

INSPECTION REPORT

CHERRY ORCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103178

Headteacher: Mrs Susan Robinson

Lead inspector: Mr Peter Lewis

Dates of inspection: 6 – 8 December 2004

Inspection number: 266598

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

© Crown copyright 2005

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: Community
Age range of pupils: 3 – 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 430

School address: Cherry Orchard Road
Birmingham
West Midlands
Postcode: B20 2LB

Telephone number: 0121 554 0862
Fax number: 0121 554 4162

Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Reverend C Fryer
Date of previous inspection: 15 March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves a mixed area within the Handsworth Wood area of Birmingham. It is larger than most other primary schools with 430 pupils who come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. A Nursery class was established in April 2004. At the same time, a neighbourhood nursery opened, sharing the site. A large proportion of pupils travel to the school from other parts of Birmingham. A very high proportion come from minority ethnic families and many pupils speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils starting school this year have attainments that are below average which reflects a decline since the time of the last inspection. In order to cater more fully for the needs of its pupils, the school has recently extended its provision to include a nursery and a neighbourhood nursery sharing the same site. Through the school, the proportion of pupils having special educational needs is average at just under 21 per cent. Although some of these pupils have

significant difficulties, most of these pupils are a little behind their peers just over 1 per cent have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. The percentage of pupils leaving or joining the school at other than the normal time is above average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21351	P Lewis	Lead inspector	Music Physical education Religious education English as an additional language
9649	J Smith	Lay inspector	
23245	A Farrage	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology
15474	J Fairclough	Team inspector	English Geography History
30205	T Kenna	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs
33825	P Sherling	Team inspector	Science Art and design

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
 Anglia House
 Carrs Road
 Cheadle
 Stockport
 SK8 2LA

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, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	17
OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES	19
What is the effectiveness of Community provision?	
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	20
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS [AND COURSES] IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Cherry Orchard Primary School provides a very good education for its pupils with many excellent features. Although pupils enter school with standards that are below average for children of a similar age, they achieve very well and attain standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the time they are eleven. This is due to **very good leadership and management** across the school and the quality of teaching which is very good overall. As a result, **the school provides very good value for money**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, senior managers and governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and, as a result, actions taken to secure improvement are highly effective.
- Pupils' excellent personal development and their very good attitudes and behaviour have a considerable impact on their learning.
- Although teaching is very good overall, it is more successful in Years 3 to 6 than in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2.
- Procedures to provide support and advice for pupils are excellent, as is the degree to which the school listens to its pupils' views.
- The overall quality of the curriculum is very good, and the school's development of its curriculum is creative and innovative.
- The use made of assessment information in planning appropriate work for pupils of all abilities is excellent and is a considerable strength.

The improvement since the last inspection is very good. The headteacher has provided a clear focus upon improving pupils' learning through rigorous self-evaluation and taking effective action. As a result, standards have improved, all the weaknesses reported have been addressed and strengths noted at that time have also improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	A	B	A	B
Mathematics	A*	A	A	A
Science	A*	A	A	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.*

Results of the 2004 national tests for Year 6 pupils were well above average in English, mathematics and science when compared with schools nationally. Some of these pupils entered the school with standards that were broadly in line with those normally found, but a significant proportion of higher-attaining pupils left the school in Years 3 to 6 which has had the effect of reducing the school's apparent performance in comparison with similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that the school's strong focus on improvement in further developing its curriculum and in the excellent use that is made of assessment have been successful in raising standards so that by the end of Year 6 standards are now well above expectation in all three subjects.

Overall achievement is very good, and this is consistently the case in Years 3 to 6 as a consequence of teachers' very high expectations of pupils' performance. Children now entering the school have attainment that is below average overall which reflects the wider area from which pupils are drawn. The school has been successful in raising the confidence and effectiveness of less experienced teachers, particularly in the early part of the Foundation Stage and in Year 1, but recognises that more needs to be done to raise standards in line with those in Years 3 to 6.

Achievement is very good for pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language as a result of the carefully planned support that is provided in class and when supported by teaching assistants in carefully planned groups. Pupils with higher attainment are very well supported in their learning and, as a result, also make very rapid progress. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and in religious education in Years 3 to 6 are above those expected.

Pupils' personal development is very good. It is exceptionally well promoted through the **excellent** provision for their moral, social and cultural development and the **very good** provision for their spiritual development. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times is **very good** and all have **very good** attitudes to their learning. The school's excellent efforts to secure good attendance have been successful, resulting in attendance that is well above average. Punctuality is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is very good. The quality of teaching is very good overall, with over half that is very good and excellent so that pupils learn very well and make very rapid progress. This is because excellent assessment, the highest expectations and interesting activities enthuse them and support their learning well. There is a very little teaching that is less than good and none that is unsatisfactory. Teaching is particularly strong in Years 3 to 6, where teachers' excellent use of assessment enables them to plan lessons that excite and fully challenge all pupils. In the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 teaching overall is good. The curriculum is clearly based on national requirements and is very well supported by the school's commitment to continuing and worthwhile review, its focus on establishing 'readiness for learning' through its understanding of all pupils' needs and by the school's exceptionally good links with parents and the community. Parents' excellent knowledge of and support for the school have a significant impact on pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management throughout the school are very good. This is because the headteacher's **excellent** leadership has ensured that all staff are fully committed to raising standards and involved in analysing effectiveness. This means that evaluation is perceptive, accurate and very clearly focused on continuing improvement in standards. As a result, appropriate actions to extend the curriculum and further increase teachers' effectiveness are clearly identified and this very good management has had a positive impact on raising standards. Subject leaders are very well supported in their role and are enabled to evaluate the effectiveness of their subjects and to plan appropriate action. Governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is very good and all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have an extremely positive view of the school and have no significant concerns. Pupils who were spoken to during the inspection thoroughly enjoy being in the school, know that they are encouraged to work hard and that they are consistently supported and looked after.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards, teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 to match those in Years 3 to 6.

The school's development planning comprehensively identifies appropriate areas for continuing development.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is very good overall. In the nursery and reception classes and in Years 1 and 2, achievement is good, while in Years 3 to 6 it is very good. The inspection finds that standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils are eleven.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the nursery and reception classes achieve well from a below average base.
- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils are eleven.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average.
- There are examples of very good and excellent teaching in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology which have a positive impact on standards.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are very well supported and achieve very well.
- Consistently very high expectations in Years 3 to 6 promote very high standards and achievement.
- Higher attaining pupils achieve very well as a result of the appropriate work that is planned for them.

Commentary

Foundation stage

1. Children have settled very well into the routines that are clearly established in the nursery and reception classes and, as a result, are achieving well. Liaison between the nursery and the reception classes is very good; regular contact between the staff and planning and assessments that are shared ensure that children's progress is smooth and paced according to their needs. Despite lower than average standards on entry to the Foundation Stage, standards in line with those expected are achieved all areas of learning by the time pupils start Year 1.

Results in national tests

2. Overall, standards have risen at Year 2 and Year 6 since the last inspection.
3. The results of the 2004 national assessments for pupils in Year 2 shows that standards were average in reading, writing and mathematics, which is similar to the findings from the last inspection although those pupils started school with generally higher attainment than is now the case. Although the trend in the school's results is slightly below the national trend following a decline in standards in mathematics in 2003, inspection evidence points to attainment that is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.9 (15.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.2 (15.3)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	16.6 (18.0)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. The table below shows that standards in the Year 6 tests were well above average in English, mathematics and science. When the pupils' results are compared with their attainment at the end of Year 2 they were also well above average in all three subjects, showing the very good progress they had made.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.7 (27.7)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	29.3 (28.9)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.3 (30.3)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. The results of the 2004 national assessments at Year 6 show that there was a continuing improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics, while results in science were similar to those of 2003. In all subjects, pupils' performance was well above the national median and the trend in the school's results was above that seen nationally. When these results are compared with the attainment of pupils who were in the school at the end of Year 2, results are well above average, showing achievement that is very good. The school has addressed issues of underperformance between boys and girls, particularly in English that were present in the 2004 national assessments. Inspection evidence indicates that there is now little difference in the standards attained.
6. The quality of provision and the high expectations of staff contribute to the good progress made by the children who achieve well in the Early Learning Goals for the Foundation Stage. Children who enter the school with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are identified and supported quickly to enable them to make good progress.
7. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well as a result of skilled teaching and the impact of clear strategies for improvement introduced by the school. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are well supported and make good progress and this is also the case for pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) who benefit from the skills and experience of teachers and teaching assistants who plan work appropriately and in relation to assessments that are taken of pupils' ability in their home language. Pupils with higher attainment respond well to the challenges that are provided and make good progress in their learning as a result. Standards are broadly average in work seen in science and English and above average in mathematics by the time pupils are seven. Standards in religious education are

above the expectations of the agreed syllabus in Year 6, as are those in information and communication technology.

8. Inspection evidence finds that standards by the end of Year 6 are well above average in mathematics and science. The headteacher's excellent leadership has ensured that improvements made in teaching and across the curriculum have been focused on raising standards in English and mathematics. As a result of these initiatives, the quality of teaching is very good and pupils achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well against their individual targets and their own prior attainment, as do pupils for whom English is an additional language. This is because of the very good teaching and support they receive. The school has carefully analysed the standards achieved by pupils of different ethnic groups in order to identify needs and has developed its provision for these pupils very well as a result. Standards in ICT are above those expected nationally following the investment in resources and training made by the school, while standards in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
9. Pupils apply their overall very good literacy skills very well in other subjects of the curriculum. Similarly, there is a broad range of planned opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical and scientific, and ICT skills to support learning in other subjects. In those lessons where a good use was made of pupils' skills in English, mathematics and information communication technology to support learning in other subjects, their motivation was obvious and learning was more rapid as a result.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The school does outstanding work in promoting pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. As a result, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and their personal development is excellent. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their very good attendance.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does outstanding work in promoting respect for diversity.
- Pupils are developing an excellent awareness of their responsibilities as young citizens.
- Pupils' very good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning promote their achievement very effectively.
- The school has exceptionally good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance.

Commentary

10. Great emphasis is placed in the nursery and reception classes on developing children's personal, social and emotional skills and planned activities support all areas of learning well. Because of this, provision in personal, social and emotional development is good. Through the rapid and consistent establishment of regular routines all children, including those with under-developed social skills, progress well. As a result children are growing in confidence and developing positive attitudes to their work.

11. The school is remarkable for its strong ethos of respect for diversity. When asked what he liked about his school one boy replied, "The variety we have, it means that we get to learn about and celebrate lots of festivals." The school systematically promotes respect for diversity through all its policies and planning. Respect for other peoples and beliefs is a regular theme of the very good daily assemblies and of religious education and PSHE lessons. It is also made alive for pupils by the good role models that the ethnically diverse staff provide. Pupils are made aware of the richness of their backgrounds through special events such as Black History Week which involves pupils in a wide variety of enjoyable and instructive workshops, including dancing, drumming and story-telling workshops given by African, Afro-Caribbean and Asian experts. As a result of this systematic promotion of tolerance and respect the school forms a very harmonious community in which bullying and harassment are rare.
12. Throughout their time at school pupils are taught about their duties as young citizens and the success of the school's work in this area is reflected in pupils' very good sense of responsibility and their good manners and courtesy to each other and to adults. Even Year 2 pupils are able to make many good suggestions about what being a good citizen means. Older pupils have many responsibilities, which help with the smooth running of the school, and they fulfil these in a very mature, sensible manner. Trained peer mediators help to smooth out playground tiffs. The school council plays a central role in school life and gives pupils from Year 2 onwards first-hand experience of the democratic process and very good opportunities for working to improve their community.
13. Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent overall. It is very effectively planned and takes place across all curriculum subjects and in a range of very specific activities.
14. Provision for spiritual development is very good. There is a strong spiritual element in class and whole school assemblies and pupils can choose to reflect or pray. They have the opportunity reflect on the value of creativity and the wonders of the natural world. Music is used very effectively in establishing the atmosphere for worship or reflection and pupils clearly enjoy this form of expression. Pupils show a good knowledge of the story of the birth of Jesus and of celebrations such as Divali.
15. Pupils are encouraged to develop a strong moral awareness and there are clear codes of behaviour in the school. Provision for moral development is excellent. Pupils are encouraged to think about everyday morality through carefully planned themes. They care for each other very well and no pupil needs to be without playmates because sitting on the friendship bench immediately brings a kind response from others.
16. Social development is also excellent. Pupils make a real contribution to the life of the school. They take real responsibility around the school and understand what it means to work with adults on behalf of their school. Pupils go on a variety of visits and are involved fund raising activities that also contribute well to their social development and to real awareness of what it means to be a good citizen. The teaching and other staff provide excellent role models for pupils in the school. They really listen to pupils and value their opinions.

17. Cultural development is excellent. Pupils are introduced to many kinds of music and literature. They participate in a range of creative activities in music and these are used very effectively in assembly. Pupils are made particularly well aware of the breadth of cultures reflected in the school, and opportunities such as 'Black History Month' are regularly seized to capitalize on this diversity.
18. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who want to do well and their interest in their lessons and their very good behaviour promote their learning well. The school has very high expectations of good behaviour and systematic procedures for achieving this. Pupils are well motivated and their self-esteem is raised by the way teachers consistently celebrate achievement and by the very good reward system. A few parents and pupils commented through their questionnaires on the misbehaviour of a very small minority of pupils. The school has very good strategies in place, including both sanctions and support, for helping to improve the behaviour of this very small minority. There were nine fixed-term exclusions given last year; these were for a short time and were given appropriately. There have been no permanent exclusions.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.1
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.

19. The school has excellent procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and the attendance rate is well above the national average. Photos of children receiving certificates for good attendance are displayed in the school foyer and provide a helpful reminder to parents of the importance of good attendance. Pupils are also motivated by weekly awards for the class with the highest attendance. The taking of extended holidays in term-time is very strongly discouraged. Punctuality is improving as the result of the school's persistent efforts and is now good overall.

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	15	1	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	3	1	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	7	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	7	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	1	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	154	3	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	40	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	113	3	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	4	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education for its pupils. A focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning through constant evaluation and innovative action has had a very positive impact on the way in which the curriculum is developed and on pupils' achievement. The school recognises that more remains to be done, and has appropriate plans in place to improve further. Pupils are cared for very well and excellent links have been established with parents and with the local community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is **very good overall**, with over a quarter that is excellent and with no teaching that is less than satisfactory. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. This marks a considerable improvement over time since the last inspection. The school has invested considerable time in supporting teachers through developments in the curriculum so that the good standards noted in the previous inspection have developed even further. This has had a very positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement so that learning is also very good overall. Assessment is excellent and the information available is used thoroughly and consistently by senior managers, teaching and support staff in planning how to move pupils forward.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have very high expectations.
- Excellent support from skilled teaching assistants helps pupils to move forward.
- There is very good inclusion of all pupils.
- While teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, they are very good in Years 3 to 6 as a result of teachers' increased expectations.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is very good which results in increased challenge for all pupils.
- In all lessons there is a good use of discussion and questioning to challenge pupils.
- There is a very good partnership between teachers and teaching assistants.
- Assessment is excellent and as a result, pupils' understanding of how they can do better is very good.

Commentary

20. The table below indicates the quality of teaching seen across the school. Teachers place learning first in their planning and collaborate very well in teams across the school and in year groups to ensure that strengths are shared and that there is a comprehensive understanding of all pupils. The school's focus on raising standards, particularly in English and mathematics has had a very positive impact on the way that teachers use skills that are taught in these core subjects to move pupils' learning forward very rapidly in all subjects. Parents and pupils are very positive about the teaching staff. Pupils especially feel that their teachers help them to learn well.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6 (14.5%)	13 (32%)	15 (36.5%)	7 (17%)	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.

21. The very best lessons share some common strengths that support the quality of pupils' learning exceptionally well. Teachers make use of a broad repertoire of styles that enables all pupils to understand what is expected and take a full part in activities and discussion. These lessons are run at an excellent pace and with clearly stated high expectations that fully stretch all pupils. Very good support from skilled and well-informed teaching assistants means that those with special educational needs have opportunities to work in small groups with adult help. Very good questioning and discussion enables pupils to think carefully and develop their understanding while considering the contributions made by other pupils.
22. Good teaching was observed in all classes during the inspection but a significant strength of the school is the high percentage of very good and excellent teaching observed, particularly in Years 3 to 6. This is a significant factor in the improving standards. The quality of teaching of children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good overall and is particularly good in relation to their social development. The school has worked to improve teachers' confidence following the introduction of the nursery last year. In this, it has been successful but recognises that more remains to be done in raising the effectiveness of teaching through the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 to match that in Years 3 to 6. In the very best lessons in Years 1 to 6, the teachers used very good subject knowledge to challenge all pupils through

activities and questioning directed at individuals and the whole group. Tasks were precisely planned in relation to pupils' abilities and teachers had the confidence to adapt the planned activities in response to the work that pupils were doing, which promoted very rapid learning for all groups.

23. In all classes English is taught very well. Teachers have a very secure subject knowledge and use this to provide a variety of stimulating lessons that frequently inspire pupils. Teaching in mathematics is also very good overall. This is because the work is extremely challenging for pupils of every attainment. Class teachers and teaching assistants work very well in ensuring the right level of support for all pupils. The most able pupils are very well challenged in English and mathematics as a result of teachers' very good knowledge of these subjects, and the way in which assessment information is planned to make learning precise.
24. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teaching is very well focused on pupils' needs and their targets are clear and realistic, they relate clearly to lesson objectives and so promote effective learning. Very knowledgeable teaching assistants help pupils very well. They explain to pupils in their group what they have to do and often support them through the very small steps of learning that these pupils require. Consequently, their learning is very good.
25. Very good use is made of small group activities where small numbers of lower attaining pupils work with skilled and enthusiastic teaching assistants who work in close collaboration with teachers. A high level of importance is placed on the development of speaking and listening skills. This encourages pupils to concentrate and persist in their work. Very good use is made of ICT and specific English and mathematics programs are used systematically to help children sustain their levels of interest and concentration. It also helps them to increase their knowledge and skills. All assessments are centred around the learning targets on pupils' education plans. These working documents are reviewed regularly with learning targets changed or up graded according to the achievements of the pupils.
26. An excellent programme of assessment and review is used consistently in all subjects throughout the school. The key skills are identified in teachers' planning and assessed as the pupils work. The information from assessments is used very well to plan the next stages of learning and set targets for improvement each term. These targets are shared with the pupils and their parents. Teachers track how effectively the pupils are working towards their targets so that teaching is always focused on meeting each pupil's needs. Teachers mark pupils' work very effectively, rigorously using the agreed marking guidelines to help them find out what pupils know and can do. In turn, the pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work so their progress is very good. In lessons, teachers are very skilled in evaluating pupils' oral and written work, adjusting their plans to take account of the most recent assessments. Pupils achieve very well as a result.

The curriculum

The school provides a very good, interesting and fully inclusive curriculum that meets pupils' learning and personal needs very well. Pupils benefit from a variety of learning experiences that are very well planned and fully meet their needs. The school provides the

full range of areas of learning at the Foundation stage and for pupils up to the end of Year 6. It meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The approach to planning and development is exceptionally strong. The curriculum is enriched by the very good opportunities for learning beyond lessons. Accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum development and evaluation of impact on learning is excellent.
- Participation in the arts and the range of external stimuli is excellent.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school is very inclusive and support for children with special educational needs is very good.
- The school maximises its use of the open spaces within the limited site.

Commentary

27. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The curriculum provided for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is very good with suitable time allocation for all subjects provided in an innovative curriculum. Cross-curricular links are very strong providing a very good learning environment. Focus weeks enhance the curriculum and pupils are very well motivated by the experiences, which has a very positive effect on their learning. The quality and range of learning activities are very good; the school includes personal, health and social activities, closely linked with the activities of the school council, and religious education. Black History week clearly raised the self-esteem of pupils as all felt valued.
28. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well established in the school. The curriculum plans for many other subjects have also drawn successfully upon national guidelines. Pupils have equal access to these programmes.
29. The curriculum is fully inclusive. This is further enriched by ensuring full inclusion in all aspects of the work, in class, in extra-curricular activities and all aspects of school life. This ensures that provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is very good. Early identification of educational or linguistic need ensures an appropriate curriculum throughout the school. Very good support from talented classroom assistants and teachers ensures that individual education and behaviour plans give pupils full access to the whole curriculum.
30. There is a very good provision of activities outside lesson times, which have a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and the standards they attain. These offer a wide range of activities such as ICT, Art, Dance, Punjabi, Science, Music, Karate and Football. The school makes very good use of a variety of visitors to enrich and support the curriculum and the contribution made to the development of the arts is excellent. Teachers ensure the visits from professional artists and dance groups advance pupils' skill development and learning. The results of these visits are clearly demonstrated, for example, in the development of clay tile painting and African masks on display, linked with photographs of the development of the skills. Enrichment of the curriculum in these ways helps to motivate and inform pupils and also helps them to make progress in their learning.

31. The majority of teachers are very experienced and the provision of teaching staff is very good overall. The school is particularly fortunate in the quality of its teaching support staff who make a very good contribution to all aspects of school life. As a result, the needs of the curriculum are very well met. There is a very good range and quality of resources to support learning in all areas of the curriculum. Accommodation is spacious and of good quality and is used well to promote a warm and inviting atmosphere that is conducive to learning. This contributes very effectively to the very good ethos of the school. As a result of the recent building works to improve provision for the Foundation Stage classes, there is some lack of external space which limits the opportunities for outdoor provision for these younger children. The school has already embarked on a very clear set of plans to address this issue.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides very good care for pupils and excellent support and guidance. Pupils are very well involved in the school and know that their views are listened to.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good procedures for ensuring pupils' care, welfare and safety.
- There are excellent procedures for providing pupils with well targeted advice and guidance.
- Pupils' involvement in the work of the school through the school council and in other ways is outstanding.

Commentary

32. Everyone in the school community works together very well to ensure that pupils are secure and well cared for. Pupils know that staff are there for them when they need help. The school has very good procedures for ensuring the safety of the premises and of school procedures and visits. Child protection arrangements are comprehensive and have a positive Impact on pupils' achievement. The school received the Healthy School Award in 2002 and, in conjunction with the school council, it is currently working to promote the importance of healthy eating. Good supervision at lunchtime helps to make this a happy part of the day for pupils; pupils receive good care when they are hurt. The only health issue noted during the inspection was the unclean state of the Infant Hall following lunchtime. Parents are pleased with the very good care which the school takes of their children. They are also pleased with the very good arrangements which the school makes to ease transition when pupils join the nursery and reception classes, move up to the junior department and move to secondary school.
33. The school provides pupils with excellent support and guidance. Rigorous assessment procedures are used systematically to provide groups and individuals with well-targeted help. Older pupils are well aware of their individual targets and these are regularly changed when they have been achieved. Very good behaviour intervention strategies, including mentoring, help to support pupils who have difficulties managing their behaviour. The school celebrates pupils' academic and

personal achievements through keenly sought certificates and awards and this helps to boost pupils' self esteem and motivation very effectively.

34. Pupils are very proud of their school and show a real sense of ownership in it. One reason for this is that staff consistently listen to and value all pupils' ideas and as a consequence pupils feel they have a real voice in the running of their school. The very active school council channels pupils' ideas very effectively to senior staff and to governors and the school values and acts on pupils' ideas whenever possible. The school council meets frequently and plays an important part in the running and development of the school. School council members talked very articulately about the importance of their work: how they helped to choose playground markings and games; how they help to organise talent shows and other charity events, and their plans to promote Healthy Eating Week through competitions. The school council gives pupils excellent first-hand experience of the meaning and importance of citizenship.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's excellent links with parents and the local community and its good links with other schools make a significant impact on pupils' learning and personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does outstanding work in helping parents to become effective partners in their children's education.
- Communication between home and school is excellent.
- Pupils' learning is greatly enriched through the school's many community links.

Commentary

35. Parents are very keen to support their children's education and the excellent partnership which exists between home and school is based on strong mutual trust. The school has very effective strategies for helping parents to become fully involved in their children's learning. Good target booklets for mathematics, English and science go home each term and include targets and also suggestions of ways that parents can support their children's work. Inspire workshops, in which parents and children work together either on numeracy or literacy, are held each year for all year groups and are very popular and well attended. They are an excellent way of providing parents with an insight into the school's work and of providing suggestions of ways in which they can support learning at home. The school's clear homework policy is another effective aspect of the school's promotion of a partnership of learning.
36. Communication between home and school, including both formal and informal communication, is excellent. The school is very welcoming to parents who value the approachability and friendliness of staff and the prompt response made to any concerns they might have. Parent governors play an important and useful role in the school's communication network; for example parent governors remind parents of the importance of collecting their children punctually at the end of the school day. Consultation between home and school is outstanding and takes place both

informally and through questionnaires. The school responds well to parents' concerns; for example it made helpful alterations to the organisation of homework as a result of parents' requests. Parents are kept very well informed about the school through a good range of informative documents, regular newsletters, parents' notice boards and a good website. They are kept very well informed about their children's progress through well attended parents' meetings and good quality annual reports.

37. Excellent links with the community help to enrich pupils' education very effectively. For example, visitors from the fire and police service help pupils learn about safety; Birmingham City Mission supports the school's charity work; experts in dance, art and music take workshops during Black History Week which help to widen pupils' understanding of the achievements of different cultures. The school also uses its local community well as a resource for learning and for visits. Excellent links with community agencies also have a very positive impact on pupils' learning and are described in the section on community provision.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are very good. The school is governed very well. The leadership of the headteacher, with very good support from senior staff, is excellent. Management is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent.
- There is an unrelenting focus on raising standards.
- The headteacher, deputy head and senior management team have created effective teaching teams.
- Strategic monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school are clear and very well focused on raising standards.
- Subject leaders have a very good understanding of standards in their subjects, and of features that promote them.

Commentary

38. Governors are very active in the school and show a very good understanding of its strengths and of planned development. They have ensured that all statutory requirements have been met and they play a key role in all aspects of planning. In consultation with the headteacher and staff, they are able to plan strategically and ensure that finance is directed at those areas which bring about school improvement. Because they know the school so well they are very well placed to challenge and support and they are very clear about their criteria for appointing new members of staff at all levels.
39. The headteacher has an exceptionally clear vision, shared with the governors that she is determined to achieve. In this, she is excellently supported by the deputy. She has led the school very well through the introduction of national strategies since the last inspection and has used the experience that this provided for staff very well in enriching the curriculum further. The school's newly "blocked" curriculum

identifies clear links across subjects and these are having a positive impact on standards, particularly in English, mathematics and ICT. There is a clear sense of excitement in learning which pervades the whole school and which starts with the head and deputy. As a result, staff in the school work very well as a team with a clear commitment to providing the best for all pupils.

40. In its development planning, the school determines priorities for improvement from its strong focus on assessment and comprehensive monitoring strategies. The headteacher, senior staff and subject leaders monitor and evaluate lessons and use the information very well in planning for improvement. For example, the identification of lower standards on entry has led the planning for extended Foundation Stage provision with the opening of the school's nursery unit and the Building blocks Nursery. The actions identified are already helping to raise standards. In this, it has achieved a high level of initial success and has very clear plans to build on this work through further review of the links between Foundation Stage and the curriculum for Years 1 and 2. For example, the introduction of the nursery in response to the declining attainment of children on entry to the school has begun to raise standards through the reception year and into Years 1 and 2.
41. The leadership of special educational needs is very good. It is lead jointly by the special needs co-ordinator and the deputy head teacher. Together they have developed a very strong team, where all are fully aware of their responsibilities and objectives. As with the very good leadership of the school's work with pupils for whom English is an additional language, links with all outside agencies are very strong. The management of the provision for pupils with SEN and with EAL is also very good. This, together with the senior management team's very good understanding of the needs of these pupils and work that has been undertaken to unify teachers' understanding of how pupils learn, ensures that they are supported well.
42. Subject leaders have a very good understanding of their leadership roles. These are very well modelled by the rigorous self-evaluation procedures that underpin whole-school development which is clear and closely focused on developing strategies to further improve pupils' learning. Areas for improvement are precisely identified and all staff are involved in tracking the progress of both individuals and groups. Because of this, subject leaders have developed a precise understanding of achievement in their subjects and how developments are planned to fit within whole-school priorities. The headteacher ensures that they are given time to monitor planning, pupils' work and, if necessary, teaching as they work to achieve the targets set out in their individual action plans.
43. The headteacher has taken strong action, where necessary, to ensure the best possible provision for pupils. There is a very good system of performance management that is linked thoroughly to development and training priorities. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy and senior staff in monitoring the effectiveness of newly introduced initiatives such as the management of teachers' workload and in working with staff to ensure their success. As a result, teaching teams share expertise well and all staff know their part in achieving the school's development priorities. New staff are inducted and supported very well.

44. Budgets are set in accordance with statutory requirements and monitored very well by senior staff and governors. Although unexpected additional payments had to be made to cover site costs for the Foundation Stage building works, the resulting budget shortfall has been clearly planned into next year's budget in consultation with the local education authority. The principles of best value are thoroughly supported by well-established procedures. A very good range of administrative procedures is managed well by the skilled administrative staff, who also provide a welcoming first point of contact with the school.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,215,450	Balance from previous year	39,017
Total expenditure	1,176,825	Balance carried forward to the next	(7,174)
Expenditure per pupil	2,863		

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

What is the effectiveness of Community provision?

The school's excellent community provision benefits both parents and pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Excellent links between the school and its community partners enhance pupils' learning and personal development well.
- Popular adult education courses help parents and other members of the community to develop their careers.
- The provision of all-day childcare on the site is very well linked with the school's provision and provides a valuable service to the community.

Commentary

45. A prime example of the school's excellent links with its community partners is that with the Handsworth Consortium of Schools. This association supports many of the school's successful projects such as parent partnership, peer mediation, mentoring and football training. The Association also organises the successful Handsworth Young People's Parliament which enables pupils from both primary and secondary schools to join together to debate topical issues. Year 5 pupils who have participated in this parliament were able to give an articulate description of its work and what they had learnt.
46. Accredited college courses for parents and other members of the community are held in the school's community room on subjects such as childcare, mentoring and computing. About fifty parents take these courses and they find them a very successful means of furthering their personal development and their careers. There are also benefits for the school: parents who take these courses often help as volunteers in class and they are better able to support their children's learning at home.
47. The provision of "wrap-around care" on the school site provides a valuable service to the community. The Building Blocks Nursery provides care for children from three months old and also before-school and after-school clubs and a summer school. This enables all parents' childcare needs to be provided conveniently on one site. The school works very closely with the management of the Building Blocks Nursery to ensure that its practice is consistent with that of the school, and this means that

pupils who move between this provision and that of the school experience a good sense of continuity. Both the Building Blocks and school nurseries also give many of the young children valuable early exposure to English.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and provides children with a stimulating and effective start to school life.

The Nursery class was established in April 2004, at the same time, a neighbourhood nursery opened sharing the site. The good and improving links between the two provide good quality learning experiences for all the children. At the same time, the two reception classes have also recently been completely re-furnished. At the time of the inspection, the school was awaiting the final phase of this development - the extension, and renewal of the outside area.

There are currently 42 children in the Nursery who attend on a part-time basis. Children start in the nursery at the beginning of the school year following their third birthday. Most enter the nursery with below average social, language and mathematical skills. With good teaching, the children achieve well. The majority transfer to the main school with other children from different settings where they enter one of two reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they will become five. At this point in the year, overall attainments of the children in the reception class are below what is usually expected of children of this age in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. This attainment is lower than that reported previously during the last inspection and reflects the decline since the last inspection of the overall attainments of the children entering the school. However, as a result of the good teaching they receive, children achieve well and the majority are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year. There has been improvement in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection, particularly in the development of the curriculum.

Children with special education needs are very effectively supported and have full access to the curriculum. As soon as the children begin their schooling they are assessed against the nationally recommended targets. This results in effective planning by both the teachers and classroom assistants with work specifically aimed at the needs of individual children. Further daily assessment ensures that planning is constantly adapted to meet the changing needs of all the children in all areas of their development. Both the nursery and reception classes have their own teaching areas that are well equipped and established. They share a well equipped outside area, which at the time of the inspection was under-used, due to the work associated with the refurbishment. Leadership in the Foundation Stage is good and a very good range of plans to further include the outside environment in children's day-to-day learning experiences are in place.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Regular routines are quickly established.

- Good classroom organisation develops social interaction.
- All staff show a consistent approach when supporting children.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. Most are working at levels close to those expected for their age and the majority are likely to achieve these standards by the time they start in Year 1. There has been excellent progress made throughout the year because a significant number of children entered reception with under developed social skills and found it hard to conform to the high expectations set by staff.
49. In both the nursery and the reception classes routines are well established and are helping these young children to work in various groups, to take turns and share. As a result children are growing in confidence and developing positive attitudes to their work. They understand classroom rules and routines and their behaviour is very good. For example, lining up for lunch is accomplished in a sensible and careful way.
50. The teacher and classroom assistants place great emphasis on developing children's personal, social and emotional skills and planned activities support all areas of learning well. The classroom has been carefully organised to enable children to select what they do from a planned range of activities and many work independently, alongside or co-operatively using the available equipment, apparatus, computer, tools and materials. Children make choices sensibly and most work confidently in the various areas of the classroom. They concentrate for appropriate periods, at times sitting quietly or working as part of a group or the whole class. Some children willingly share the resources available and take appropriate responsibility for putting away what they have used. Others choose to work alone or alongside others, and have not as yet learned to share.
51. In the reception class these areas are further developed. Children are helped to become independent. There are clear routines for children to select and work in the different areas of the room or with particular pieces of equipment. Children understand and respond to these routines well. The approach taken to involving children in managing resources and equipment for themselves is good for promoting personal development and many are able to clear things away quickly and tidily when required.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff give clear ideas of what is expected of the children including the difference between right and wrong. Patient, supportive teaching, where children are encouraged to work together and collaborate in their tasks, results in happy and confident children who make good gains in their lessons.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's communication skills are being developed well.
- Great emphasis is placed on developing children's listening skills.
- Many children have difficulty in communicating what they want to say.

Commentary

53. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. Most are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning. In the nursery, the teacher gives children very good examples of how to use speaking and listening skills by listening carefully to what they say, interacting with them as they work and joining in with their activities and play. This has a positive impact on the progress children make. Some children enjoy conversation and are beginning to take turns in speaking and listening, particularly with adults. However, a significant majority do not listen well either to other children or adults. Many are reluctant to, and others have difficulty in expressing themselves in order to be understood. Several are at the early stages of English language acquisition.
54. As a result of the good teaching in both the nursery and reception classes, children in the reception classes answer questions posed by their teacher and are eager to express their ideas in words. Some show confidence in speaking to adults and to other children, and many initiate conversations in their play. They enjoy listening to stories and sharing a book with an adult. Most children know some letter sounds and can draw the shapes of letters.
55. Children understand that writing is used to communicate and at times they enjoy working at the writing tables, making books and lists. In the nursery they have opportunities to write during their imaginative structured play sessions. In one session observed, the children made booklets depicting the story of 'The Nativity'. Staff work with small groups of children giving them very individually focused help. In the reception class in one lesson observed, the teacher gave valuable support and help to a group who were sequencing the story of 'Handa's surprise'. Many demonstrated the ability to use their knowledge of sounds to match words to the fruit in 'Handa's' basket. Many demonstrated the ability to use their knowledge of sounds to write words that were phonetically recognisable.
56. Children are aware that books are a source of information and pleasure. They handle books with confidence, and are eager to retell the stories. Some are able to recognise some familiar words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to develop children's counting skills.
- Mathematical concepts are made relevant to children's experiences.

Commentary

57. Children achieve well as a result of good teaching and the majority are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning. Children are making good progress in developing their awareness and understanding of mathematics. They enjoy counting. In the nursery, children are learning to recognise numbers and count as they count the red holly berries. In the reception classes most can count accurately to 10, and many can count beyond 10. The teachers make good use of number rhymes to reinforce children's counting. Children count while they sort objects as they play.
58. Teaching is good and, as a result children learn well. The teachers organise the classrooms effectively to enable them to meet the mathematical needs of all children. Planning ensures that children are provided with a balance of teaching and activities. Mathematical learning opportunities are planned into a range of activities that children choose for themselves.
59. Most children in the reception classes can recognise simple two-dimensional shapes. They know circle, square, triangle and rectangle. They relate addition to combining two groups of objects, and can use the appropriate language and symbols. They use relevant vocabulary when answering questions, such as those about 'more than'.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff plan a good range of interesting activities that lay a strong emphasis on practical investigation. This makes learning interesting and exciting.
- Opportunities to learn about multicultural issues feature highly in the planning.
- Computers are well used.

Commentary

60. Children achieve well as a result of good teaching and the majority are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning. Children are provided with a wealth of opportunities to learn about their world. The nursery children helped to make bread for the Harvest Festival, and were fascinated when the dough rose. Activities are interesting and are well planned with an emphasis on investigation. For example, reception children visited the local green grocer's shop and tasted different fruits as part of their investigation about the fruit that 'Handa' was carrying in her basket.
61. In this multicultural school, no opportunities are missed to experience the traditions of other cultures. At the time of the inspection, all children were discovering the tradition of Christmas, decorating the tree, wrapping presents for their friends and writing cards.
62. Children use the computers with confidence, using the mouse to identify and move items on the computer screen and point to illustrations. A variety of programs are used well to promote the children's understanding in this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor facilities at the nursery are used effectively.
- Access to outdoor facilities for the reception class children is limited.
- Children are taught well to handle resources safely.

Commentary

63. Children achieve well as a result of good teaching and the majority are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning. The outdoor area at the nursery at the time of the inspection was about to be refurbished. Staff were using this limited facility well to support children's physical development. Opportunities are planned for children in the nursery to experiment and experience a range of physical activities, such as manoeuvring wheeled vehicles. Teachers and teaching assistants plan well together and allow the children to take initiatives and manage tasks for themselves.
64. Children in the reception classes are taught well which enables them to learn rapidly. However, they do not share fully in the outdoor facility as their access to the area is limited. Teachers compensate for this by ensuring that children experience challenge in their physical development through their physical education lessons in the school hall.
65. In the nursery the children move around the classroom with growing confidence. They show an increasing awareness of space for themselves and for others. Many use small equipment with increasing control, as they draw or write. However, many have difficulty in manipulating scissors, and several are still unsure which is their dominant hand. Many are able to manipulate construction materials. In the reception classes children are taught well to handle equipment with care, and most are aware of the need to do things safely. Children's skills in manipulating small tools, scissors and pencils develop well because of the good opportunities they have to practise and apply them.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of experiences and materials are used to stimulate children's imagination.
- Good links are made with other areas of learning.

Commentary

66. Good teaching enables children to achieve well and the majority are on course to meet the expectations in this area of learning. In all classes children enjoy a good range of well-planned art and craft and role-play experiences to stimulate their imagination. They concentrate well on these, making pictures and models with a variety of materials and paint. They are beginning to relate well to each other and share in imaginative ideas to create stories and events. In the nursery they enjoyed dressing as Mary to act their part in the Nativity play. All the children enjoy singing and making music. Reception children enjoy matching movement to music; for example, music from India. Children learn very well from role-play. Their responses indicate that they are observing and remembering real-life situations well. An example of this was seen when the Reception children went through the actions of buying and selling fruit, following their visit to the green grocers.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching in Years 3 – 6 promotes good standards and very good achievement.
- The new guided reading structure gives pupils valuable opportunities to develop very good skills in the use of reference texts and in gaining full understanding from fiction.
- A wide variety of writing challenges develops pupils' skills very well.
- Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 is improved to very good in Years 3 to 6 as a result of teachers' very high expectations.
- The constructive marking strategies support pupils in the evaluation of their work and awareness of future learning needs.

Commentary

67. The standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 have been generally well above the national average in recent years. There has been very good progress through Years 3 to 6. Figures for 2004 show standards that are well above average in comparison with schools nationally, although they are average in comparison with attainment at Year 2. At the end of Year 2 attainment was average in relation to schools nationally and to similar schools, reflecting a continuing decline in attainment on entry to the school. Inspection evidence confirms these results. From a position of below average attainment on entry, weak communication skills are improved through Years 1 and 2 and developed very well in Years 3 to 6. These results represent good and very good achievement respectively.
68. The skills of speaking and listening are developed very well in Year 6. Pupils are confident in answering questions and in making contributions to the progress of the lesson. They seek clarification and support answers well with relevant facts and reasoning. Year 2 pupils listen carefully to teaching and respond well with relevant answers. They use accurate terminology such as 'verb' and 'adverb' when discussing text. This is a focused strategy by the school and the impact is clearly evident in pupils' range of vocabulary.

69. Year 6 pupils of all abilities use very good reading skills to make good use of reference materials from information books and the Internet. They select relevant information and record it in their own words. When reading fiction they use good expression. Higher attaining pupils make good use of inference and deduction skills. Year 2 pupils enjoy reading and pupils of all abilities have favourite books. Instructions are read and followed carefully. They discuss what they have read when answering comprehension questions. Higher and average attaining pupils read with expression and lower attaining pupils use the alphabet to work out unfamiliar words which reflects the success of the school's identified strategies for improvement.
70. Pupils' writing is very good in Year 6. They write to a variety of challenges with style that is appropriate to the setting. For example news reports that were linked with a history topic on the wars between Sparta and Athens captured the style of newspaper reporting very well. Very good use of ICT led to the production of realistic news pages that included anecdotes and illustrations. Higher and average attaining pupils use a variety of sentence openings to maintain interest. Extended sentences use good punctuation and imaginative vocabulary. Lower attaining pupils show their interest with imaginative writing but sentence structure is simple and punctuation is inconsistent. Handwriting is neat and shows pupils' pride in their work. Spelling is accurate with complex words such as 'arachnophobia' successful in tests for the majority of pupils. Year 2 pupils also use cursive handwriting. Higher attaining pupils are accurate in spelling complex words. Writing is imaginative and interesting due to the use of good vocabulary. Sentences are accurately punctuated by most pupils and the majority use time connectives well.
71. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6 where a high level of challenge with high expectations of performance are key features. Planning is very good and very good subject knowledge underpins lessons that use time well in setting targets for completion of work. Work is matched well to the abilities of the pupils. As a result all pupils are challenged appropriately and work with interest and enthusiasm at all times. Marking is constructive and evaluative against individual learning objectives for pupils at both key stages. Teaching at in Years 1 and 2 focuses strongly on moving pupils forward from the weak language skills on entry to the school. Lower attaining pupils are supported well and classroom assistants are used very well. Reading skills are improving steadily as a result of the recent improvements made to the reading scheme and the use of guided reading sessions. There is a necessary focus on phonetic skills and this leaves less time for the development of other reading strategies. Learning activities are matched well to the abilities of the pupils.
72. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. There have been significant improvements in teaching and in provision for pupils with special educational needs. Standards are now higher and achievement is now very good by the end of Year 6. There are numerous opportunities for independent study and research of information from reference sources and Internet sources. The school has recently contributed to national research on raising achievement in boys' writing. Assessments demonstrate improvement as a result.
73. Subject leadership is very good. The subject leader clearly knows the performance of the school and its pupils. Assessment procedures are excellent and lead to

individual targets for pupils' short term learning. Teaching and learning are monitored very well. Development of reading resources and the structured planning for the use of literacy skills in other subject areas are producing very good improvement.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

74. A good range of opportunities are planned to develop literacy skills in the setting of other curriculum topics which have a very positive impact on pupils' confidence and on the standards attained. Overall, pupils use their literacy skills very well in other subjects. For example an enormous amount of literacy development featured in a history lesson during inspection. Learning in other subjects is improved by recording observations, making comparisons and evaluating reference information. The skills of literacy are also developed well in other subject areas to make gains in speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. There are numerous examples of literacy skills being used from poems in geography and prayers in religious education to evaluative writing in history and factual recording in science. Other subjects are used very well to develop writing skills when preparing newspaper reports in imaginative historical settings or to write tributes to inspirational people.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well and make very good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching overall is very good which has a positive impact on learning.
- Pupils of all abilities are well challenged and so learn rapidly.
- Assessment is thorough and the marking of pupils' work is consistently related to what is being taught.
- Resources for teaching are comprehensive and well used to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

75. Children enter the school with standards that are below average but the results of the 2004 national tests for Year 2 pupils were in line with the national average. In lessons seen during the inspection, the younger pupils' work is already at that level and they are on line to achieve standards that exceed those expected nationally as a result of the school's emphasis on planning. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieved well above average results in the 2004 tests and are on line to reach similarly high standards in 2005. In lessons seen during the inspection, standards are above expectation and pupils are working towards targets that will see them achieving well above national expectations in 2005. This demonstrates very good achievement in comparison with these pupils' prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and, as a result, their achievement is very good when compared to their prior attainment.
76. Very good teaching in the school is characterised by rapid pace and high expectations of pupils' performance. Because of this, pupils learn rapidly. Lessons

are brisk, but pupils are given sufficient time to think and reflect and so their learning too is frequently excellent. The amount of work they cover in lessons is good and all pupils try hard. Practical approaches work well, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be good. The subject is very well managed. The subject leader has a very good subject knowledge and clarity of vision that has been very well communicated throughout the school. This has enabled her to ensure that all teachers are familiar with the subject and confident in how to teach it.

77. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good. They are well managed and so achieve high standards in lessons. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. The school has two leading teachers of mathematics in the local education authority who provide excellent role models for colleagues and pupils. The pupils benefit from being set in ability groups so that teachers can focus more closely on their specific needs. This is allowing pupils with special educational needs to move at a pace more appropriate to their needs, as well as allowing more able pupils to be offered real challenge in their work. One example of the effectiveness of this form of organisation involved Year 6 pupils investigating sequences of square and triangular numbers. Excellent teaching and learning helped pupils make outstanding progress as they worked at a very high standard, eventually developing an algebraic formula to calculate the size of higher numbers. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and very high expectations of their pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to ensure that pupils learn at a good pace. They use mathematical vocabulary particularly well and ensure that the pupils describe their methods of calculation fully, often in discussion with their "talking partners." The resources for learning are very good. Each classroom has a good stock of resources to support teaching and there is a very good range of computer software for pupils to use. The school website also has an excellent range of software for parents to use at home with their children. As well as the homework that is regularly set, this supports and reinforces what pupils have learnt at school.
78. The mathematics coordinator has a very good understanding of the subject and of pupils' achievement. Her excellent subject knowledge and thorough evaluation of performance help ensure that provision in mathematics is very good. Assessment is particularly rigorous. Pupils' levels of attainment are checked regularly, with targets set for each pupil to achieve within a time scale. Teachers' marking is consistently related to what is being taught so that pupils can judge for themselves how successful they have been and which aspects of their work they need to improve. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

79. The use of mathematics in other subjects is very good and, as a result, has a very positive impact upon pupils' learning across the curriculum. Overall, pupils use their mathematical skills very well in other subjects. There are many planned opportunities for the pupils to apply their mathematical learning whilst studying other subjects. For example, there is very good use of line graphs by older pupils to show comparisons between Celsius and Fahrenheit temperatures in science. Throughout the school, pupils can confidently apply their knowledge in new contexts to prove they fully understand.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well because of the overall very good teaching throughout the school.
- There is a good emphasis on the investigative strand of this subject, and the use of scientific language.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' performance which results in very good learning.
- Consistent use of cross-curricular links supports science.
- Pupils' progress is continually checked.
- The subject is monitored very effectively by the subject leader.

Commentary

80. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve the standards of those expected nationally, and at the end of Year 6 achieve standards well above those expected nationally. Achievement overall is very good, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Most pupils enter Year 1 with limited language skills, so progress is good as they develop a basic science vocabulary and establish learning skills in science lessons. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make very good progress, as teachers encourage pupils to become more independent and to apply the knowledge previously gained to new situations, leading to very good learning. Very good science assessment at the end of each unit of work ensures progress and informs planning.
81. Overall teaching and learning are very good; they are good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6 as a result of the high levels of experience that are present in these years. Good planning, organisation, clear learning objectives, and regular assessment are consistent features of teaching in science. High expectations of pupils' learning, good speaking and listening opportunities and the extensive use of resources promote very good learning. Accurate vocabulary and technical language are continually used and pupils are constantly involved in discussions, leading to full understanding of the topics. For example, pupils in Year 2 were able to articulate their learning about the vibrations of sound as a result of the careful emphasis placed on scientific vocabulary in previous lessons. Very good links have been established between science and other subjects, adding to pupils' excitement and interest. An excellent lesson in Year 5, for example, enabled pupils to make use of skills learned in English when writing descriptions of filtration experiments and in beginning to plan letters to the area water board.
82. There has been steady improvement since the last inspection. Standards overall have been maintained, and pupils have greater opportunity to investigate independently. Assessments are more rigorous and are consistently used to inform and refine teachers' planning. The innovations in the planning for science encourage independent learning and increased motivation.
83. The leadership and management of science are good. The coordinator is enthusiastic and has implemented some important developments including attention given to both cross curricular links and investigative opportunities in planning and teaching

that effectively aid learning. She has been involved in the monitoring of the subject by checking the planning and giving advice. She has also carried out classroom observations of science lessons, given feedback to the teachers and has demonstrated strategies of teaching investigative science. As a result, teachers are confident in planning lessons that are set at an appropriate level for all pupils including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. The science club for Year 6 is well attended and further extends learning. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is very good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved and are now better than those expected nationally.
 - Pupils' positive attitudes and improved confidence help them achieve well.
 - Leadership of ICT is very good and the range and quality of equipment has improved since the school was last inspected.
 - Teaching and learning have improved. Lessons are interesting and exciting.
 - The use of ICT to promote learning across the curriculum is very good.
84. By Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' ICT skills are better than those expected nationally. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and teach it confidently. Pupils have very positive attitudes to ICT, work confidently and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior learning because teachers and support staff make a significant contribution in providing targeted help for those who need extra attention. This was evident when a small group of pupils with special educational needs worked in the ICT suite using a program that provided a structure for their writing. They applied themselves well to the task and achieved good results.
85. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good overall and occasionally very good. Teachers take great care when planning lessons to build on previous work in order to improve and extend pupils' understanding. The teaching of ICT skills is systematic and thorough. Assessment is carried out regularly to evaluate how well pupils are developing their skills. Teachers' expertise and confidence is much better than at the time of the previous inspection so all pupils benefit from improved teaching. Lessons are interesting and exciting. The two ICT suites are used very well, both for teaching ICT skills and applying them in other subjects. In one excellent lesson, Year 6 pupils used ICT to amend text by improving the vocabulary in a story based on their history work about Greek myths. The resulting work was exceptionally good.
86. Leadership and management of ICT are very good. The coordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She leads by example and provides expert support to colleagues. The scheme of work ensures the progressive development of skills and understanding as pupils move through the school. These skills are practised as the pupils work on other subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils practised word processing skills as they completed their instructional writing. This typifies the scheme of work

that puts learning into real life contexts. The range and quality of equipment is good. The school has made good progress with the provision of resources for ICT. The school website is an excellent resource, providing access to a large range of programs that parents may use at home as they help their children. The weekly ICT club is well attended.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

87. The planned use of ICT in other subjects is very good and, as a result, has a very positive impact upon pupils' learning across the curriculum. Pupils use their ICT skills very well in other subjects. A good lesson involved younger pupils changing descriptive writing into a set of instructions using a word processing program. The pupils' good work proved their understanding of both literacy and ICT. Another example included the use of ICT in art, with pupils designing pictures in the style of Mondrian, the noted Dutch painter. Teachers and pupils use interactive whiteboards as learning tools in literacy, numeracy and other subjects and this helps improve the quality of learning across the curriculum. Very good learning was observed when pupils compared information in a CD ROM with that from a reference book. They had to think very carefully and give reasons for their choice. This also helped them practise their speaking and listening skills.

HUMANITIES

88. No lessons were observed in geography and only two in history so it is not possible to make a secure judgement about provision in these subjects. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has adopted appropriate schemes of work in these subjects and pupils' previous work was examined. Pupils' work shows that history topics and local and wider studies in geography are covered appropriately and that both subjects support work in other areas, particularly literacy and art, very well.
89. Analysis of pupils' work and display around the school shows standards that are generally above those expected nationally at Year 6. Year 6 pupils use skills of comparison and evaluation well when studying rain forest environments. They use their literacy skills well in composing poems and recording information from reference books and the Internet. Skills from subjects such as mathematics and ICT are used to find and record factual data in graphical form. Pupils' attitudes are good and the quality of their work reflects this in the care that is taken in presentation.
90. The curriculum provision is good. Visits are used to give greater meaning to the learning of the pupils. The use of skills from subject areas such as literacy, maths and ICT is developing very well. Older pupils, for example, make good use of the internet to compare different map scales. These opportunities are planned to increase learning for all subjects.
91. The subject leadership is very good. The newly appointed co-ordinator has fully audited resources and the curriculum for history and has a clear view of standards in the subject which she has used well in establishing clear plans for future development. Assessment procedures evaluate learning at the end of each topic. Topic plans include identified links to subject areas such as English, mathematics and ICT.

92. Standards seen in history lessons are very high for pupils in Year 6 and achievement is very good. Standards and achievement as seen in analysis of pupils' work and display are good for pupils in Year 2. Teaching in Year 6 stimulates pupils to use skills of enquiry, explanation and comparison well when interpreting factual information. They make very good use of reference sources such as books and the Internet. When recording information they make very good use of literacy skills and ICT software. For example, when studying the Ancient Greeks a news bulletin was prepared. Historical facts were accurately recorded and presented in a very realistic manner. Illustrations, good language, evaluation and interpretation improved skills of literacy and ICT as well as geography. Year 2 pupils use accurate vocabulary, express opinions, record information and seek to explain and investigate links between facts.
93. Subject management is very good. A review of the curriculum and of resources has been followed by action to make good use of local heritage resources that are relevant to topics. Professional development has sought inspirational courses and benefits can be seen in the very good structure to the curriculum. Topics are linked to other subject areas so that learning is enhanced. For example, literacy skills are used to improve learning in history but history is also used to improve the literacy skills. ICT is used particularly well to link these two areas of learning. Support materials for topics include good assessment criteria and a portfolio of pupils' work indicate standards that can be achieved.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The locally agreed syllabus guides planning well in all year groups.
- Displays reflect good cross-curricular links and opportunities for reflection.
- Pupils' cultural development is considerably strengthened by their work in religious education.

Commentary

94. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is in line with the skills, knowledge and understanding expected in the locally agreed syllabus while, by Year 6, it is above. Pupils reflect on what it is to be a member of a group, culminating in what a person does to be a member of a family. This aspect of their work is very well supported through the school's very well planned work on PSHE and, particularly, on building strong relationships. Pupils understand the importance of religious artefacts and the ideas relating to festivals. During the inspection, pupils were exploring the Christmas story, supported very well by assemblies and acts of collective worship that celebrated the diversity of faith within the school in a way that allowed full access to all pupils. Displays showed good cross-curricular links to art and design and very good cross-curricular links are established with English and science through, for example, writing prayers, and the high quality of discussion that is promoted.

95. Overall, teaching is good and this, together with the strong links that are made with speaking and listening and with writing, enables pupils to learn well and to make good progress. In the best teaching, discussion is planned and promoted very well, a feature that is very well reflected in assemblies where pupils are fully involved. The range and complexity of discussion progresses well as pupils move through the school. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus and of how it can best be resourced.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

96. No lessons were observed in design and technology, art and design, music or physical education but pupils' previous work was examined.

Art and design

97. Art and design work on display indicates a broad range of techniques and methods and good cross-curricular links. The standard of work overall was above that normally expected. In the library, artwork on the theme of a film 'Finding Nemo' transformed the area into an underwater environment with painted mobiles, collage and drapes used to good effect. Very bold and vibrant charcoal drawings and paintings of landmarks that were observed on a visit to London were displayed in some classes. Information and communication technology is used well to draw pictures that are used to create settings for stories, printing and rubbings of surfaces around the school indicates the range of work on display.

Design and technology

98. Design and technology is organised well with a scheme of work that is based on national guidelines, incorporating a range of topics that encourage the pupils to apply their learning from other subjects. For example, accurate measuring and cutting is practised as they design and make packaging to carry an object. Some pupils made bread by accurately following a recipe. Then they designed their own recipes for bread, pizza and sandwiches to show what they had learned. This work supported prior learning about healthy lifestyles. The process of design is embedded into all aspects of the work so pupils gain greater skills as they progress through the school. They evaluate their work rigorously, judging where improvements could be made. The quality of finished products is good, for example the fabric collages designed and made by the older pupils are very well sewn, as well as being very attractive. Useful links have been made with the neighbouring secondary school but the use of ICT needs further development to include software for computer-assisted design.

Music

99. Music is part of school life and pupils have the opportunity to hear a wide range of music playing in both planned music sessions and in the school generally. Pupils sing tunefully and with enjoyment in assemblies and to a standard that is at least in line with expectations. Teachers choose music carefully to fit in with assembly themes. Performing arts have a high and developing profile within the school and

pupils have a good range of opportunities to participate in a range of events within school and the wider community.

Physical Education

100. Pupils describe a range of activities in athletics and gymnastics. Their confidence is well developed, and older pupils describe the benefits of working with a teacher from a neighbouring secondary school in developing their skills. The school provides a balanced curriculum, which is enhanced by a wide range of well attended after-school clubs which make a significant contribution to children's learning. Systems for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning are well developed, and this, combined with the subject leaders' very good knowledge of the subject, provides leadership and management that are good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils discuss issues openly, leading to a very good understanding of the community around them.
- The school council builds a strong foundation for raising self-esteem.
- Display reflects the emphasis demonstrated throughout the school on personal, social and health education.

Commentary

101. The school sees pupils' personal development as central to its work. There is a very good programme, carefully linked to other areas through the whole curriculum, which helps pupils develop safe and healthy lifestyles, gain confidence and link with others. Statutory requirements, including the provision of sex and drugs education are fully in place and well linked with the school's work on healthy lifestyles. Pupils are given the opportunity to discuss issues sensitively, respecting the views of others. These well supported opportunities have a significant effect on pupils' learning. A Year 2 pupil advised if you were on your own at play, you should "be brave and make new friends". The school council provides pupils with many opportunities to take an active part in the organisation of the school. Pupils appreciate their views are taken into account. Display aims to raise self esteem. Strong leadership ensures projects are effective, impacting positively on the whole school community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	1
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	1
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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