

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **HASLUCKS GREEN JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Shirley

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104046

Headteacher: Mr M Lee

Lead inspector: Mr C D Loizou

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 266967

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	243
School address:	Haslucks Green Road Shirley Solihull West Midlands
Postcode:	B90 2EJ
Telephone number:	0121 744 2088
Fax number:	0121 744 0646
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev K White
Date of previous inspection:	7 <sup>th</sup> June 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Haslucks Green is a community junior school situated near the centre of Shirley in Solihull. There are 243 boys and girls on roll, which is average. The pupils join the school in Year 3 and come from a number of infant schools in the area. On entry to the school, the attainment of most pupils is above average but this varies from year to year. For example, last year's Year 6 pupils started in Year 3 with average attainment and different year groups across the school also reflect this variation. Most of the pupils (approximately 80 per cent) are from white British backgrounds; a small number (two per cent) are of mixed or black Caribbean and African heritage and one in five pupils are from an Asian background (Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi). There are no pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition. A below average number of pupils (40) has been identified as having special educational needs; five have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which is higher than in most schools. Nine per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. The school has a strong commitment to initial teacher training and has established partnerships with three training institutions in the Midlands. The school has also been awarded the Football Association National Charter Mark and is applying for the National Arts Mark award, reflecting its commitment to the visual and performing arts and music.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18645	Charalambos Loizou	Lead inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology; Physical education
14404	Alan Rolfe	Lay inspector	
20010	John Sangster	Team inspector	English; Geography; History; Religious education
2759	Derek Sleightholme	Team inspector	Special educational needs; Science; Art and design; Design and technology; Music

The inspection contractor was :

peakschoolhaus Ltd

B.P.S. Centre  
Brake Lane  
Boughton  
Nottingham  
NG22 9HQ

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

As a result of very effective leadership by the headteacher, good management and teaching, the school provides a **good standard of education**. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is above average but does vary from year to year. The pupils make good progress and achieve well; by the end of Year 6, standards in English and science are above average; in mathematics they are well above average. Overall, the school gives good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The pupils do well because the teaching is effective and standards are above average as a result, but standards could be higher in writing
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by the staff and governors
- The school has a positive ethos and pupils of all ability, including those with special educational needs, achieve well, but in some lessons, tasks could be better matched to the abilities of all pupils
- The teachers, ably assisted by the support staff, provide work that interests and stimulates the pupils and the pupils respond with good behaviour and attend school regularly and on time
- The pupils receive a broad range of experiences in and out of lessons because the staff make the curriculum interesting, practical and relevant to the pupils

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected. Although national test results declined recently, they improved last year because the school has taken appropriate action and begun to reverse this decline. Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues in the last report. The teaching, curriculum, leadership and management have improved. There is now greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

### 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	C	B	B
Mathematics	A	B	A	A
Science	A	C	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
The 'similar' in the table above refers to the percentage of free school meals.*

Inspection evidence confirms that the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those capable of attaining the higher levels, **achieve well**. The pupils enter Year 3 with skills that are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. This trend of lower writing attainment on entry compared to other subjects is common in other year groups. The school's results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. The results were higher than in previous years because the school has applied good assessments to identify that writing standards needed improving. This has succeeded because the school has reversed the decline in results in 2003, particularly in writing, but more still needs to be done to provide more opportunities for the pupils to write at length and independently. The proportion of pupils attaining expected and higher levels has increased

significantly compared to 2003. Inspectors found that standards in the current Year 6 are similar to the previous year and the pupils continue to make good progress. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and science, and well above average in mathematics. Standards have risen in information and communication technology (ICT) and are now above what is expected of pupils at the end of Year 6, as they are in art and design, history, music and physical education. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected.

The pupils have good attitudes to learning and are well behaved. They are polite and courteous to each other and relationships are very good throughout the school. Attendance is very good because it is well above the national average and punctuality is good. **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good.** There are very good opportunities for the pupils to show respect and demonstrate care for each other.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a good quality of education. The teaching is good** throughout the school which contributes to the pupils' achievement through to Year 6. The teachers, well supported by teaching assistants, are particularly successful in planning practical and interesting work that meets the needs of different levels of ability, but in a small number of lessons this could be a lot sharper and more challenging. There are good assessment procedures in place that help to track how well the pupils are doing. Good use is made of resources, particularly those for ICT and those used in art and design and physical education.

The school provides a good curriculum, enhanced by a very good range of enrichment activities. The care and welfare of the pupils are good and they are offered good support and guidance. The school benefits from good links with parents and the community and very good relationships with other schools and organisations.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good** overall. The headteacher's very good leadership is having a direct impact on the pupils' achievement, because there is a strong focus on developing and improving the quality of education. As a result, the school has a good climate for learning in which all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are able to make progress. The governors and senior staff play a significant part in the school's development.

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

Most parents and pupils are very satisfied with the school. In particular, parents are pleased that their children like school and are made to feel very welcome when they first start. They feel that the school is well led and managed and the teachers expect their children to work hard. The pupils confirm that they enjoy school and feel that they are treated fairly and learn new things in lessons.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The school should:

- improve writing standards across the school so that teachers provide more opportunities for the pupils to write at length in a broader range of subjects and topics;
- ensure that assessment information is used to provide tasks that match the abilities of pupils of all abilities.





## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in subjects

The evidence of the inspection confirms that the pupils' achievement is good overall. Standards in English and science are above average by the end of Year 6, and in mathematics they are well above average. National test results declined in 2003 compared with previous years but this reflects the variation in attainment on entry. The most recent national tests show an improvement on the previous year and standards are improving.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well because they are well taught
- Reading standards are well above average and writing standards, although above average, could be higher and match those seen in reading

#### Commentary

1. The pupils enter Year 3 with skills that are above average in English and mathematics; however, writing standards on entry to the school, although average, are lower than reading standards. Entry assessments show that there is significant variation between year groups so that in some years the pupils start Year 3 with average attainment, as was the case with last year's Year 6 pupils. The pupils settle into school well and are well taught. Their reading skills on entry to the school are usually above or well above average and this helps them to achieve well in other subjects but independent writing skills are much lower than those found in reading or mathematics.
2. The school's results in the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6 were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. The same standards apply when comparing the results with schools in similar circumstances (those with similar free school meal rates). The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. The results in 2003 declined but the school has reversed this in 2004 where the results show a significant improvement on the previous year. Attainment across the school suggests that this improving trend is being sustained.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (27.2)	27.0 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.8 (28.0)	27.2 (26.8)
Science	30.3 (29.1)	28.9 (28.6)

*There were 64 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Inspectors found that pupils' achievement is good but writing standards could be higher, particularly extended and independent forms of writing. Achievement is good because the pupils are well taught. In relation to their attainment on entry to the school the pupils have made good progress in English, mathematics and science but could do better in writing. Not enough is

being done to develop writing, especially writing at length in other subjects such as geography, history, religious education and science.

4. Inspection evidence confirms that the school has reversed a recent trend of decline and standards are rising in Years 3 to 6. The pupils are achieving well. The school places a high priority on the pupils' literacy and numeracy and a very close check is kept on how they are progressing. The assessment information gathered, particularly by the headteacher and senior management team, provides teachers with an accurate picture of how well the pupils are doing. However, in a small number of lessons, the tasks provided for the pupils do not always challenge or extend their skills. On the whole, lessons are well structured and a strong emphasis is placed on providing practical, first-hand experiences which help the pupils to make good progress in acquiring the basic skills, but this is less evident in independent writing compared with other aspects of the work the pupils do. A wide range of strategies is used to develop the pupils' literacy skills as they move through the school and basic reading and writing skills are taught effectively. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length which hinders their progress and confidence when attempting to write independently. Grammar and spelling are taught well and this is reflected in the pupils' accuracy in their spelling tests. The school has rightly identified the need to develop a more systematic approach to the teaching of writing to improve the pupils' confidence and skills when writing at length and independently. The mathematics programme is well organised and taught and this enables the pupils to reach well above average standards. Standards in science are above those expected because the pupils are given a variety of stimulating and challenging investigations and experiments, so that they develop the skills of scientific enquiry well.
5. Among other subjects, standards have risen in ICT and are now above those expected of pupils at the end of Year 6, due largely to improvements to resources, teaching and organisation. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and standards are above what is expected in art and design, history, music and physical education. In art and design and music, standards are above the expectations of pupils of this age because the pupils enjoy a broad curriculum that develops their skills progressively as they move through the school. Physical education is given high priority and this is reflected in the extensive range of extra-curricular sports and activities with notable achievements in football, dance, gymnastics and swimming.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates because of the good support they receive. Planning takes good account of their specific needs and the teaching assistants have a significant impact on the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. A significant number of pupils with special educational needs exceed the progress they are expected to make by the end of Year 6; for example, a significant proportion reached or exceeded the standards expected for their age in last year's national tests. The more able pupils achieve well because the teachers have high expectations of them and they usually receive work that challenges and stimulates them to reach the higher levels of which they are capable. However, in a few lessons, the work provided for these pupils does not challenge them sufficiently and this is an area for the school to improve further. Those identified as gifted or talented, in sport or the arts for example, extend their skills through the many out-of-school activities and often achieve success in local organisations and clubs.

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

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is consistently good. Relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are very good. Overall provision for pupils' personal

development is good. Their social and moral development is very good, their spiritual development is good and their cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is very good and punctuality is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are well behaved and attentive in lessons and at other times
- Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good
- Relationships between staff and pupils make a positive contribution to pupils' learning
- Attendance is well above the national average

### **Commentary**

7. Pupils' good attitudes to work make a positive contribution to their learning. In discussion, virtually all pupils say they enjoy coming to school and are able to identify favourite subjects. The majority of pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Pupils of all abilities are very interested in what they are doing and take an active part in all aspects of lessons. They listen attentively to their teachers' instructions, maintain concentration over time and make a positive contribution to classroom discussions. The pupils are confident, and are willing and able to talk about their work and to explain their ideas. Pupils with special educational needs show good attitudes to learning. In a Year 5 lesson pupils were willing to predict what would happen when the weights of an inflated and a deflated balloon were compared on a simple balance made from a coat hanger.
8. The behaviour of the pupils is good. In the majority of lessons seen behaviour was good and in some it was very good. This has a positive impact on learning because the pupils are keen and try hard in lessons. Most pupils are aware of what is and is not acceptable behaviour, have a good understanding of the school rules, like the school's rewards system and readily accept the principle of sanctions as an appropriate response to instances of unacceptable behaviour. Before and after school, at breaks and lunchtimes, pupils interact well together. Pupils with special educational needs also show good attitudes to work and behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils treat the school's accommodation and equipment with care and respect.
9. Bullying is rare. The school has a good anti-bullying policy that makes clear that bullying will not be tolerated. Parents and pupils have indicated that these procedures are effective. There have been no exclusions of pupils for many years. The governing body has adopted and monitors an effective race relations policy.
10. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Regular assemblies include time for prayer and thoughtful reflection. Through the school's personal, social and health education programme (PSHE), particularly in circle time (sessions where the pupils share ideas with others), they are encouraged to explore their feelings and emotions and their relationships with friends and family. Spiritual links are also found in subjects such as religious education, science, art and design and history.
11. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and become increasingly aware of the need for rules and codes of conduct. They recognise that the school rules are there for the benefit of all, appreciate that they are responsible for their own actions and have a good grasp of the impact of their actions on others. They work well together in pairs and small groups. Relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves are very good. Staff provide very good role

models and by openly valuing pupils' opinions and ideas effectively promote their self-esteem. Pupils are taught to share, help one another and show consideration for others; for example, older children are involved in 'paired reading' with younger pupils and act as "buddies" for pupils new to the school. Pupils' social development is enhanced by a range of educational visits, visitors to the school and the extra-curricular activities provided by the school. The school council gives pupils opportunities to exercise responsibility and participate in decisions that affect the school community; such opportunities enhance pupils' sense of responsibility and citizenship.

12. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, but stronger in their understanding of their own cultural traditions than those of different cultures represented in wider society. Although pupils learn about different religious beliefs and practices in religious education, there are few opportunities to promote pupils' understanding of the multi-cultural nature of the society in which they live. This is an area the school has improved since the last inspection but it could do more to enrich the curriculum and lessons further.
13. The level of attendance is well above the national average. The school monitors registers on a regular basis and contacts parents where attendance is a cause for concern. Most pupils are punctual, and lessons make a prompt start throughout the day.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.0
National data	5.8	National data	0.4

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

## Exclusions

There have been no exclusions.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. The teaching, learning and curriculum are good and there are good arrangements for securing the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils. Links with parents and the local community are good and there are very good links with other schools.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good and there are good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well but the pupils are not being provided with enough opportunities to write at length
- The strong leadership of the headteacher has both supported and developed the teaching

- The pupils work hard and enjoy the large majority of lessons and ICT is used well to support learning
- Systematic and accurate assessments are made of the pupils' progress but in some lessons these are not being used to provide tasks that are matched to the abilities of all the pupils
- Teachers' marking provides helpful pointers for improvement and learning targets for the pupils

### **Commentary**

14. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and this has a significant impact on the pupils' achievement and the progress they make. The teaching was very good in nearly three out of ten lessons seen and, across the school, there are many good features. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and the amount of good teaching has improved with no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection throughout the school. Compared with the school's previous inspection, the teaching has improved mainly because there are more good lessons across the school. This is due largely to the very good leadership of the headteacher who, together with the governors and senior staff, has secured key appointments to the teaching staff that have had a significant impact on the consistency of teaching and the school's teaching and learning policy. This is also reflected in the school's strong commitment to initial teacher training.

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	11 (29%)	24 (63%)	3 (8%)	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.*

15. The school gives the highest priority to the development of the pupils' self-esteem and their progress in basic literacy and numeracy as well as providing a broad and practical curriculum. The teachers have a very clear understanding of how the basic skills should be taught and they have a very consistent approach from class to class. Lessons in literacy and numeracy follow the national guidelines, but are adapted to take account of the pupils' understanding and experience. This is most effective in reading, mathematics and science and the school's current priorities are to improve independent forms of writing as it has recognised that the pupils should make better progress. The teaching of ICT has also improved, due largely to the leadership of the co-ordinators and to significant improvements to resources. The ICT co-ordinators have been instrumental in improving the knowledge and confidence of the teachers and ensuring consistency from class to class.
16. The pupils respond positively to the teachers' high expectations of how they should behave and approach their work. Lessons are well organised so that the pupils are able to concentrate on their learning, secure in the knowledge that their contributions will be valued by adults and other pupils. They are not afraid to make mistakes but, equally, they enjoy succeeding. This was seen to great effect in a Year 4 class, where the pupils took great delight in hearing a very imaginative piece of writing by one of their classmates. The teachers plan interesting and exciting activities that capture the pupils' attention and motivate them to do well. On the rare occasions when pupils misbehave, they are dealt with effectively by the staff. Practical, hands-on experiences motivate and interest the pupils so that learning is made fun. Year 5 pupils in the science lesson, for example, investigated the properties of liquids and solids and in Year 6 a mathematics lesson started with a very interesting puzzle to identify and draw a complex series of shapes having limited information.
17. The teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is good across the school. The early identification and assessment of the pupils' needs means that those with special educational needs are supported well because they benefit from a balance of whole-class teaching, small group work and individual attention to their areas of difficulty. The teaching assistants play an important role in ensuring that these pupils are successful in reaching their targets. The teachers work closely with support staff to plan and assess the needs of all pupils and this ensures that individual help and support is provided.
18. Across the school, there are good procedures to assess the pupils and keep a check on their progress, particularly in English and mathematics, but increasingly in other subjects too. This is reflected in teachers' marking and target setting. Regular tests and assessments are made and the information gathered is used effectively to identify areas of strength or weakness in the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. However, in a small number of lessons the work planned does not extend the pupils further or meet the needs of pupils of differing ability. The school recognises the need to develop this aspect of its teaching further as well as providing regular opportunities for the pupils to write at length and independently in most subjects.

### **The curriculum**

The school offers its pupils a good curriculum. There is very good enrichment through a wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. The accommodation and resources for learning are good.



## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school offers pupils a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors, which makes learning interesting and stimulating for the pupils
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs
- The school makes good use of its well-trained support staff
- Better use could be made of the time within the school day as some lessons are too long and, at times, this affects the concentration and application of the pupils

## **Commentary**

19. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, dance, music and drama. The school also takes part successfully in inter-school competitions. There is also a well-established reputation for providing football to boys and girls of all ages and abilities and this has culminated in the school being awarded the National Football Association Charter Mark. Good use is also made of coaching from professional and local football and rugby clubs. The 'Young Explorers' club is attended by nearly half the pupils in Year 6, increasing their interest and motivation and contributing to the high standards achieved in science. Visits to local places of interest greatly add to pupils' understanding of history and geography, but in religious education there are few opportunities for the pupils to visit places of worship of faiths other than Christianity. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn musical instruments and take part in school performances.
20. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils access the same range of curriculum experiences as other pupils. The improvements in the delivery of practical experiences, such as investigative work in science, have brought benefits to pupils who have special educational needs. These pupils have full access to a very good range of activities that are provided outside the school day.
21. The school has a good number of support staff. They have had a wide range of training and work well with teachers throughout the school in supporting designated pupils as well as groups, and within the class generally. They are involved with teachers in planning work. A notable feature is that they often move through the school with a group of pupils, which greatly enhances their value to those pupils and to the class teachers in supporting them.
22. English and mathematics lessons sometimes extend for over an hour, which is longer than the time recommended in the national strategies and leads to the pace in some lessons slackening and pupils finding it difficult to maintain their concentration.

## **Care, guidance and support**

This is a caring school, which provides a safe and secure environment, where pupils feel happy and can learn and develop. Procedures for pupils' support and guidance are good. The school actively seeks and values pupils' views of the school. Induction arrangements are very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and help to provide a good standard of pastoral care
- Overall, procedures for child protection are good; however, there is a need to ensure staff training is updated

- The school actively seeks pupils' views through the school council

## **Commentary**

23. The school is committed to providing a safe working environment for staff and pupils. The health and safety policy meets statutory requirements; the headteacher is responsible for the application of this policy on a day-to-day basis. Procedures for general risk assessments are in place and inspections are carried out on a regular basis. Risk assessments for educational visits, including residential trips, are well established. First aid provision is good and good records of accidents and injuries are maintained.
24. Overall, arrangements for child protection are good. The headteacher is the designated officer and has received appropriate training. The school follows the local child protection procedures and has its own specific policy. However, there has been insufficient recent training of other staff which means the school is not continually being updated on recent initiatives and policies related to child protection legislation and practice.
25. Pupils are provided with a good level of personal support and guidance that is underpinned by teachers' good knowledge of them and the very good relationships between them. Pupils say that they are confident to approach teachers should they have any problems of either a personal or an academic nature and that they would be provided with appropriate guidance and support. Teachers and support staff maintain good records of pupils' academic and personal development; all pupils have discussions about targets for improvement and how they can achieve these targets. The school provides good care and support for pupils with special educational needs. The provision for pupils' welfare is further enhanced by the involvement of a social skills mentor/councillor who works with a small group of vulnerable pupils to improve their social skills and help them to assimilate into the life of the school.
26. The school actively seeks pupils' views of the school mainly through the school council, circle time, and pupil questionnaires and makes very good use of pupils' contributions. This ensures not only that pupils feel valued and fully part of the school, but also contributes to their understanding of citizenship and the part they play in a community. The school values pupils' views highly and where practicable takes them into consideration when reviewing policies and procedures.
27. The school has very good procedures for the induction of children into the school. Staff work closely with the main infant partner school staff to ensure a smooth transition into the school. This involves the transfer of information relating to pupils' academic and personal development. Parents are given a wide range of information and guidance about these procedures and how they can help to prepare their children for school life. Parents and children have opportunities to visit the school and meet with their teachers prior to admission. These procedures enable children to settle quickly into the school environment.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has developed a good partnership with parents, who have positive views of the school. The school has developed good links with the wider community and very good links with other schools, all of which make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents receive good information from the school, but reports could be clearer in ways in which pupils could improve
- Parents hold positive views of the school
- There are very good links with other schools

## Commentary

28. Overall, the quality of information given to parents is good. The school brochure and the governors' annual report provide a wide range of information about the school and its activities. Regular newsletters and letters about specific events ensure that parents are kept up to date about current school activities. Parents have good opportunities to discuss their children's progress at consultation meetings; attendance at these meetings is very good. Overall, pupils' annual reports are good; they provide a clear indication of standards and achievement, but they do not always identify areas for further development, or indicate ways to improve. The school actively seeks the views of parents through the use of questionnaires that are analysed so that their views may be incorporated into new or revised school policies and procedures. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are offered every opportunity to be involved in reviews and target setting for their children.
29. Overall, parents have positive views of the school. In particular, they are pleased with the quality of teaching, the expectation that their children will work hard and the way in which the school is helping their children to become more responsible and mature. They are also pleased with the progress their children make, the way in which the school is led and managed and the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Evidence from the inspection confirms these positive views of the school.
30. Parents' involvement in their children's learning is good. A small but significant number of parents help in the school, listening to pupils read, assisting in classrooms and accompanying pupils on educational visits. The school provides good support for parents to help and support them in assisting their children's learning at home, including, in conjunction with a local college, parent classes in ICT, literacy and numeracy. There is an active Parents' Association that organises social and fund-raising events; significant amounts of money have been raised to finance additional learning resources including new books for the library and funding workshops in mathematics, photography, Romans and Victorians.
31. The school's links with the community are good and these make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. A very good range of visitors to the school, including artists, musicians, dancers and theatre groups, effectively enhances pupils' learning across the curriculum, but especially in games, drama, art and design and music. Links with local sports clubs provide professional coaching in rugby, cricket and football. The school makes good use of the local community, including visits to a local art gallery and library which support pupils' learning in art and design and design and technology effectively. Local field trips are also used well to enhance pupils' learning in history, science and geography and links with the local parish church support pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Links with local businesses are very good and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in citizenship, particularly the Young Enterprise scheme that involves volunteers from local businesses. This ties in well with the school's own mini-enterprise programme.
32. The school's links with other schools are very good. There are strong links with the local secondary school to which the majority of pupils transfer. The school has developed good transition arrangements including effective liaison between staff, the development of bridging

units in mathematics and ICT, and the transfer of information relating to both pupils' academic and social skills. Pupils benefit from a full day induction at the secondary school, at which time they meet their form tutor and experience a range of lessons. There are good arrangements for the transfer of pupils with special educational needs and other vulnerable pupils, including close co-operation between special educational needs co-ordinators and the provision of the 'Building Bridges' project. This project provides pupils with additional pastoral support to prepare them for transfer that is continued after transfer; feedback from the secondary school indicates that this project has been successful in helping these pupils to settle quickly into their new environment.

33. There are good links with other schools and colleges that provide student work and teacher training placements. These good links have enabled Year 6 pupils to be involved in the 'Crossover Project' whereby they were tasked to build a model-powered buggy that would travel over a bridge constructed by pupils from another school. To complete this project pupils had to communicate by e-mail and use the Internet with their partners, and were successful in winning the category showing the best co-operation. The school's links with higher education institutions are good and are effective in enriching the school curriculum.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are good overall. Leadership by the headteacher is very good, and by the key senior staff it is good. The governance of the school is good. The effectiveness of management is good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher, who sets high expectations, is keen that pupils succeed and is visionary about the school
- The governors, who have good understanding of their roles and responsibilities, have established good procedures to monitor standards
- Strategic planning is very good and based on very effective self-evaluation and teamwork
- There is a good system of monitoring that leads to identification of priorities
- There are very good arrangements for reviewing staff performance and good support for newly appointed staff

### **Commentary**

34. The headteacher is passionate for the success of this school. He leads very well and by example to fulfil the school philosophy to “Create a friendly, welcoming and stimulating environment in which children feel happy and secure and eager to learn”. The headteacher has a high profile around the school and a clear presence in assemblies and pupils respect his authority. This is embedded in the promotion of very good relationships that are reflected in the very good role models provided by school leaders to other staff and pupils.
35. Through the headteacher’s very good leadership and good support from key staff, the school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. All the weaknesses identified at that time have been successfully addressed with standards in 2004 returning to above average and well above average levels in national tests. The school is popular with parents and is oversubscribed.
36. The governors, who together possess a number of relevant skills to their role, are all very involved in and contribute to the working of the school. Their expertise includes knowledge of the community, the pastoral dimension, finance and management. They are regular visitors, some occasions being formalised into meetings with the leaders of the subjects to which they are linked. Governors are well informed about standards and about how these compare to similar schools, because the school monitors very good assessment and tracking information. The headteacher’s reports to governors include helpful information on standards, developments in teaching, curriculum developments particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and progress with school priorities. These are clearly referenced to school documentation. The governors ensure all relevant statutory requirements are met.
37. Strategic planning is very good and based on very effective self-evaluation and teamwork. There is good involvement by the governors and senior staff in this process and it leads to clear identification of school targets. The school improvement plan sets out realistic priorities based on secure audits by staff with leadership responsibilities. The audits include trends in pupils’ performance, lesson observation evidence and regular scrutiny of pupils’ work. Good practice is identified and disseminated across the school. The school-based annual curriculum conference at the commencement of the autumn term provides a good opportunity for staff to share their aspirations for the coming year.

38. The monitoring of subjects is rigorous and has improved since the previous inspection. Subject leaders scrutinise planning, make regular checks on the quality of pupils' work and record achievement through detailed assessments. Subject leaders discuss progress with the link governor, some having reported to the full governing body. They keep and update monitoring logs regularly. The outcomes are noted, discussed in staff meetings and followed up through planned actions, sometimes as subject development plans. The evidence noted is often precise; for example, the music subject leader noted the participation levels of pupils learning to play an instrument and the percentage of pupils in Year 6 who had played in the orchestra at the leavers' service.
39. Most of the monitoring of teaching is currently undertaken by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Although this is often organised within the very effective performance management arrangements, there are, from time to time, thematic surveys, including some by local authority officers. Although teachers are encouraged to carry out peer monitoring in subjects such as mathematics, the monitoring of teaching, by subject leaders, is sometimes under-emphasised. Teachers work in teams to compensate for this, especially when planning and evaluating lessons together.
40. There are very good arrangements for reviewing staff performance and good support for newly appointed staff. Performance management has successfully been extended to all staff who welcome the support and leadership provided by the deputy headteacher in co-ordinating their professional development. Newly qualified teachers are regularly observed, supported by a named mentor and encouraged to access the expertise of subject leaders. For example, teachers have sought advice and been provided with good guidance in how to organise science investigations when this aspect of this subject was being promoted.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	469,731	Balance from previous year	38,460
Total expenditure	480,223	Balance carried forward to the next	27,968
Expenditure per pupil	2,134		

41. Financial practices are good. At the time of the most recent report by auditors, the school was judged as operating efficiently on all financial measures. The purchase of advice and support for budget monitoring has impacted positively in terms of accurate information on trends and patterns in spending. Good progress has been made in implementing best value principles with respect to some aspects of premises maintenance and service level agreements.
42. The school's carry-forward figure only just exceeds the nationally recommended proportion of the school's income. Unallocated funds have yet to be reconciled after new ICT resources were purchased. The school makes efficient use of its budget and provides good value for money given the achievement of the pupils across the school and the level of expenditure per pupil.

## PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

### SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

#### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well, although standards of writing do not match those achieved in reading, which are well above average
- The quality of teaching and learning is good
- The subject is led and managed well
- Better use should be made of opportunities to develop writing in other subjects as well as in English
- Teachers do not always set tasks which extend more able pupils sufficiently

#### Commentary

43. Pupils enter the school with writing skills which are broadly average for their age, and reading and speaking skills which are above average. By the time pupils leave the school, standards, as reflected in national tests and pupils' work, are above average. Test results in English were above average in 2004, both nationally and when compared with similar schools. Pupils' achievement in writing has not matched that in reading, particularly at the higher Level 5, but the school has recognised this deficit and put in place strategies to raise standards in writing, for instance by giving additional focused support to those pupils who find it difficult to write at length. In addition to this the staff have targeted those pupils who are currently on the borderline between achieving the expected Level 4 and Level 5. However, these strategies have not yet had their full impact, and are not sufficiently reinforced in other subjects where pupils have the opportunity to write independently and at length in a range of subjects.
44. The school has identified speaking and listening as an area for development and this has had a positive impact on English standards. During the inspection the standards observed were above average. Pupils in Year 4 were given very good opportunities to express their response to the poem *Family Photo Album* and used a good range of vocabulary, from 'powerful' to 'boring'. Teachers provide a very good model of spoken English. Drama is used well to develop speaking skills, and this is enhanced by the school's involvement in the Arts Mark and Creativity Project. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 improvised a short scene from the story *Paper Bag Prince*, after a warm-up activity in which each pupil had to complete the sentence "What I like about where I live is...".
45. Standards of reading are well above average. Pupils read a very good range of fiction books, from authors as varied as Charles Dickens and Jacqueline Wilson. Most pupils read fluently and with good expression, and the lower attaining pupils have good strategies to help them when they do not recognise a word. They know how to use contents and index pages to locate information in a non-fiction book.
46. Pupils' writing during the inspection showed above average standards. Pupils in Year 6 write in a wide range of forms. For instance, during the inspection they were planning and drafting a newspaper report. Pupils understood the conventions but there were some weaknesses in the use

of punctuation, such as apostrophes. In other lessons pupils wrote some effective character sketches, using models from published work. Previous work included writing a scene from *Macbeth* in modern idiom. Their handwriting is usually good. Younger pupils, in Year 4, wrote very well about 'Holding a baby' using their own experience, backed up by the use of a thesaurus and an outline into which they could fit their writing. Pupils in Year 5 wrote instructions for a recipe following their reading of *George's Marvellous Medicine*.

47. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, as teachers use resources well to engage pupils' interest. This is evident during thought-provoking class discussions and group work where pupils share ideas with others. Teachers generally plan lessons very well, but sometimes sessions are too long and they are not able to maintain the pace to keep pupils involved in the middle part of the lesson. Sometimes also the more able pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to develop their writing skills further, as they are given the same task as others. For instance, in the lesson in which they had to write a newspaper report, all pupils had to go through two stages of planning, which meant that there was less time available to develop the actual writing of the report.
48. English is led well by the subject leader. She has monitored provision effectively, identified weaknesses and with colleagues devised appropriate strategies to remedy them. The school has also participated in the Solihull Reading Challenge, which has helped to promote the interest in reading, as well as other events such as the Solihull Children's Book Award. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching, satisfactory then, is now good, and deficiencies in the stock of books have been resolved. Good opportunities are now given for pupils to draft and redraft their work, although limited use is made of ICT in this process.

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

49. Speaking and listening skills develop well through role-play and drama, as when pupils improvise events in history or recall how characters would have felt in stories. Reading skills are developed very well throughout the school and this helps the pupils to undertake research in subjects such as history and science or to find information using reference books or maps in geography. In some areas of the curriculum good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills. For instance, pupils in Year 5 were given very clear direction on how to write a report in science, with good support for those with special educational needs. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils have written a long account of the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen, but in other areas of history, geography and religious education, for instance, pupils do not have the opportunity to write more extensively and develop their writing skills at the same time as consolidating their understanding of the subject.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The pupils achieve well above average standards and make good progress throughout the school
- Teachers provide good lessons with some very good features that include problem solving and investigative mathematics
- Very good assessments are made of how well the pupils are doing but in some lessons assessment information is not being used to challenge pupils of all abilities



## Commentary

50. The pupils start Year 3 with mathematical knowledge and skills that are above average. They make good progress and achieve well and, by the end of Year 6, standards are well above average. This is a similar picture to that seen in the Year 6 national tests. Test results in 2004 were well above average and this continues a steady trend of rising standards. The school's results in 2004 also compared very favourably with those schools working in similar circumstances. Standards in mathematics have been maintained since the last inspection. Over recent years the school's results have been improving in line with the national trend of improvement. The current Year 6 indicates that standards are also well above what is expected of pupils of this age.
51. The improvements seen reflect the high priority placed on raising and sustaining standards in mathematics. The subject is overseen effectively by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic subject co-ordinator together with a good senior management team. Together with the headteacher, they keep a very close check on the progress made by the pupils and on the impact that the teaching is having on learning. A good range of strategies is adopted to keep track of the pupils' progress and highlight any shortcomings in their understanding. Day-to-day assessments, including the marking of pupils' work, are thorough, evaluate how the pupils are doing and identify what they need to do to improve. Each half term, the teachers assess and review lesson planning and regular discussions are held with the pupils so that they, too, can contribute to the process. Test results, including the national assessments, are analysed very thoroughly to identify patterns of strength or weakness. Overall, the school maintains very good use information gleaned from these assessments to ensure that the work planned meets the needs of different levels of ability. However, in some lessons the tasks could be better matched to the abilities of both more able and less capable pupils in particular. The staff, including support staff who provide support for pupils with special educational needs, tackle any areas for development very energetically. For example, a weakness identified in the pupils' problem-solving skills was addressed by targeting support at specific pupils and providing more lessons that involve problem solving and investigative mathematics. This has proved very successful, for example, when Year 6 pupils investigated the relationship between the radius, diameter and circumference of a circle or when Year 3 pupils calculated different factors and multiples of numbers to identify common patterns in multiplication.
52. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff aim to make lessons exciting, interesting and highly participative. In this respect they are largely successful, ensuring that all pupils are actively engaged from the very start in mental and oral mathematics. Lesson openings are usually brisk, often relate to work from previous lessons, and set the tone for the rest of the lesson. The best lessons provide challenging tasks that are closely matched to the abilities of the pupils and, during the inspection, these accounted for approximately two in three lessons. This was evident for example when Year 5 pupils used standard metric units and pupils of all abilities were able to extend their knowledge of how to calibrate and measure using a ruler as well as applying estimations which were checked against some very accurate measurements. Good use is made of computers as they capture the pupils' attention and enhance the quality of the teacher's explanations and instructions. For example, in a good lesson in Year 6, the pupils enjoyed entering information onto a spreadsheet and then working out how to present the information as a chart for investigation later. In approximately one in three lessons, tasks are not always well matched to extend the more able or to reinforce key skills for those pupils of average and below average ability. The bulk of most lessons involve different tasks and worksheets when the pupils work independently. However, in some lessons, the key skills being

taught or reinforced are not very different between groups; consequently, the work is not always well matched to the abilities and needs of the pupils.

53. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because of this good provision. Lessons are very well planned, so that those who need help get it. Pupils of all abilities develop in confidence as they move through the school, showing an increasing ability to calculate mentally. The staff expect pupils of all abilities to do well as when Year 4 pupils investigated multiplication and division using a range of techniques that helped them to quickly identify efficient ways of calculating the relationship between the two operations. The challenge and pace of this lesson motivated pupils of all abilities and this was enhanced by specific work for each ability group that closely matched their learning needs.
54. Across the school the pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics. They work very hard, persevere when they have difficulty and work well together in pairs and groups. Every opportunity is given to encourage the pupils to explain how they have arrived at an answer. As well as supporting their mathematical development, these discussions make a significant contribution to the pupils' speaking and listening and the promotion of their self-esteem. The teaching assistants, when deployed to help and teach in lessons, play a prominent role in ensuring that pupils of all abilities are able to contribute to the discussions and understand what they have to do.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

55. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use mathematics in other subjects. Daily registration sessions are used to develop mental calculation. In science, the pupils measure the height and growth rate of plants and compare their own measurements with those of other pupils. Music lessons provide the opportunity for the pupils to count beats and develop mathematical language by comparing the length of notes. In design and technology, the pupils investigate bridge structures and basic mechanics when designing model vehicles and in Years 5 and 6 they are able to sort and collect data to enhance their designs. Pupils of all age groups are able to create tallies, charts and simple matrices to produce graphs and tables about their favourite colours, songs or television programmes. Patterns are investigated in art and design, for example by exploring repeating patterns in buildings. There are numerous opportunities to develop mathematics in ICT.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards
- Good teaching and careful assessment ensure that pupils learn about important scientific concepts
- The science curriculum is lively with regular opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations
- The subject leader has been influential in improving the teaching and learning

### **Commentary**

56. Test results in 2004 were much better than in 2003 with pupils attaining well above average standards thus reversing a recent decline in science attainment. These pupils had achieved very well compared to their prior attainment at the beginning of Year 3. Inspection evidence shows

standards in all aspects of science of the current Year 6 to be above average. This judgement is based on the overall spread of attainment found in the inspection and the tracking of the results of these pupils when assessed in Year 5. Given the broadly average attainment of last year's Year 6 pupils on entry to Year 3 this represents good achievement over time.

57. The inspection has shown the success of the recent return to above average standards and good achievement can be traced to good confident teaching based on high expectations, and thorough assessment of what pupils can do and need to improve. The school provides an interesting, lively science curriculum with regular opportunities for pupils to carry out experiments. Good use is made of resources in well-managed lessons. The subject leader provides clear guidance based on advice from a consultant and accurate analysis of assessment data.
58. By Year 6, most pupils have made good gains in learning that covers scientific knowledge, concepts and processes. Most pupils understand the concept of a food chain and how animals adapt to the habitat in which they live. Pupils know what is meant by an endangered species. Most have a good understanding of the importance of setting up tests that are fair. They appropriately use scientific terms such as prediction, method and conclusion when recording the outcomes of experiments.
59. Pupils achieved very well in a Year 6 lesson when they tried to find out how to dissolve jelly quickly. The pupils concentrated on accurate reading of the temperature of the water at the start of the investigation. Their interest in the topic led some to challenge the author of their science book when their results did not produce the expected outcomes. Discussion was lively when the results of some groups were compared with those of others.
60. Scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observation evidence show most of the teaching is good. This is an improvement on the satisfactory teaching found at the time of the previous inspection. Most teachers organise science experiments well and provide clear guidance to pupils drawing on explicit lesson objectives. This leads to good learning based on practical investigations. The subject leader and senior management team have raised the profile of the value of investigations. This has been a significant factor in the improvement in standards and achievement.
61. The good teaching is based on regular and careful assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills acquired through topics such as healthy food and lifestyle, electric circuits, and gases, solids and liquids. The information from these carefully documented assessments is then used to focus planning on the next stage of learning. In a very good lesson on gases for pupils in Year 5 the teacher challenged the pupils by posing the question, "Does air have weight?" Lively discussion followed as pupils debated the options before reaching agreement on a group prediction. The investigation provided opportunities for more able pupils to think more deeply as pupils were encouraged to draw on the scientific evidence available to them. Pupils who have special educational needs benefited from the sensitive approach of a learning support assistant who repeated the investigation with them to help consolidate their understanding.
62. The lesson showed the benefit of very good planning of tasks matched to different levels of prior attainment. Despite evidence of setting work at different levels of understanding, in the lessons observed this approach was not a regular feature of work in pupils' books where most pupils, including those of higher and lower attainment, often completed work of similar levels of understanding.

63. Subject leadership of science is good. The subject leader has analysed test papers to find out those aspects of science that are proving to be problematic for pupils. This has led to practical guidance to staff on improving their teaching approaches to presenting scientific explanations and organising investigations. The subject leader has undertaken several important monitoring and evaluating tasks including the scrutiny of work each half term to check for consistency of delivery, particularly between parallel classes.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above those expected by the end of Year 6 and achievement is good
- ICT is playing an increasingly important role in teaching and learning across the school
- The subject is well managed and resources are used well to ensure that the pupils make good progress

### **Commentary**

64. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection developing and improving the ICT curriculum. From the work that the pupils do in the ICT room and at other times in a range of subjects, it is clear that standards are above those expected throughout the school. The pupils achieve well in most lessons and printed work displayed around the school indicates that the pupils are making good use of their ICT skills to help their learning in other subjects. The work includes, for example, Year 3 and 4 pupils designing book covers for their stories using desktop publishing and modelling skills. The pupils demonstrate how well they have acquired skills such as word processing and graphics and older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are adept at combining these to edit and improve the presentation of, say, reports presented as newspaper headline stories. Year 6 pupils are developing a good range of control and modelling skills. This was observed when the pupils investigated routines and procedures to program instructions that would make a lighthouse light and sound its horn using a challenging simulation program.
65. The teaching is good with skilful support and teaching provided by teaching assistants who are often deployed to support in the ICT room. This an effective and efficient use of the school's resources as teachers and support staff fully utilise computers, the projector and the recently purchased digital photography and camcorder facilities to support the pupils' learning across the full range of the ICT curriculum. The teaching is clearly having an impact on pupils' learning so that, for example, the pupils can observe demonstrations of advanced word-processing skills or the use of hyperlinks when using the Internet to research information. In this way the pupils learn ICT skills and knowledge beyond their years.
66. The good leadership and management of the subject have helped the school to improve the subject further. Teachers, support staff and governors have all played an important part in improving resources and developing the school's ICT room and resources. The subject co-ordinator is skilled at deploying resources and helping the staff to develop their skills and this has improved the professional competence of teachers and other support staff. The governors often invite subject co-ordinators to present to them the development of their subject and this provides them with information about how well the pupils and staff are doing after investing in new resources.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. The pupils achieve well because there is a cross-curricular approach to ICT and the teaching is particularly skilled at combining the skills the pupils acquire with those in other subjects. This was best demonstrated when Year 4 pupils used a simulation program to investigate switches and electric circuits to support their science work. Other ICT tasks across the school include problem solving when attempting to program a screen robot around a maze. Drawing and constructing shapes extend the pupils' mathematical understanding of interior and exterior angles. Year 6 pupils were observed researching information in their history lesson using the Internet and this further developed their knowledge and understanding of the period being studied as well as their basic ICT skills.

## HUMANITIES

68. There was no opportunity to observe **geography** lessons during the inspection, and no judgement can be made on provision or standards in the subject. Some pupils' work was available for analysis from Years 3 and 5. In Year 3, the pupils have identified the continents and some features of Australia. They have also considered how the world in which they live has changed through a 'View from the Window'. In Year 5, they identify the different countries that make up Great Britain, and some of its towns, cities and islands. They can also distinguish between physical and man-made features of the landscape.

## History

During the inspection history was being taught only in Years 4 and 6. Provision in history is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve standards above those expected for their age
- Teaching and learning are good and this helps the pupils to develop good research skills
- Opportunities for pupils to write extensively are limited

## Commentary

69. The pupils achieve well in history. During the inspection they showed a good understanding of features of Ancient Egyptian life, using evidence from wall paintings well. Their written work also provided good evidence of individual research; during the inspection pupils were observed using the Internet to find out more about daily life in Ancient Egypt. They also had a good recall of previous work on the Romans, Tudors and Victorians. However, apart from an account of the finding of Tutankhamen's tomb, there was little opportunity for them to write extensively.
70. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are planned carefully to build up pupils' understanding of how to use evidence to find out about the past. In the lessons in Year 4 good use was made of visual aids to reinforce what pupils had learned. In Year 6, the teachers used the resources very well and formulated questions clearly to extend pupils' understanding of the topic of Ancient Egypt. Teaching is enriched by a good range of visits to places of interest, such as Baddesley Clinton for the Tudors, and workshops on the Romans and Victorians.
71. The subject is led and managed well. Although the subject leader does not have opportunities to monitor teaching in the subject directly, she does analyse pupils' work and present her findings

to the governing body. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils now make good progress in their learning, and their use of research skills has improved.

## **Religious education**

Provision for religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good, although they have limited opportunities to record their work
- Teaching and learning are good and the subject is led and managed well
- Pupils' attainment is not measured against the levels set by the agreed syllabus
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to visit places of worship or listen to visitors from different faiths

### **Commentary**

72. Pupils achieve the standards expected by the locally agreed syllabus. They learn about the major world faiths, including Christianity. Earlier work in Year 6 showed a good understanding of the motivation of figures such as Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi in the fight for equality and human rights. In Year 5, pupils understand that different faiths have their own versions of the creation story, and they have begun to consider the views of some faiths on the difficult topic of death. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 show a good understanding of stories from the Old and New Testaments, as well as the significance to a member of the Jewish faith of some of its practices. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to write about what they have learnt at length, which would not only consolidate their learning but develop and enhance their literacy skills and their understanding of religious vocabulary.
73. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Two lessons were observed during the inspection, one in Year 3 and one in Year 6. Both lessons were planned well to develop pupils' understanding. In Year 3, following on from the Biblical creation story, the teacher used the words of the hymn *All things bright and beautiful* skilfully to introduce the concept of caring for the environment, as pupils thought about what was 'bright and beautiful' or 'wise and wonderful' in their own lives. In Year 6, the teacher encouraged pupils to share their knowledge of their own faith as they explored their understanding of the concept of angels. Pupils evaluate at the end of each unit of work what they have learned, and this is also checked by teachers, but they do not use the attainment levels provided in the locally agreed syllabus, which would enable them to assess more accurately the progress pupils have made in their knowledge and understanding.
74. The subject leader manages the subject well, although her opportunities to monitor teaching in other classes have been limited. She has helped to formulate a scheme of work which other teachers can follow and checks on pupils' progress by looking at the evaluation of their work. Since the last inspection improvement has been good. Teaching and resources have both improved. However, although pupils visit local churches and Coventry Cathedral, they do not have regular opportunities to visit places of worship of other faiths or to learn from visitors from those faiths.

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

75. No lessons were observed during this inspection in **art and design** and only one Year 4 **music** lesson was seen. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement in these subjects. Scrutiny of displays and pupils' sketchbooks shows that standards of work are above average in art and design. Music standards are above those expected and the quality and range of singing and instrumental music are good.
76. In **art and design**, the pupils find out how different art materials are used to produce different effects. They practise the pencil shading techniques by experimenting with different grades of pencil. During a geography project on Australia pupils explored patterns through observing Aboriginal art. Pupils learn to reflect still life in their drawings and paintings of plants, shoes and sporting equipment. They learn about the artistic styles of well-known artists such as Van Gogh, Seurat and Mondrian. In one topic, pupils by the end of Year 6 work in the style of Picasso and learn to express emotions such as anger and fear through work that is linked well to personal and social themes.
77. Subject leadership of art and design is good. Pupils' work has been monitored regularly with evaluative judgements reached on the quality of planning and displays. The subject leader has provided clear guidance on the importance of maintaining good standards and how this can be ensured through careful marking and assessment. The school is preparing evidence to meet the criteria for assessment against the National Arts Mark.
78. No **design and technology** lessons were observed during this inspection. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgments of standards, teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
79. One corridor display provided evidence that the key elements of the design and technology process are covered securely, with medium-term planning confirming a good range of topics provided for each year group. The planning overview shows that, during the four years of this junior school, pupils work with a good range of tools and materials to design and make products including picture frames, torches, money containers and controllable vehicles.
80. Pupils in Year 6 represented the local education authority in the final of a design competition held at Ironbridge during the summer term of 2004. The pupils successfully met the challenge to construct an electric vehicle that would travel up a ramp and over a bridge, carrying a 50 gram weight. The pupils developed the partnership with those of another school, who were constructing the bridge, through regular e-mail communication. Photographic evidence shows the enthusiastic pupils enjoying the activity that skilfully combined their understanding of science, English, mathematics and ICT through the design and technology process.
81. In the **music** lesson seen, a hymn practice and a whole-school assembly, standards of singing were above those expected for pupils' ages. Pupils are taught music each week; they also practise singing regularly together as a whole school. A visiting specialist, through a project developed in conjunction with the local authority's music service, currently teaches lessons in Year 4. This benefits the pupils and impacts positively on the quality of music being produced. Pupils use musical terms confidently, such as metre and round. They learn how to project their voices through good posture, breathing exercises and regular singing practice. They have learned to sing a good repertoire of music of differing styles and mood and they confidently control the volume to match the mood of the composition. Their singing is melodic and appropriate to the setting of whole-school assembly.
82. Pupils respond well when given the opportunity to comment on how they want their performance to develop. In the Year 4 lesson observed, pupils' response was excellent as they

learned to change the dynamics of the sounds they produced. By the end of this lesson the pupils were singing a round very effectively.

83. Planning documents show that across a year pupils have good opportunities to listen to music, to compose music and to perform both in school events and in public settings. Pupils who join the choir sing in the massed school summer term concert held at Birmingham Symphony Hall. Pupils also perform locally at Christmas events and the annual school concert where productions such as *Scrooge* are mounted. The good range of musical experiences is being used as assessment evidence for Arts Mark status.
84. The leadership of music is good. This has impacted well on the maintenance of good standards since the previous inspection. The enthusiastic subject leader has worked hard to raise the profile of music and has a clear plan for further enhancement of this subject. The leader keeps accurate records of the take-up by pupils in extra-curricular music such as pupil participation levels in the orchestra and instrumental tuition. The subject leader has evaluated well the impact of the decision to introduce specialist teaching into Year 4 and has skilfully assessed the return for this investment on improving the quality of music teaching at the school.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching is good and focuses on improving the pupils' skills
- The pupils enjoy physical education, make good progress and achieve well
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities and the school makes very good use of outside specialists to enhance the subject in other areas such as dance and gymnastics

### **Commentary**

85. Although it was not possible to see lessons in the full range of activities offered by the school, the evidence of lessons in gymnastics and dance and a brief observation of a games session in Year 5 indicate that standards are above what is expected of pupils by the end of Year 6. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. In addition, the school reports that over 90 per cent of the pupils are able to swim the expected 25 metres before they leave the school.
86. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well organised; resources are plentiful, so that there is maximum participation at all times. The subject is well led and managed by the physical education subject leader who, along with other staff, also takes responsibility for sporting activities outside school hours. The school has an established reputation for sporting achievement, particularly in football for both boys and girls. This was endorsed recently and in previous years with a National Football Association Charter Mark.
87. From Year 3, the pupils learn to listen carefully to instructions, follow rules and practise to improve their skills. In a good dance lesson with pupils in Year 3, effective use was made of key learning objectives such as rhythm, pace and modes of movement to focus the pupils' learning. Throughout the lesson, the teacher referred back to these objectives and encouraged the pupils to improve what they were doing. In a very good Year 4 gymnastics lesson the pupils performed a series of balances with good control and made rapid progress in linking them together in interesting ways to form a sequence of movements and balances. In their games



lesson, pupils in Year 5 pass, move and intercept the ball with a growing awareness of their own position and that of team mates and opponents when playing netball.

88. In all of the lessons, there is a clear emphasis on improvement. The pupils work hard, listen carefully to the advice they are given, behave very well and clearly enjoy their lessons. Many of them take advantage of the very wide range of activities provided outside of lessons, many of which are led by teachers, specialists and volunteers. This has a very positive impact on the pupils' physical development and on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During the inspection, a specialist dance teacher worked with Year 4 pupils as part of a Borough-wide creativity project. The lessons seen were of high quality and the pupils' performance improved rapidly as a result. Ongoing assessments of the pupils' capabilities are made because the co-ordinator has identified ways of assessing the pupils' progress to track their performance and to monitor standards across the school.

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

89. No direct teaching was seen in this area. The evidence from discussions with staff and pupils and from scrutinising the planning indicates that a good programme is provided, but it is not possible to make firm judgements on the quality of the provision and learning. The school has developed a good policy and places a strong emphasis on the pupils' personal and social development. Good behaviour is reinforced during class discussion times, where pupils are given the opportunity to explore ways of resolving issues and the school is particularly successful in supporting very good relationships. Aspects of personal and social development are taught regularly in each class and strongly supported in assemblies. There are clear procedures for teaching sex education and drug awareness.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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