

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BENSON COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

Hockley

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103362

Acting Headteacher: Mr C Leach

Lead inspector: Mr T Neat

Dates of inspection: 19 - 21 January 2004

Inspection number: 260770

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 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	264.5
School address:	Benson Road Hockley Birmingham
Postcode:	B18 5TD
Telephone number:	0121 554 4913/4267
Fax number:	0121 523 3448
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms S Beardsmore
Date of previous inspection:	19 October 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Benson Community Primary is an urban school of broadly average size. The percentage of pupils whose first language is not, or believed not to be English is very high. The most common languages spoken by these pupils are Urdu and Punjabi. There are currently 12 pupils identified as being at an early stage of language acquisition. The pupil body is made up of many different cultural groups, the largest of which is Black or Black British of Caribbean heritage. There is much more movement of pupils in and out of the school, at times other than the usual ones, than is found nationally. The level of teacher turnover has been very high in the last few years. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The percentage identified as having special educational needs is above average. These pupils' difficulties include social, emotional, behavioural, and communication problems. The proportion with Statements of Special Educational Needs is below average. The school is involved in the Excellence in Cities, Sure Start and Leadership Development Strategy in Primary Schools initiatives. It received a Schools Achievement Award in 2001 and an Early Years Gold Award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20007	T Neat	Lead inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Physical education
9880	A G Comer	Lay inspector	
30144	E Hastings	Team inspector	English as an additional language
28088	C Raymond	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Music
4350	C R Whittington	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Benson is an effective school**, which is very inclusive. Pupils achieve well because the school helps them feel good about themselves, teaching and learning are good and the school is led and managed well. It provides good value for money. The school's culture of improving pupils' self-image enhances their learning, but not enough parents actively support their children's education.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses

- It works very effectively to make pupils feel confident.
- Senior managers are committed to moving the school forward.
- It creates a caring, welcoming and inclusive environment, resulting in pupils behaving very well and having very good attitudes to learning.
- The provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory.
- The governors' monitoring, evaluating and reviewing of the work of the school are not sufficiently systematic.

The school has improved well since the last inspection and the issues raised in the last report have been addressed effectively. Standards have risen and attendance, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are significantly better.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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	C
Mathematics	E	A	C	A
Science	E	A	D	A

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

**Achievement is good** in each section of the school. Children begin the nursery with attainment well below the levels normally found and for a very significant number English is a second language. They achieve well, but most are not on course to achieve the learning goals children are expected to reach by the time they leave the reception classes. In Years 1 to 6 pupils achieve well overall, although the high turnover of staff has reduced the progress made by a minority. The amount of progress made from ages seven to 11 was among the highest in the country last year. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress. Standards have risen considerably over the last few years and are above average compared with similar schools. Gifted and talented pupils achieve very well. Standards in information and communication technology are adversely affected by unsatisfactory provision.

**Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** Attendance is satisfactory, but punctuality is unsatisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and contribute strongly to the progress they make.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education is good. Teaching is good** overall, in each section of the school, resulting in pupils learning well. Teachers assess pupils' work and progress well. A key strength of the teaching is the extent to which teachers work to boost pupils' confidence. This focus impacts well on learning. The school's pastoral care system is very effective, with committed staff and very

effective lines of communication. There are not enough first aiders. The school's links with the local community are good. The very good links with other schools benefit both pupils and teachers.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The substantive headteacher of the school resigned because of ill health shortly before Christmas. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher of a nearby school was running Benson Primary with the deputy headteacher, who was appointed relatively recently. The current arrangements for leading and managing the school are working well. The quality of leadership of the acting headteacher is good. The quality of management is good. Senior managers are committed to raising standards and contribute strongly to the school's success through their leadership and management roles. They have a clear understanding of how the school should develop further. The quality of governance is satisfactory. The governing body holds the school to account for its academic performance and understands the importance of checking the progress pupils make. Their arrangements for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the work of the school are not systematic enough. Not all statutory requirements are met. Some of the subject co-ordinators are new to their posts and need time to evaluate provision.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Most parents have positive views of what the school provides and achieves. They are pleased that their children enjoy school and are expected to work hard. A few parents and some pupils had concerns about bullying, but there was no evidence of this during the inspection. Pupils are happy to attend and are proud of their school. The school actively seeks and acts upon the views of pupils through questionnaires and the School Council.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- raise standards in the core subjects;
- improve the provision for information and communication technology;
- complete the development of the Foundation Stage by improving the provision in the reception classes to match that of the nursery;
- improve curricular planning to promote the development of speaking, listening and writing skills more effectively;
- the governors should devise and implement more systematic arrangements for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the work of the school.

and, to meet statutory requirements governors should:

- seek agreement, devise and implement a policy for collective worship which meets the needs of the school and the community it serves and monitor its implementation;
- ensure that all the required items of information are provided in its annual report to parents.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in each section of the school is **good**. The achievement of boys and girls is equally **good**. The achievement of pupils whose home language is not English and those with special educational needs is **good**. Overall, standards in the core subjects are **well below average** compared with all schools.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average compared with similar schools.
- Standards have risen markedly over the last few years.
- Improvement in results from ages seven to 11 is among the best in the country.
- Gifted and talented pupils achieve very well.
- Unsatisfactory provision in information and communication technology affects standards.
- The achievement of a minority of pupils has been adversely affected by teacher turnover.

#### Commentary

1. Children join the nursery with levels of attainment that are well below those found nationally and a very high proportion have poorly developed English language skills. Children make good progress overall in the Foundation Stage, but the majority are not on course to achieve the learning goals set for this age group by the time they leave the reception class.
2. The 2003 national test results for seven year olds show that pupils attain standards in reading and writing that are well above average compared with those in similar schools, and above average in mathematics. The same results in comparison with all schools are, respectively, below average, average and well below average. At age 11, results compared with similar schools in 2003 were well below average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. In 2002, standards attained by the pupils then aged eleven were well above average overall, average in English and the results in mathematics and science were in the top five per cent in the country. The poorer results overall for 2003, and especially in English, were due to the arrival of a relatively large number of 11 year olds who were at an early stage of English language acquisition shortly before the tests. Compared with all schools, the overall standards of pupils aged 11 were well below average in 2003 and broadly average in 2002.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.4 (12.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.4 (12.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.4 (14.2)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 29 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 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.3 (25.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.8 (28.9)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.4 (30.3)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*



3. Inspection evidence broadly reflects the recent national tests results and indicates that throughout the school, pupils achieve well and many achieve very well. Attainment in English at aged 11 is weaker than in mathematics and science, because of the high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language, and the greater impact of teacher turnover in Years 3 to 6. The high level of teacher turnover in the recent past has resulted in some adverse impact on the achievement of a minority of pupils.
4. The amount of progress made by pupils at the school between the ages of seven and 11 is much greater than is found nationally. When compared with other schools with similar results for seven-year-olds in 1999, the results achieved four years later by the same pupils aged 11 at Benson are much better. Using this form of measure of value added from seven to 11, Benson ranks in the top ten per cent of schools nationally.
5. The standards attained, whether measured against all schools or against schools with similar proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, have improved considerably over the last few years. This appears to be due largely to the strong leadership and management of the last headteacher, the focus on achievement and the 'can do' philosophy she brought to the school. Pupils show good levels of confidence and staff work well to support this. The rate of improvement in the school's results at both seven and 11 years of age is greater than the national trend. Intervention strategies, such as the use of resources for the 'reading recovery' programme and focussed teaching of groups pupils in danger of underachieving, have contributed significantly to the rise in standards.
6. Pupils who have been identified as gifted and talented achieve very well, especially in Years 3 to 6, thanks to the impact of the extra resources arising from the school's involvement in the Excellence in Cities initiative and specialist teaching, some of which is funded by this project. Older pupils were observed performing in the school choir. The coaching they receive from a music specialist resulted in them singing songs from different cultural heritages to a very good standard. The provision of specialist science teaching of Years 1 to 6 impacts well on standards overall, but is especially beneficial to the most able pupils in Years 5 and 6 who receive regular timetabled extra tuition. The 'Children's University' - a facility shared with other local schools - is another example of the additional provision from which gifted and talented pupils benefit.
7. The provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory, for reasons given on pages 23 and 24. As a result, it is unlikely that the majority of pupils will attain the expected standards.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Attendance is **satisfactory**, but punctuality is **unsatisfactory**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Other aspects of pupils' personal development are **good**. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The procedures to monitor and promote good attendance and punctuality are very good.
- Pupils' punctuality is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils' attitudes and relationships are very good.
- Opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual awareness are missed.

### **Commentary**

8. Through a very effective monitoring system that includes regular attendance reviews involving school staff and the welfare service, as well as intervention activity of the learning mentor, the school has dramatically improved attendance over the past year and a half. In addition there are awards for pupils and classes with high attendance rates. Attendance is now in line with national averages and has improved since the last inspection. Evidence suggests that this level

of attendance can now be maintained or even improved upon further. A significant minority of pupils arrives late for school and this disrupts lessons as well as having an adverse effect on teaching and learning. The co-operation of some parents and carers in ensuring their children arrive at school on time falls below the school's expectations.

## Attendance

### *Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	0.6
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

9. Pupils' attitudes towards school are very good and contribute strongly to their achievement. They have improved since the last inspection. Pupils readily participate in the life of the school, including the School Council and the wide range of activities outside the classroom. All pupils who completed the questionnaire or who were interviewed expressed very positive views about all aspects of the school and are proud of it. The self-esteem of the vast majority of pupils is high.
10. Behaviour is very good and has also improved since the last inspection. This is a direct result of the very effective behaviour management strategies employed by the school that include peer mentoring, individual work with the learning mentor, and behaviour support in the classroom. Pupils move around the school sensibly and have very good relationships with each other and with adults, both at work and at play. They are polite and well-mannered. The very good relationships seen help those pupils with special educational needs to gain in self-esteem. The few incidents of bullying and/or racial abuse that do occur are quickly and effectively dealt with.
11. During the last academic year there were 15 'fixed period' exclusions and one permanent exclusion, involving a total of 8 pupils. During the current academic year there have been no exclusions.
12. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good overall. Within that context, however, opportunities to promote the spiritual awareness of pupils are missed, particularly in the daily assemblies. The personal, social and health education programme provides sound opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on a range of moral and social issues during lessons, class time and assemblies. Awards are presented to pupils for outstanding examples of citizenship. The School Council, the variety of educational visits and visitors and the range of activities outside the classroom encourage pupils to develop socially and morally, as well as contributing to their achievement and personal development. Pupils are able to gain a good understanding of their own and other cultures through the curriculum and through the rich cultural diversity of the whole-school community.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching, learning and assessment are **good**. The curriculum is **satisfactory**, with **good** opportunities for enrichment. The care, support and guidance pupils receive are **good**, overall. The school's links with parents are **satisfactory** and those with the community and other schools are **good**.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**, overall, in each section of the school. The quality of assessment of pupils' work is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers work very effectively to increase pupils' confidence.
- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour.
- The teaching is very inclusive.
- There is significant variation in the quality of teaching.

## Commentary

13. A key strength of the teaching is the extent to which teachers consciously work to boost pupils' confidence. In many lessons, examples of the use of praise and the celebration of pupils' achievements were seen. In a Year 1 English lesson, lots of praise, rewards and incentives resulted in pupils being alert, interested and keen to contribute. This regime also contributed to the excellent relationship between the class and the teacher. The raising of pupils' self-esteem and very encouraging comments about their work motivated the class very effectively in a Year 3 science lesson. Remarks such as "I can't wait to see your finished work" heightened pupils' resolve to work hard. An inspector in a Year 4 mathematics lesson wrote, "The pupils are confident because they are valued."
14. The very good behaviour seen in lessons arises directly from the generally very effective control and management of pupils by their teachers. The calm, well-controlled, quiet classroom in a Year 3 mathematics lesson contributed to the progress that pupils made. In a lesson for Year 6 pupils in the computer room the teacher's very effective control and management of the class resulted in excellent behaviour. Consequently, pupils applied themselves well to their tasks.
15. The teachers work hard to ensure that all pupils are included in lessons and have equal opportunities to learn. Good provision is made in lessons to support pupils whose first language is not English and those identified as having special educational needs. Teachers plan lessons effectively to meet the needs of groups within the class, including those of different ability. In a Year 5 science lesson careful monitoring of the progress of pupils for whom English is an additional language and those who find learning difficult contributed strongly to the good progress they made. Their achievement was also promoted by adapted worksheets and the clear identification of key vocabulary.
16. In each section of the school, the quality of teaching and learning are good overall. This has a direct and positive effect on pupils' achievement. Teachers assess pupils' learning effectively, set appropriate targets and generally help pupils to understand how to improve.
17. However, there are significant differences within the overall picture. There has been much teacher turnover in recent years. In the Foundation Stage, all the staff in the reception classes are new. In comparison, there has been much less disruption in the nursery. As a result, the teaching and learning in the nursery are consistently good, whereas in the reception classes, where staff need time to adjust to their classes, they are satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of lessons varied considerably, from very good to, in one instance, unsatisfactory. Teaching is good in English and science and satisfactory in mathematics.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	2 (7%)	19 (63%)	8 (27%)	1(3%)	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.*

18. In the best lessons, where the teaching is lively and conducted at a very good pace, pupils settle immediately to their tasks, work very well together and do their best. Where teaching is less successful, pupils are not challenged sufficiently or given enough responsibility for their own

learning. The teaching lacks pace and is occasionally inaccurate. Even under these circumstances, pupils behave very well and maintain positive attitudes to learning.

19. Well-organised activities provide good opportunities for pupils with English as an additional language, and for the systematic development and extension of their language skills. The class teachers and their assistants work very well together in partnership to support pupils learning, and this ensures their good progress. As the teaching is often stimulating and challenging pupils develop positive attitudes, show a keen interest in lessons and achieve well as a result.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is effective. Pupils are helped to succeed through appropriately set work and good levels of support. Pupils' progress is assessed carefully and this information is used to set further relevant targets. A number of pupils with special educational needs benefit from individual help through the learning mentor project.

### **The curriculum**

The overall quality of the curriculum throughout the school is **satisfactory**. Opportunities for curriculum enrichment through the range of extra curricular activities, together with the number of visits for the pupils and visitors to the school are **good**. Overall, the range and quality of resources and accommodation are **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Staff place a high priority on the inclusion of all pupils in both work and play.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school is aware of the areas for curriculum improvement and has planned for these.
- The use made of the accommodation is a strength.
- Literacy is underdeveloped across the curriculum.
- Information and communication technology is a weakness.
- There are insufficient books in the school library and many of the books in school do not reflect the school's multi-cultural population.

### **Commentary**

21. The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and is securely based on national planning guidance. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including the provision for sex and drugs education. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are used effectively to teach English and mathematics. The school is aware of the need to further develop the foundation subjects and to increase the opportunities for speaking, listening and writing in all areas of the curriculum. The use of information and communication technology in different subjects is underdeveloped because the provision of equipment is unsatisfactory.
22. There is good provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language within the overall curriculum. Pupils' language levels are assessed and targets are set. In the nursery and reception classes there is great emphasis placed upon language development, and by Year 2 the focus has moved to developing reading and language through the delivery of the additional strategies. Good quality support through teaching assistants continues through to Year 6, and progress of all pupils is carefully monitored. Pupils' self-esteem is enhanced very effectively through the language rich experiences of the curriculum.
23. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers write the individual education plans (IEPs), which are suitably focussed to ensure that each pupil's specific needs are met. Pupils are aware of these and, when appropriate, many have them stapled inside their exercise books.
24. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is satisfactory. The school is highly inclusive in all aspects of its work and teachers use positive strategies that develop

children's pride, initiative and responsibilities. This is a strength of the school. A School Council meets regularly and the librarians have regular self-initiated meetings to develop their responsibilities.

25. The curriculum is enriched by the large number of sporting and other activities provided for the pupils. A good range of visits (including residential) and visitors are used effectively to enhance the curriculum and provide a wide range of learning opportunities. All pupils benefit from these.
26. The quantity and quality of resources are generally satisfactory, and these are used appropriately.
27. However, the library contains too few books, and too few truly reflect the rich multi-cultural nature of the school.
28. Good use is made of the accommodation, with some very useful alterations made, such as the removal of walls within the reception class area. Much of the school has recently been decorated, making it a pleasant, attractive environment in which to work, and contributing positively to the rich school ethos. It is very well maintained by the Buildings and Site Supervisor. High quality displays reward effort, enhance learning and contribute to the strong pattern of inclusion.
29. The teachers and learning support staff in all parts of the school are generally experienced and most work very effectively together to support the pupils' learning and contribute to their good achievement over time.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Provision to ensure pupils' care, health and safety is **satisfactory**. The support, advice and guidance for pupils are **good**. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good pastoral care and general welfare of the pupils.
- There is an insufficient number of staff with first-aid qualifications.

### **Commentary**

30. Policies and procedures for child protection and for promoting the general welfare of pupils are very good. The school's pastoral care system is very effective with committed staff and very effective lines of communication. The work of the learning mentor plays a very significant part in this system. Her contribution includes the mentoring of individuals and groups of pupils and a programme of 'circle time' for all year groups. All pupils have very trusting relationships with one or more adults in the school. However, there is only one fully qualified first aider and if she is not available the health and safety of pupils and other staff could be put at risk.
31. Teachers and support staff know pupils and their families well and cater for their needs very effectively. They provide good role models for the pupils. The advice, support and guidance that pupils receive throughout their time at school are good. Relationships are very good between staff and pupils with special educational needs. This helps to ensure that they make good progress. Levels of support are effective, with pupils generally catered for within the classrooms.
32. Personal, social and health education is now a formal part of the curriculum, and its contribution to pupils' personal growth is increasing. Arrangements for the induction of pupils into the school and their transfer to the next phase of their education are good. The school actively seeks and acts upon the views of pupils through questionnaires and the rapidly-developing School Council.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are **satisfactory**. The school's links with the local community are **good**. The school's links with other schools are **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very strong educational links with other schools.
- The governors' annual report to parents does not meet statutory requirements.

### Commentary

33. Parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire (41 per cent) or who attended the parents' meeting (27) generally have positive views of what the school provides and achieves.
34. The information that parents receive, through meetings, newsletters and reports, is satisfactory overall. Newsletters are presented well and are informative but do not celebrate the school's nor the pupils' achievements and successes. Pupil reports are satisfactory, but comments on pupils' achievement and progress are often brief and the targets set are sometimes non-specific and not readily measurable. The governors' annual report to parents omits three items of information that are statutory requirements.
35. The school makes good efforts to encourage parental involvement in the life of the school and in their children's education. The work of the Parent Partnership Worker and the links with the Handsworth Parent Partnership are beginning to have a positive impact on the number of parents involved in the work of the school. However, the school believes that the response from parents to these efforts could be better. For example, there is no 'parent teacher' or 'friends of the school' group and attendance at parents' evenings is very low. Parents are invited to discuss the targets set for their children with special educational needs, although not all wish to be involved.
36. The school's links with the local community are good. The school is beginning to forge partnerships with a number of local religious groups and through the 'Business in the Community' project a number of effective business links have been put into place. There are very good links with the Holyhead Cluster of Schools and with the Handsworth Consortium of Schools. These result in, for example, the sharing of expertise in the provision for gifted and talented pupils.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The quality of leadership by the acting headteacher is **good**. The quality of management is **good**. The quality of governance is **satisfactory**. Not all statutory requirements are met.

### Areas of non-compliance:

Acts of worship of a predominantly Christian nature are not provided consistently.  
A few items of the required information for parents are not provided by the governing body.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school helps pupils very effectively to believe in themselves.
- All pupils are included very effectively.
- Governors need to appoint permanent staff and review the allocation of responsibilities.
- Senior managers are committed to helping the school to improve.
- The school runs well day to day.

## Commentary

37. At all levels, leadership is focussed very firmly and very effectively on helping pupils to believe in themselves in order to achieve their full potential. Discussions with pupils show that the school is very successful in giving them confidence. They talk readily and openly about their achievements and their views. Assemblies are used extremely effectively to celebrate the achievements of individuals, groups and the school as a whole. The inspection team feels that this approach has a very positive effect on pupils' academic and personal development.
38. The school is very inclusive. The different cultures of pupils are celebrated and valued. Good provision is made for those for whom English is an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs. The needs of pupils of different abilities are catered for well in teachers' lesson planning and the school takes full advantage of the opportunities provided by the Excellence in Cities initiative to boost provision for the gifted and talented. For example, these pupils attend the 'Children's University' at a nearby secondary school on Saturday mornings.
39. The new co-ordinator of the provision of pupils for whom English is an additional language provides good leadership, has a good overview of the provision and has provided effective guidelines for all teachers for the teaching of these pupils. The co-ordinator makes effective use of her release time to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision. The leadership and management of pupils with special educational needs are very effective. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is committed and well-organised; vital in a school where there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
40. The substantive headteacher of the school resigned shortly before Christmas because of ill health. At the time of the inspection, the experienced headteacher of a local primary school was running Benson with the assistance of the deputy headteacher, who was appointed relatively recently. The current arrangements for leading and managing the school are working effectively. The acting headteacher has quickly gained a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and knows the local community well. The deputy headteacher and the acting headteacher have rapidly achieved a high level of positive and productive teamwork, which is helping the school to maintain its drive to improve and ensures that it functions well in its daily life. Senior managers are committed to raising standards and contribute strongly to the school's success through their leadership and management roles. They have a clear understanding of how the school should develop further, based on the outcomes of monitoring and evaluating standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The caretaker and the office staff also work hard and successfully to ensure that the school operates smoothly day to day.
41. The new chairperson and the other governors are committed to moving the school forward. A high proportion of governors are parents. This increases the overall level of involvement and helps in developing understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governing body holds the school to account for its academic performance and knows the importance of checking how well pupils are making progress. It uses appropriate sources of information to understand how good results are compared with other schools. Recent training has helped to improve the effectiveness of the governing body. The governors' arrangements for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the work of the school are not sufficiently systematic. For example, there are too few 'link' governors visiting the school to keep the governing body fully informed about developments in a wide enough range of subjects. The governors' role in monitoring progress towards achieving the objectives of the school improvement plan at suitable points during the year is not agreed and recorded. These factors reduce the capacity of the governing body to further develop its role in strategic planning.
42. The governing body does not fulfil all of its statutory duties. There are three items of information missing from that which they should provide for parents, and acts of worship of a predominantly Christian nature are not provided consistently. However, because of the high proportion of pupils who are not Christian, the school is currently looking at its arrangements with a view to seeking exemption from this requirement. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and they are

taught about a range of faiths in assemblies and in religious education lessons. They respect the right of others to worship as they wish. The view of the inspection team is that the failure to meet the statutory requirements referred to does not have an adverse effect on pupils' achievements or their teaching and learning.

43. As a result of teacher turnover, members of the senior management team have taken on extra responsibilities. There is now a need to appoint suitably qualified permanent staff members and to review the allocation of responsibilities. Several of the subject co-ordinators are new to their posts and need time to evaluate provision effectively. No one currently co-ordinates work in art and design, and design and technology.
44. Financial management is good and spending is planned effectively in pursuit of the school's educational priorities. The costs of meeting the objectives of the school's improvement plan are identified clearly. The recommendations of the recent auditors' report have been implemented and the administrative staff work well in assisting financial administration.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	847,123	Balance from previous year	8,310
Total expenditure	851,278	Balance carried forward to the next	4,155
Expenditure per pupil	3,118		

45. The strong emphasis placed by the last headteacher on equipping key members of staff to analyse attainment data, act on the outcomes and monitor, evaluate and review the performance of the school serves very well to enhance pupils' learning. However, of even greater significance is the culture of improving pupils' self-image and hence their confidence. This has a direct and very positive impact on their performance as learners. For a very high proportion of pupils, having to learn English as an additional language hampers their efforts to learn, but the good provision made by the school helps them to overcome this barrier. The school continues to make efforts to involve as many parents as possible in their children's work, but the contribution of a significant proportion still does not add to pupils' achievement as well as it might.



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

**Provision for the children in the nursery is a strength of the school.**

46. Overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The nursery received a “Gold Award” in May 2003. Provision for children in the reception classes is satisfactory. The nursery has maintained the standards found at the last inspection. Children enter the nursery with attainment well below average and a very significant number of children have poorly developed English language speaking skills. Personal, social and emotional skills are well below average. There were 52 pupils in the nursery and 40 children in the reception classes at the time of the inspection.
47. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. Teachers of the youngest children concentrate on the development of language and social skills and as a result the children make a very positive start to their education. High standards are set and the curriculum, which covers all areas of learning, provides good opportunities for the children to develop. Throughout the Foundation Stage they are supported well by all staff and relationships are good. This contributes to the overall good progress made by children. Good leadership and management are having a positive effect on the provision in the reception classes. There have been improvements made in the organisation of the accommodation that now make it possible to teach the Foundation Stage curriculum more effectively. This development is at an early stage and with guidance and support from the co-ordinator linked to a stable staffing situation it is expected that provision will continue to improve. The children’s progress is monitored carefully throughout the Foundation Stage. The accommodation is good and the outdoor provision for the nursery has been improved since the last inspection. Outdoor provision for reception is satisfactory at the present time and is currently undergoing planned changes to improve it further.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good relationships are formed between adults and children, promoting good learning opportunities.
- Induction procedures do not include home visits.

#### **Commentary**

48. Staff place great emphasis on the development of personal, social and emotional development of the children. This area of learning is of major importance when children start in the nursery and the children achieve well. Children are below average by the time they leave the Foundation Stage, but have made good progress. This is due to the good teaching, relationships between children and adults and a well-planned environment where children settle quickly and feel secure. Children in both the nursery and reception are encouraged to be independent. Nursery children learn to take turns when giving out the milk during snack time and reception children all help to clear up and put things away at the end of a session. Behaviour is very good as the staff are skilled in knowing how young children learn. They plan a good range of activities to provide a stimulating learning environment that children enjoy and which enhances their learning.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All adults take every opportunity to develop children's language skills and teaching is good overall.
- There are insufficient books in the Foundation Stage to reflect the extent of ethnic diversity in the school.

## **Commentary**

49. There are good opportunities in all activities for the children to develop their language skills, which are well below average when they start school. At the present time almost 50 per cent of pupils in the nursery have English as a second language. All children achieve well but despite the good teaching in the nursery attainment remains below the expected level by the time the children start in Year 1. Adults take every opportunity to help children extend their language skills across all areas of learning. Many different songs are used to support learning. Adults encouraged language when sharing role-play with the children in the 'hospital ward' that had been set up and the ordering of a pizza using telephones. Children are taught to listen to adults and to one another, and in the nursery listening skills are developing well. The children enjoyed listening to a story about Maisy's Dream and one child interrupted saying, "Can I read it?" The teachers replied, "Yes you will be able to." This sort of approach helps to reinforce a positive attitude to learning. In the nursery learning is enjoyed by the children and focussed support is given to groups when learning to recognise their names and the initial sound. This is continued in the reception class where children's achievement is satisfactory. Children continue to learn initial letter sounds and some are beginning to develop early reading skills. In a lesson about positional words - 'above', 'behind', 'in front of', 'beside' and 'below' - independent activities were planned to support a main focus. However, the children did not always understand what they were doing or why because the language used in the instructions was too challenging. Opportunities for writing are provided and efforts children make to write are celebrated. Children happily make shopping lists and share them with adults. It is expected that all children leaving the reception class will be able to write their name independently.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planning for mathematical development is good.
- Children start with few mathematical skills.

## **Commentary**

50. Many opportunities are planned for the development of mathematical skills. Nursery children have the opportunity to say and find the numbers they want with an adult when putting in a telephone number to order their favourite pizza during role-play. With support they learn to use positional language when sticking shapes on the top middle and bottom of a sheet of paper. Reception children count to 30 with teacher support and indicate when they reach ten and 20 by using hand actions. When singing "Flying Saucers" children are developing the concept of subtraction. Most of the youngest children need support to count objects and staff ensure opportunities are taken to develop the skill. Both nursery and reception children use computer programmes to support early development of mathematical skills. The good planning and resources impact positively on children's achievement in mathematical development. At the end of the Foundation Stage children have made good progress, but still remain below the expected level of attainment.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

51. Children enter the nursery with a limited general knowledge and their lack of English makes it difficult for them to build it up quickly. No specific lessons on this area were seen during the inspection and so no judgement on teaching is made, but the recent planning suggests that provision is good. Children have the opportunity to look at materials, make rubbings, wash and dress dolls. The curriculum is planned to develop skills so that the children can show curiosity, observe and describe features, objects and events. . During the inspection the reception staff had organised for the local fire engine to pay the school a visit helping children understand the role of people in their community.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

52. No sessions were observed outside or inside during the inspection other than a group of children using the large parachute to play some group games. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on attainment or provision in this area of learning. The outdoor play area for the nursery has been improved since the last inspection and provides a safe and secure area for children to develop gross motor skills. Bicycles are the most popular choice of wheeled apparatus. Reception children also have a secure and safe area, but it has yet to be developed to match the high standard of provision provided for the nursery classes. Both the nursery and reception teachers plan for daily outdoor activities with a focus on specific skills to be developed.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is planned well.
- The school provides a wide range of opportunities.

### **Commentary**

53. Children have many opportunities to develop creative activities especially in the nursery. In the nursery role-play and art activities are guided by adults and this has a very positive effect on children's development. During the inspection reception staff were not seen leading groups in this area of learning. Children in the nursery were mixing orange and green to paint rectangles representing bricks. Some children were able to explain how to mix brown when talking during snack time. Many opportunities are provided for role-play. Some children had the opportunity to write lists for shopping while others play in a 'hospital ward' that had been created. Children dressed as policeman had great fun arresting others. In all these activities the adults made the most of opportunities to share and be involved in the role-play helping to further develop the children's understanding, confidence and language. A specialist to teach music and the regular use of songs throughout the foundation curriculum also support pupils' learning.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in English are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and are below these at the end of Year 6. The standards throughout the school are improving.
- The overall standards of teaching and learning are good.

- The very good relationships between adults and pupils boost confidence and encourage interest and effort.
- Good use is made of assessment to track the progress of pupils across the school.
- The rich learning environment throughout the school enhances pupils' learning.
- The co-ordinator makes a positive contribution to the subject.
- The use of literacy across the curriculum is underdeveloped.
- There are insufficient non-fiction books in the school library and the range of books does not reflect the multi-cultural nature of the school.

## Commentary

54. Inspection evidence shows that standards are in line with the expected levels for seven year olds and below for those pupils aged 11. Standards are rising. They have improved considerably since the time of the last inspection. The national test results in 2003 showed pupils at the age of seven to be average when compared with all schools, and well above average when compared with similar schools. Those for 11-year-olds were below the average for all schools, but average compared with similar schools. This was partly the result of a high influx during Year 6 of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The co-ordinator and teachers are determined to rectify these low standards for the older pupils, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, now achieve well. Most pupils have targets for improving their writing skills, which are updated regularly. In some classes, those pupils with special educational needs have their individual education plans attached to their exercise books, so that they know they are working towards their special targets. Pupils who are gifted and talented are identified and given work, which is appropriate to their abilities. Those pupils with English as an additional language are included fully and make good progress.
55. Speaking and listening skills are promoted well in many classes, although it remains an area for further development. In Year 6, pupils talk and listen with assurance in a wide range of contexts, whether considering corporal punishment or acting out the trial of Ruth Ellis. They do this with great enthusiasm.
56. The standard of reading is average for pupils in Year 2, but below average for many of the older pupils. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a poor understanding of strategies used to help with unknown words. Guided reading sessions are used purposefully and are helping to raise standards. Pupils are encouraged to take books home and read to an adult, and many – though not all – do this on a regular basis. There are no home-school reading records, where a parent, carer or pupil is encouraged to write a comment. A number of pupils benefit from regular, intensive 'reading recovery' sessions, which are effective in raising standards.
57. Standards in writing are improving well and remain an area for continued development. Although the content is good, the standard of what is actually written (spelling and handwriting) still needs improvement for the older pupils. Good examples of pupils writing at length are found in Year 2, where pupils have made books retelling the story of 'Mr Gumpy's Outing', and also in Year 6.
58. There are displays of work around the school which reinforce literacy skills and record the pupils' achievements. These include 'dictionary hints' in Year 1, poetry in Year 4 and 5 and extended writing in Year 6.
59. The quality of teaching and learning are good in the majority of lessons, but range from unsatisfactory to very good. The best lessons seen were lively and imaginative. Most staff are very enthusiastic and have high expectations. This has given many pupils a very positive belief in their abilities. Most try hard during their lessons and are fully committed to their learning. Relationships in many of the classes are excellent. Where teaching is less satisfactory, the teaching is poorly organised, the pupils are not expected to play a fully active part in the lesson and in one case the information taught was inaccurate.

60. The very good relationships between adults and pupils enhance learning. Pupils have very positive attitudes and are willing and eager to learn. Most teaching assistants are involved fully in lessons and clearly enjoy their work, making a positive contribution to pupils' achievements. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 1 class, where teacher and assistant worked very well as a team. All adults give praise to reward and encourage pupils. In the vast majority of lessons they make learning interesting and enjoyable and all the pupils are fully involved.
61. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and adapted appropriately to support effective learning.
62. Good use is made of assessment to track the progress of pupils across the school. This is helping to raise standards by ensuring that the work set is appropriate for each pupil. Day-to-day assessment is constructive and relevant, with teachers giving considerable time to marking their pupils' books.
63. The work of an effective co-ordinator is helping to raise standards. She is fully aware of the strengths and areas for development and has an appropriate action plan to improve the subject. The overall quality of resources is satisfactory. However, the school library has too few non-fiction books to cover all areas of interest, and the pupils' wide multi-cultural heritage is under-represented. The librarians take their role very conscientiously and are to be commended.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

64. Insufficient use is made of other subjects to develop writing skills. An exception is Year 6, where pupils write prayers (as poems) in their study of Rastafarians and write persuasive arguments in history.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

- Standards have risen.
- Some good teaching is evident.
- Turnover of teaching staff has interrupted the flow of learning.
- There is too little investigative mathematics.

### **Commentary**

65. There has been a rise in standards since the last inspection. When pupils enter Year 1 their standards are below the national average. Most achieve well. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress and are on course to be in line with national expectations. By the end of Year 6, standards are also on course to be in line with national expectations. Pupils for whom English is a second language are integrated well into lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants support these pupils effectively and they make good progress.
66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and many lessons are of good quality. Teachers plan well. Where teaching is good pupils are motivated well to learn and they work hard and show an interest in their work. They are given opportunities to explain their thinking and in a good lesson a pupil was used to teach the class her method of finding the area of a compound shape. In another good lesson, for Year 1 pupils, a kangaroo puppet was used effectively to keep the pupils' interest and concentration during a mental arithmetic activity. Good questioning ensured pupils of all abilities were challenged appropriately. Efforts are made in all classes to help pupils learn the appropriate mathematical language such as 'cuboid', 'formula' and 'inverse operation'. Marking is regular and consistent across the school. Individual targets are included inside the pupils' mathematics books and assessments take place by highlighting statements indicating the pupils' achievement. Different groups of pupils are fully integrated into lessons and generally

planning is effective in meeting their needs. Good use is made of teaching assistants enabling pupils with special educational needs to achieve well.

67. When teaching is satisfactory, rather than good, learning lacks continuity due to ineffective management of pupils' behaviour. Because of the high turnover of staff, teachers occasionally lack understanding of pupils' previous experiences and work is not always set appropriately. During the inspection there was little evidence of investigative mathematics.
68. The co-ordinator leads the subject with enthusiasm and commitment and is aware of those classes that have had a fast turnover of staff and the effect it has had on the development of mathematics. She sees all planning and analyses mathematical data and this knowledge is used to help raise standards in the school. Gifted and talented pupils are identified at both key stages. At the time of the inspection one pupil was being supported by the school so that she can attend an area class which enables pupils in primary schools to take GCSE mathematics examinations. Some monitoring and evaluating of mathematics lessons has taken place in the past and are planned again.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

69. Work in science makes a satisfactory contribution to the development of numeracy skills. In a Year 2 lesson the story of Red Riding Hood was being used effectively to develop pupils' learning of addition. However, systematic planning to improve numeracy skills in a wide range of subjects is not yet in place.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have improved well.
- Consistently good teaching and learning lead to good achievement.
- Lessons boost pupils' confidence.
- The teaching is very inclusive.
- Units of work are not sequenced effectively.

### **Commentary**

70. Standards have risen considerably since the last inspection. At that time, in comparison with similar schools 11-year-olds achieved average results in the national tests. In 2003 the results for pupils aged 11 were well above the similar schools' average and in 2002 they were in the top five per cent in the country.
71. A specialist teacher takes all science lessons for pupils in Years 1 to 6. All the lessons seen were of good quality. This consistently good teaching leads to pupils learning and achieving well. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that there is a very clear emphasis on practical work and first-hand experience, leading to very good attitudes to learning. Other strong features of teaching include:
- very good development of pupils' self-confidence;
  - abundant use of praise, combined with firm discipline, resulting in very good behaviour;
  - regular testing, ensuring both teacher and pupils know how well they are learning as time passes;
  - high expectations of pupils. This was clear in the amount of responsibility given to pupils in a Year 4 lesson for working out how to do their experiment, and good teacher subject knowledge.

72. It is not always clear that pupils are sufficiently involved in assessing their learning at the end of lessons. The handwriting of written comments in the marking of pupils' work does not always provide an appropriate model, especially for pupils in Years 1 and 2. More emphasis on marking to improve skills of written English would help to raise standards in that subject.
73. In the lessons observed, the teacher took every opportunity to lift pupils' spirits and enhance their image of themselves. A Year 3 lesson began with pupils being asked to share their well-drawn bar charts with the class, which responded with spontaneous applause. The very effective motivation of pupils continued later with the teacher saying, "I can't wait to see your finished work." This sort of approach had a marked effect on behaviour, levels of application and concentration, all of which were of high quality.
74. All pupils are treated with equal respect and good provision is made to give everyone equal opportunities to succeed. Tasks are modified to help pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English. Teaching assistants are deployed well to help these pupils. The different cultures of pupils are valued highly and work is chosen to celebrate differences. In a lesson about diet, pupils investigated foods from different parts of the world.
75. The programme of work is based securely on the National Curriculum and national planning guidance. However, scrutiny of the work of pupils in Years 1 to 6 shows that the sequencing of units of work, especially those related to healthy living leads to unproductive repetition. As a result, the same ideas are taught in consecutive years without sufficient gains being made by pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A leasing contract has severely limited progress.
- It is unlikely that standards are satisfactory.
- Plans to address the situation are well-advanced.

### **Commentary**

76. The signing of a contract to lease computers some years ago has prevented the school from replacing them with the kind of machines needed to teach the current Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum effectively. This means that provision has worsened considerably since the last inspection. The current co-ordinator for information and communication technology, who has only had responsibility since September, has investigated the terms of the contract thoroughly, but has been unable to rescind the agreement. As the machines have aged their reliability has deteriorated considerably, resulting in computers in classrooms being put into the computer suite to replace those that had failed.
77. Given the unsatisfactory provision of hardware, it is unlikely that pupils in any of the Years 1 to 6 attain at the level expected for their age. This is partly because the machines lack the capacity and the flexibility needed for the significantly more sophisticated tasks that pupils are expected to perform now. The school has continued to try to provide the full range of experiences for pupils and has bought the necessary equipment and software to do this. It has tried to improve the provision by buying laptop computers, but the financial demands of servicing the existing agreement have restricted this process. As a result, the number of appropriate computers available remains too low to allow individuals enough practice to consolidate their skills sufficiently. In the only lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher was obliged to take only half the class into the computer room for this reason.

78. The lease will run out very soon and plans to replace the existing equipment are being finalized. The school is confident that by the end of next month there will be ample provision of new machines and software. The ratio of computers to pupils will then be better than that currently recommended by the government. More than enough money has been put aside to pay for the improvements. Teachers are appropriately trained and are keen to press ahead. The co-ordinator has supported his colleagues well and has a clear understanding of how to develop provision and raise standards.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

79. A number of examples of the appropriate use of computers to support learning in other subjects was seen, such as during a design and technology lesson in Year 1. However, for the reasons already stated, the use of computers across the curriculum is limited.

### **HUMANITIES**

Not enough lessons were seen to judge provision in this curriculum area.

#### **Religious education**

Too few lessons and too little work were seen to judge the quality of teaching and learning or standards reached.

#### **Commentary**

80. Although an appropriate amount of time is given to religious education, during the inspection only two lessons were observed, including a Year 6 lesson on the significance of Rastafarianism, where teaching and learning were very good.

81. The early priorities of the school's life have appropriately focussed on literacy and numeracy and now the profile of religious education needs to be raised in the school, led by the co-ordinator. The quality of curriculum leadership is sound and there are firm plans to develop the subject. There have been several useful visits such as to the Multi-Faith Centre, but these need to be extended to cover all the religions studied. Such visits support the work of the school in teaching the children about the major world faiths.

82. The co-ordinator is aware of the improvements needed in the subject which can help to raise standards. Staff confidence in teaching the subject is growing, and their work in religious education serves to clarify and affirm the values of the school.

#### **Geography and History**

Too few lessons and too little work were seen to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning and standards reached.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

Not enough lessons were seen to judge provision in this curriculum area.

#### **Art**

Only one lesson was observed, so it is not possible to make a judgement on provision or standards.

#### **Commentary**

83. The evidence from displayed work and other sources shows that a range of techniques is taught as the pupils move through the school. There was no evidence of three-dimensional work on display and the use of sketchbooks to develop observational skills was not evident in all classes.



## **Design and technology**

It is not possible to judge the provision in this subject as only one lesson was observed during the inspection.

### **Commentary**

84. Not enough things made by pupils were available to make a judgement about standards. Evidence of pupils' design drawings, displayed work and teachers' planning shows that an appropriate range of learning experiences is provided.
85. Pupils in Year 1 use cardboard to make sliders, including ones with guides. They plan to create sliders of various shapes to produce different effects, such as a bowler hat rising from a man's head. Good quality design drawings are produced by pupils in Year 3 when they investigate packaging. They take containers apart and sketch the shapes from which they are made. They investigate colours used in wrappers and containers. Good links are made by the teacher to enhance learning about healthy eating. Year 6 pupils design soft toys for children in the nursery. They show appropriate understanding of the users' needs by, for example, choosing silky ribbon to make the product attractive to touch. Their preparatory drawings identify the materials they intend to use, but not how the parts will be joined.

## **Music**

The only music heard was the school choir singing, so it is not possible to make a judgement on provision or standards.

### **Commentary**

86. The choir, which is made up of pupils who auditioned for a place, performed during an assembly and their singing was of a very high standard. The school has a music specialist who works with all the classes in the school including the nursery. The school puts on performances for parents, the most recent being a version of Romeo and Juliet. There is a dedicated music room and other resources, which are centrally held, are satisfactory. At the present time pupils do not have the opportunity to be taught to play musical instruments by specialist peripatetic teachers.

## **Physical education**

No lessons were observed. As a result, it is not possible to evaluate the provision or standards.

### **Commentary**

87. Until recently the employment of a specialist teacher, who worked with Years 1 to 6, helped to boost the school's provision. However, pupils still work with two expert dance teachers. It was only possible to see a short part of their session with Year 6 pupils, but it was clear that levels of involvement and enjoyment were high.
88. The school's links with external organisations enhance pupils' learning experiences significantly. Its enrolment in the School Sports Programme has brought many benefits, including increased levels of participation in physical exercise. The school takes full advantage of opportunities provided in the local area. West Bromwich Albion Football soccer and Birmingham Bullets basketball clubs have laid on coaching for pupils. The police have put on 'tag' rugby activities.
89. Pupils also enjoy success in competitions, for example, winning the west Birmingham junior golf championship.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

It is not possible to judge the provision in this subject since no lessons were observed.

### **Commentary**

90. The learning mentor makes a very effective contribution to the personal development of many pupils. Her work in leading 'circle time' sessions with different age groups has a very good effect on the social and moral development of pupils. In such a period with Year 6 pupils she was very successful in helping them to deal with their emotions and take control of their behaviour. Her influence is particularly helpful to pupils who need structured support to improve their behaviour. The very good practice observed when the learning mentor was working in this capacity included provision for letting the pupils' parents know what had been covered in each session. The pupils are very responsive to her input. They trust her greatly and relate very well to her.
91. Observation of a meeting of the School Council showed that pupils conduct their business confidently and very enthusiastically. They represent their peers effectively and make sensible suggestions to improve provision, such as acquiring big, outdoor board games for playtimes.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
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	4
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	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	0
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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