide effective aids to raising achievement. Financial controls are applied rigorously and in respect to the surplus available, clear priorities have been established for its spending, for example, on a junior library and increased ICT resources such as additional interactive whiteboards. The administrative staff provide good support on a day to day basis and support the work of the school well. The school provides good value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

36. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in the nursery on a part-time basis and in the reception class. Initial assessments show that most children start school with levels of attainment that are above those expected for their age. Children make good progress and achieve well during their nursery and reception years because of the good teaching they receive. As a result, the majority of children will exceed the nationally expected standards by the end of their reception year in all six areas of learning. Children with special educational needs achieve well because of the very good support they receive.
37. Curricular planning is good. It is clearly linked to the national guidelines, with a varied range of practical activities to develop children's skills in all areas of learning. Visits out of and visitors to the school effectively enrich the curriculum by providing further learning experiences for the children. The quality of teaching is good overall and the very able teaching assistants contribute very positively to the children's overall achievement. Staff work well together, forming good relationships with the children and successfully creating a safe and secure learning environment. The nursery, in particular, provides a bright, attractive and stimulating environment celebrating the good work of all the children across all areas of learning.
38. Good induction procedures and information to parents ensure that the children settle quickly into school routines. Work is well matched to the individual abilities of the children, is regularly assessed and the information used well to plan the next stages of learning. Assessment procedures are good and children's progress in all areas of learning is effectively tracked. The Foundation Stage is currently led and managed by the lower school phase leader and is satisfactory overall. However, the school does not currently acknowledge the Foundation Stage as a discreet area of learning and ensure that all aspects of its work are fully integrated within a whole school framework.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal, social and emotional development are promoted well in other areas of learning.
- Good teaching and good relationships promote good attitudes to school and to learning.
- Children work and play well together and behave well.

Commentary

39. The provision for children's personal, social and emotional development permeates all areas of learning, resulting in the children achieving well. They are happy to come to school, settle quickly into school life, following the established class and school routines well. Children play happily together because of the good relationships they form with each other and with adults. Both nursery and reception children are developing good personal skills and independence as they participate in a wide range of practical activities. For example, during snack time in the nursery, the children show patience as they wait their turn and good manners as they help to pass fruit and drinks around the groups, chatting happily with adults and each other. Most children handle equipment and resources with care and help tidy up after activities. Teaching is good and promotes enjoyment in learning. Children in both the nursery and the reception class show good attitudes in lessons by listening attentively, following instructions carefully and concentrating well on tasks. This has a positive impact on

their learning. The staff know the children very well, are sensitive to their individual needs and use praise well to boost children's confidence.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good overall and the teaching assistants contribute significantly to the children's achievement.
- A good range of practical activities promote children's language skills in all areas of learning.
- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed well.
- Children have good attitudes to their work but occasionally lose interest
- Support assistants contribute very well to children's learning.

Commentary

40. The quality of teaching is good and the good range of practical activities effectively promotes language skills across all areas of learning. Speaking and listening skills are developing well through the good opportunities provided for the children to talk about their work. For example, in both the nursery and the reception class, adults' effective questioning helps the children to articulate clearly and confidently their understanding of how plants grow. All children listen attentively to each other's ideas and develop these further during role-play activities at the "Garden Centre". Children listen to stories with interest and enjoyment, follow the text correctly and show a good understanding of the main points. They have made a good start at learning to read and spell. The nursery children recognise familiar letter sounds and shapes from their names and objects around them, while the reception children build these into simple words, which they incorporate appropriately into their independent writing activities. All children show good attitudes to their learning but the reception children lose interest when the pace slows and they sit for too long listening to the teacher. Very well briefed and knowledgeable support staff contribute in great measure to the children's achievement as they successfully encourage them to use and extend their language and literacy skills in other areas of learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well planned practical activities and good teaching promote good learning
- There is good use of mathematical vocabulary
- Children have good attitudes to their work and show good levels of concentration.

Commentary

41. Teachers plan a good range of practical activities that cover all aspects of mathematical development. The nursery age children are beginning to recognise and order numbers to 10 and use mathematical vocabulary such as "full" and "empty" as they dig in the "garden". The reception age children build well on this as they record number sentences to 20 and beyond. They can solve simple money problems, with the more able children accurately counting and sorting coins to 50p. All children achieve well because teaching is good and independent activities are well matched to their individual needs. Children show good attitudes to their work and behave well because they are well motivated. For example, in the reception class,

the good use of resources in a weighing activity made learning interesting and fun. Mathematical language such as “heavier”, “lighter”, “more than”, “less than” was used well when estimating and comparing weights and children recorded data well in the form of pictograms. The very good support they receive from teaching assistants impacts positively on the children’s learning.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in this area of learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children’s curiosity is stimulated by a good range of practical activities
- Good attention is given to helping children learn more about their immediate environment
- Attractive displays in the nursery celebrate well the children’s work in this area of learning.

Commentary

42. Good teaching and well planned practical activities stimulate children’s curiosity and develop their observational skills. As a result, children make good progress in all subjects in this area of learning. Attractive displays in the nursery celebrate this work well. All children show a secure understanding of plant growth as they sequence pictures accurately and clearly articulate the functions of the root and the stem. They put past events in order and, through visits and visitors, learn about the local environment and the work of people within the community. Both nursery and reception children can use talking books and show appropriate mouse control when using the computer.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy activities and show good levels of concentration for their age.
- The outdoor play area is underdeveloped.

Commentary

43. All children develop their manipulative skills well through the good opportunities presented to them to use, for example, scissors, pencils, paintbrushes, and small construction equipment. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Reception age children display a good range of movements as they roll, jump, stretch and balance, using a variety of apparatus in physical education lessons. They work enthusiastically and show good levels of concentration for their age as they follow the teacher’s clear instructions and good demonstrations. However, the outdoor play area is underdeveloped. As a result the children in both the nursery and reception class have limited opportunities to develop further their physical skills by using large play and climbing equipment and wheeled toys.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and children enjoy creative activities
- A good range of practical activities is provided which is appropriately linked to the other areas of learning.

Commentary

44. Good teaching and planning ensures that the children have good opportunities to draw, paint, and make pictures and models from a variety of media. The children's work is linked well to other areas of learning as, for example, the nursery age children make lion masks and use a variety of musical instruments to accompany their lion dances in celebration of the Chinese New Year. The reception age children's artwork is linked well to literacy as they make a large co-operative collage of "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" and paint pictures of "The Three Pigs". Role play activities effectively develop the children's speaking and listening skills and their imaginative language, as was seen in their activities at the "Garden Centre" The children enjoy their creative activities and achieve well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are above average at seven years of age and well above average by eleven years of age.
- Teaching is good overall, with very good teaching of older pupils
- There is a lack of challenge for the more able pupils in some year groups
- Pupils' have good attitudes to learning.
- The subject benefits from good leadership and management
- Literacy is used well in other subjects.

Commentary

45. Over the last few years, pupils have maintained standards well above the national average in the national tests for Year 6 in English and better than those of similar schools. Standards of work seen during the inspection show that Year 6 pupils are on target to achieve very well. Standards have improved since the last inspection. In the 2003 national tests for Year 2, standards were above the national average but in line with those of similar schools. The standards seen in Year 2 indicate a similar level of good achievement. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is monitored and their achievement is in line with that of their classmates. All pupils are well supported in their learning, including those pupils who experience learning difficulties but those who are more able could be given greater challenge in some classes.
46. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes, particularly in Years 3, 4 and 6, it is very good. This indicates an improvement in teaching since the previous inspection. Where there is high quality of teaching it makes a significant impact on the standards pupils achieve. This was seen, for example, in a Year 4 lesson where the teacher used very good strategies to raise the standard of boys' writing through peer tutoring. Teachers show good subject knowledge and plan lessons with clear learning intentions which are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and then used to review learning in very useful final review sessions. Good use is made of ICT. In Year 6, for example, a group of pupils confidently used word processing skills to prepare a persuasive argument for a debate. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the overall quality of teaching. They are well informed by the teachers and so they are able to work effectively with pupils with learning difficulties, providing a good level of support that is well matched to individual needs. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and their approach to work. These high expectations, together with the brisk pace shown in most lessons, are enabling pupils to make the most of their learning opportunities.
47. Pupils achieve well throughout the school, although the more able pupils are often given the same task as their classmates and this does not enable them to achieve as well as they might. All the pupils in Year 6 are able to suggest the essential features of argumentative text such as: the language of debate, connectives, positive and negative benefits, introduction and conclusion. In Year 2, a high proportion of the pupils' writing is structured and clear with ideas developed logically, includes interesting words and good use of punctuation. For example, one pupil wrote: 'One snowy morning something amazing happened when I looked out of my window.' Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
48. Pupils enjoy reading and are very well supported both at school and at home which makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved. As a result, standards in reading are

above average by the age of seven. In Year 2 most pupils are confident, fluent readers and are able to use a range of strategies to read an unfamiliar word. For example, one girl explained how she used picture clues, initial letter sounds and sounding out to read the word 'alligator.' By the age of eleven standards in reading are well above average. The majority of pupils in Year 6 read challenging texts with expression to engage the listener's interest. They are able to discuss the main characters and identify crucial developments in a story. They retrieve and organise information from a variety of sources, reference books and the Internet and use this to support their work in other subjects.

49. The good attitudes shown by the pupils towards their work make a significant impact on the standards they achieve. All pupils are well behaved, listen intently and have the confidence to ask and answer questions, which enables them to make valued contributions during lessons. The relationship between staff and pupils is good.
50. The leadership and management of the subject are good. As a result of effective checking on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, the two co-ordinators are able to identify specific areas for development. The improvement in the subject since the last inspection has been good especially in identifying strategies to improve boys' writing. However, strategies used are not as yet applied consistently across the school. Pupils' progress is effectively tracked and used to set targets for improvement. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always inform pupils' what they need to do to improve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. Very good opportunities are made for the application of literacy skills across the curriculum. Oral sessions in lessons are used very effectively to develop speaking and listening skills. Pupils are given frequent, worthwhile opportunities to practise their writing skills in such subjects as history, geography and design and technology.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are reaching standards that are above average by the end of Year 6
- The teaching of mathematics is good overall and is particularly strong in Years 3 and 6
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and as a result achieve well
- The leadership and management of the subject are good
- The school has a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject
- Marking is inconsistent and does not give pupils enough guidance on how they can improve.

Commentary

52. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Although results in national tests at the end of Year 6 have been slightly lower than in previous years the situation does not reflect an overall fall in standards. Rather it reflects the differences in ability between the different groups of pupils and the influence of higher than might be expected levels of pupil mobility. Inspection evidence shows that there are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
53. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Throughout the school pupils have well developed numeracy skills. They are very quick when responding to mental and oral questions and have a well-developed and effective range of strategies with which to tackle them. The enthusiasm and speed with which they respond to questions posed is impressive. In some lessons pupils are helped to improve their pace and confidence by using number fans. As a result of this and other

strategies such as the use of the white board in Year 5, pupils' confidence levels grow, as does their understanding and accuracy. Younger pupils reach above average standards in their accuracy of calculation and recognition of number sequencing and patterns. Older pupils have a very good understanding of computation and place value and reach good standards in shape, measures and data handling. However, insufficient challenge is offered to the higher attaining pupils in all year groups other than Year 6 within the area of using and applying mathematics. This reduces opportunities for these pupils to attain even higher standards.

54. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this means that concepts are presented clearly and accurately leaving no room for the development of error in pupils' minds. Correct mathematical vocabulary is used and reinforced consistently throughout the school. Very effective reinforcement and new learning takes place in mental agility sessions which the teachers manage very well. Lessons throughout the school are generally well structured and move at a good pace although, on occasions, teachers spend too long on explanation and do not allow enough time for pupils to undertake their own independent work. A small but growing number of teachers, for example those in Year 3 and Year 6, are using computers selectively but very effectively to enhance the quality of their teaching of mathematics. As a result, pupils' achievements, rates of progress and understanding are improved significantly. For example, in one Year 3 class the teacher used ICT very effectively to demonstrate the concept of 'difference' to a group of lower attaining pupils. The success was dramatic as confusion was replaced by understanding. Classroom assistants are well informed and prepared in advance to provide invaluable support for those pupils with learning difficulties.

55. Good leadership has accurately identified that the use and application of mathematical knowledge to solving problems is an area of learning which needs to be targeted for improvement, especially as a challenge to the higher attaining pupils and thereby to raise their standard of attainment further. The exception is in Year 6 where, because of the creative use of time and good understanding of pupils' needs, the teacher is helping pupils to identify the strategies they need to apply their knowledge to exciting and enjoyable mathematical problems.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. A good range of computer programs are used to support and enhance learning and the skills of estimation and measure are used well in design and technology lessons. Mathematical skills are put to good use in subjects such as geography and science where pupils construct graphs and pie charts. However, in the construction of these graphs insufficient use is made of the school's ICT facilities.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features
- Pupils' attitudes in lessons are good and they enjoy the practical activities
- Links to other subjects are inconsistent across the school
- Assessment information is not used well enough in teachers' planning to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able.

Commentary

57. Standards attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 match those expected for their ages and their achievement is satisfactory.
58. Most teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan a range of practical activities that satisfactorily develop pupils' enquiry skills. As a result, pupils have a secure scientific knowledge, they use a suitable range of technical vocabulary and develop appropriate skills for making predictions and carrying out a fair test. Where teaching is good, effective questioning helps pupils use what they already know to extend their thinking skills as, for example, in the Year 6 lesson on reversible and irreversible changes using a variety of substances. In most lessons teachers explain clearly what they expect pupils to find out and they prepare and organise resources well to support learning. However, planning does not effectively ensure that all pupils learn as well as they can, especially the more able pupils. Follow up activities often lack appropriate challenge, and there is insufficient coverage of some aspects of the subject for older pupils. Investigative work is sometimes too teacher directed, with too few opportunities for pupils to organise their own work or to show initiative when recording their findings. The whole afternoon session allocated to science teaching is too long in the format that it is at the moment. As a result, pupils' lose interest and concentration, especially during non-practical lessons. This was confirmed in discussion with pupils. However, in most lessons pupils show good attitudes to their work and enjoy the practical activities. They work well collaboratively, sharing resources sensibly, discussing ideas and considering the opinions of others.
59. Links with other subjects are inconsistent across the school. Older pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills satisfactorily to record their work, but the over-dependence on worksheets in Year 2 limits pupils' opportunities to apply these skills. However, the variety of recorded work in the Year 3 classes incorporates these and ICT skills well and this impacts positively on pupils' achievement. Younger pupils' work on healthy eating and the safe use of medicines contributes well to their personal, social and health education. However, discussions with pupils and work in their books indicate that ICT and non-fiction books are not used as well as they could be to research scientific information.
60. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has analysed test and assessment results to identify any weaknesses and to target pupils needing extra support. However, recently introduced monitoring systems have not had sufficient time to impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Systems to track pupils' progress over time are not rigorous enough. Assessment information is not used well enough to inform teachers' future planning or to ensure that the more able pupils are appropriately challenged. Teachers' written marking does not always provide sufficient guidance to pupils about how well they have achieved or how they might improve their work. However, these are areas for improvement that the co-ordinator has already identified in his current action plan. The good use of resources, of the school and local environment and of visits such as those to Jodrell Bank and the annual residential fieldtrip, positively enhance pupils' scientific learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **good**. Substantial improvements have been made since the previous inspection in respect of resources, curriculum and leadership. These improvements have led to good teaching and learning and a rise in standards which, by the end of the juniors, are above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have improved their own skills and knowledge in order to teach the subject effectively.
- Standards are good by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils learn ICT skills systematically.

- Leadership is good with a clear view of where developments are required.

Commentary

61. By the end of the Year 2 pupils' attainment is average and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils use painting programs as a context through which to develop their computer skills and mouse control. They can open and close programs and most know how to save their work. They prepare text for a range of subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils produced informative accounts on the Great Fire of London. By the end of Year 6 levels of attainment and pupils' achievement are above average.
62. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection. Teaching is now good. ICT lessons are taught with confidence to develop the skills laid down by the school's programme of work. They also create many opportunities for pupils to apply these skills to ongoing work within the classroom. As a result, pupils are beginning to develop their skills in a well structured and systematic order and are learning to apply them in meaningful ways.
63. Pupils are confident users of presentation and word processing programs and use these to present their work in a range of appropriate styles and layouts. For example, Year 4 pupils combine text and graphics to create their own newspaper articles and Year 6 show high levels of skill in their creations of multi-media presentations. These skilfully incorporate visual images, static and moving text accompanied by music and sounds which have been carefully selected to reflect the theme of each topic. Pupils know how to use spreadsheets. They can transfer and use these skills in meaningful ways. For example they have developed a complex but effective and very efficient system for their own 'Tourist Board' that can calculate the cost of a holiday based on economy or first class air fare and accommodation within predetermined budgets. Control and monitoring are developing features in the school's provision. In these areas, pupils are developing the necessary skills through the use of a suite of well selected programs which, for example, challenge pupils to formulate instructions to replicate the sequence of traffic lights.
64. The school's computer suite is used very effectively by teachers and pupils. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and respond well. The subject is well led. The subject leader has produced some useful documentation to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are taught in a well structured and systematic way to promote learning and raise standards of attainment.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. Teachers make good use of ICT to help pupils learn in other subjects. Throughout the school pupils use computers to create databases in a range of subjects and publish stories, poems and accounts of historical events. It has been used particularly well to raise boys' attainment in writing. A small but growing number of teachers, for example those in Year 3 and Year 6, are using computers selectively but very effectively to enhance the quality of their own teaching in English, mathematics and history. As a result, pupils' interest, achievements, rates of progress and understanding are improved significantly.

HUMANITIES

66. Insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to make a judgement on provision in **history** and **geography**; these subjects were, therefore, sampled.
67. In **history** two lessons were observed. In a Year 3 class pupils analysed text on 'winning and dining' at the time of the Ancient Greeks. This activity promoted early use of secondary sources and developed pupils' literacy skills well. The lesson also contributed effectively to the creativity project in which this class is involved and provided effective cross-curricular links. In a Year 6 class, excellent teaching enabled pupils to achieve very well. The teacher

used an excellent range of primary source material, such as video footage of actual events in World War 2 to stimulate pupils' interpretation of facts. Pupils recorded their views of an event from both the German and English perspective; this was a very good task as it challenged all pupils to consider bias in account writing as well as to develop further their very good writing skills.

68. In **geography**, no lessons were observed. Documentation available shows that the co-ordinator has worked hard to review and update curriculum information.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

69. Insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to make judgements on provision in **art and design** or in **music**; these subjects were, therefore, sampled.

70. In **art and design** no lessons were seen. From checking the guidelines, teachers' planning and the work on display it is evident that the pupils are given opportunities to use a range of media. These include paint, various drawing materials, printing, textiles and paper sculpture. For example, the pupils in Year 1 tear, curl, twist, pleat and cut paper to create paper sculptures. In Year 5, the pupils use sketching pencils, pastels or paint to record their close observation of a still life composition. Pupils are taught about the work of known artists and use their work as a stimulus for their own. For example, in Year 4, pupils used the work of Salvador Dali to create surreal images by printing with fabric, string and wood.

71. In **music** two lessons were observed that were taught by visiting teachers from the local authority's advisory service. Both lessons were of high quality. In Year 3, the class teacher worked well with the visiting teacher to promote and extend pupils' learning as part of the creativity project, using music as a vehicle and at the same time promoting pupils' interest in history. In Year 6, pupils had the opportunity to share their musical knowledge and expertise by composing a short piece and playing to their classmates. Both the class teacher and visiting teacher worked very well with the children to encourage their participation and enjoyment.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan work to build up pupils' skills progressively
- Pupils experience the compete design, make and evaluate process
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good
- There are good links to literacy and numeracy
- The end of unit assessment and pupils' level of achievement are not as closely linked as they should be.

Commentary

72. Standards in design and technology are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and eleven, which is similar to those found at the last inspection. Teachers have taken the time to check on the content of the curriculum as a whole and this results in teachers covering the full design, make and evaluate process ensuring that there is a balance across the subject. Teachers' planning takes account of what pupils have covered previously and therefore the teachers are able to plan to build on what pupils have already attained. This ensures satisfactory progress for the pupils and generally results in pupils achieving to their potential.

73. Account is given to developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in designing, making and evaluating. The pupils in Year 6, for example, had carried out extensive research on a project based on 'slippers' before designing a pair of slippers. This process enabled them to make realistic designs that took account of friends' and family preferences of materials. In a good Year 2 lesson the pupils were actively involved in making moving vehicles using their labelled designs as a guide. The teacher was well planned and organised the resources effectively to allow all pupils to achieve well. Pupils with learning difficulties were very supported by two teaching assistants. The lesson effectively developed pupils' knowledge of materials and components, such as axles and wheels. Teachers make assessments of pupils' progress at the end of each unit of study and the information gained is used to help plan the next steps in learning. The school is aware that this could be developed further to provide a closer link with pupils' levels of achievement.
74. Appropriate emphasis is given to developing pupils' skills in joining materials. Pupils experience different ways of joining paper, card, wood and fabric. The pupils in Year 4, for example, effectively join pieces of card to make fixed and moving pivots to make a mechanism for a pop-up book.
75. Because the activities are interesting and learning is made fun, pupils respond very positively, showing enjoyment in their work. They show good skills of co-operation when they work in pairs or groups; their behaviour is good which enables them to concentrate and work at an appropriate rate. Pupils' very positive attitudes contribute greatly to their learning. Teachers value pupils' contributions and the pupils have the confidence to ask questions and to make mistakes without fear of rebuke.
76. Pupils make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills in design and technology, in labelling and annotating designs, for example, and when they write an evaluation of the finished product. Younger pupils use their mathematical skills when measuring the length of piece of dowel for an axle and older pupils explore the nets of cubes and cuboids when they disassemble boxes for a packaging project. The subject is well managed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A clear progression in the development of skills and movements was seen in most lessons
- Pupils have limited opportunities to evaluate each other's work
- Pupils have good attitudes to the subject
- Accommodation is used well.

Commentary

77. Standards attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 match those expected for their ages and achievement is satisfactory. All aspects of the subject including swimming are adequately covered during the year.
78. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good the teachers use their secure knowledge of the subject to prepare sequences of progressively demanding activities that engage pupils' interest and promote good levels of concentration and perseverance. Appropriate emphasis is placed on warm up activities and most pupils control their movements satisfactorily in terms of space, direction, speed and levels. These activities link well to science and health education lessons as pupils competently explain the effect that exercise has on the body. Teachers' clear explanations and demonstrations

ensure that pupils are clear about their learning. They respond well by working sensibly in pairs or groups, as seen in the Year 6 dance lesson, sharing equipment and taking turns. However, teachers do not consistently encourage pupils to identify good techniques in their demonstrations, for example in gymnastics and games in order to use them to improve their own work. This restricts pupils' progress as they are not clear about what they need to strive for in order to improve. Good relationships and class management promote good behaviour in lessons and help maintain a safe environment.

79. Provision is appropriately enhanced by a satisfactory range of after school clubs, although these are not always well attended, by the participation in inter-school sporting competitions and by the annual residential visit for older pupils, all which contribute positively to developing pupils' physical and personal skills. However, few opportunities are provided to develop pupils' physical skills through the expertise of outside coaches or sports representatives, or through daily playtime activities.

80. Leadership and management are underdeveloped. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has not yet had time to check on standards or on the quality of teaching and learning. Assessment and recording systems are not rigorous enough to track pupils' progress through the school and the subject action plan focuses mainly on auditing resources. However, the good indoor and outdoor accommodation and the suitable range of resources are used well to support learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of opportunities, both during and outside the normal school day, to develop this area of learning
- Pupils show a growing confidence to share their ideas, opinions and feelings.

Commentary

81. The recently introduced scheme of work provides for the continuous development of pupils' awareness of citizenship, healthy and safe lifestyles and personal growth and relationships. This includes teaching pupils about sex and relationships, the dangers of drug abuse and racial equality. Learning in this subject is promoted satisfactorily across most areas of the curriculum and PSHCE lessons and circle time activities provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to discuss and resolve matters of importance or concern to them. Pupils also have a say in the running of the school through the school council. The satisfactory range of after school clubs, the annual residential visit for older pupils, and visits and visitors to the school further enhance pupils' personal development and give them a good understanding of citizenship. This is also promoted through, for example, visits to a local residential home and through pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves as they collect money to support local and national charities. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the role but is very enthusiastic, with a clear sense of direction for this subject. However, it is too early to assess how the recent innovations are impacting overall on standards and pupils' achievement.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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