

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **JOSEPH TURNER PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Tipton

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103970

Headteacher: Miss P Edmunds

Lead inspector: Mr F Carruthers

Dates of inspection: 7-9 March 2005

Inspection number: 267119

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	350
School address:	Powis Avenue Tipton West Midlands
Postcode:	DY4 0RN
Telephone number:	0121 557 8733
Fax number:	0121 557 6774
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs P Hipkins
Date of previous inspection:	8 February 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average sized primary school, with above average levels of social deprivation in the local community. There are slightly more boys than girls on roll. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Two pupils have English as an additional language. The attainment of children on entry to the Nursery is well below average. There is an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs (36 per cent) and three pupils have statements of special educational need. These pupils have a range of need, mostly for moderate learning difficulties, speech and language difficulties, and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupil mobility<sup>1</sup> is above the average of primary schools nationally. The school has developed links with other local schools and is involved in several national and local strategies and initiatives to raise standards and promote good attitudes to learning. The school achieved the Basic Skills Award in 2002.

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<sup>1</sup> Pupil mobility refers to the number of pupils who join the school at times other than at the start of the Reception year or leave at times other than the end of Year 6.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21285	F Carruthers	Lead inspector	Geography History Music Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language
11077	J Harrison	Lay inspector	
29504	S Herring	Team inspector	English Art and design Special educational needs
17767	S Power	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education
32831	T Walker	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a reasonably effective school.** Pupils in general achieve satisfactorily though more able pupils could be doing better. Standards in writing, mathematics and science are not high enough. The leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory, as is the quality of education that the school provides. The cost of educating a pupil at the school is below the average of primary schools nationally and the school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- More able pupils are not doing as well as they could in writing, mathematics and science;
- Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage<sup>2</sup>;
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, because of good provision and effective use of classroom assistants;
- Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education;
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work but attendance rates are below the national average;
- Pupils are well cared for at the school and links with parents, other schools and the community are good;
- Checking the quality of teaching and learning in lessons is not rigorous enough.

The school was last inspected in February 1999. Since then improvement has been satisfactory. Improvements arising from the key issues in subject planning and assessment procedures in science, the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage and ICT have been good and minor issues have been resolved satisfactorily. The school has introduced several initiatives to promote good attitudes and better performance of pupils, for instance a *Nurture group*. However, standards in English and mathematics have not risen in line with the national upward trend and these remain the key aspect for improvement.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	E	E	D
Mathematics	E	E	E	D
Science	D	D	E	E

*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.*

**Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.** Some pupils achieve well, for example, those with special educational needs and children in the Foundation Stage. Others, particularly more able pupils, could be doing better, and boys are not doing as well as girls in National Curriculum tests in Year 6. In the Foundation Stage, the children, whose attainment is well below average on starting in the Nursery, achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development and physical development. They achieve well in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Achievement in creative development is satisfactory. By the end of the Reception Year, the children's level of attainment is

<sup>2</sup> The Foundation Stage in this school consists of the Nursery classes and the two Reception classes.

below average overall. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. In the current Year 2 standards are below average in reading, mathematics and science, well below average in writing and average in ICT. Overall, this is an improvement on standards in 2004, which were adversely affected by exceptional circumstances in the spring term, which led to the school closing for several weeks for health and safety reasons. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory and standards in the current Year 6 are better than last year's, which are illustrated in the table above. More pupils are achieving well in the current Years 5 and 6 but more must be done to promote better achievement by more able pupils and by boys in general. The school has introduced initiatives to raise standards but most are too recent to be able to measure their impact. Pupils achieve well in ICT and religious education and standards are average.

**Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and their social and moral development is good.** Pupils have good attitudes to school and their behaviour is satisfactory. Levels of attendance are below average but improving significantly in recent terms.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education, including teaching and learning, is satisfactory.** Strengths of the teaching are the teamwork among all staff and teachers' planning of lessons. The teaching of ICT and religious education is good. However, expectations of what pupils can achieve in writing, mathematics and science are not always high enough. The curriculum is satisfactory and has a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All aspects of care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. Links with parents, other schools and the community are effective and contribute well to the pupils' learning.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership, management and governance of the school are satisfactory.** The headteacher promotes a strong team spirit and is highly committed to the care and welfare of pupils. This is evident in the number of initiatives introduced to bolster pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The role of governors in the strategic planning of the school has improved since the last inspection. However, there is not a sharp enough focus on driving standards up and checking the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Parents are pleased with the work of the school and few concerns were expressed in response to the inspectors' questionnaire and at the meeting with inspectors. Most pupils report that they enjoy school but there is a minority of older boys who are less positive. The school is trying hard to turn their opinions around.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise expectations of what more able pupils can achieve and make better use of assessment to raise standards in writing, mathematics and science;
- Improve the monitoring of teaching and learning to spread good practice and raise the quality of education for pupils;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that acts of collective worship comply with requirements.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage and satisfactorily in Years 1 to 6. Girls generally do better than boys. The more able pupils do not achieve well enough in writing, mathematics and science. Standards in the Reception classes are below average overall and in Years 2 and 6 they are below average in reading, mathematics and science, well below average in writing. Standards are average in information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education and pupils achieve well.

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

- Pupils with the potential to attain high standards are not doing as well as they could in writing, mathematics and science.
- Standards in ICT are much improved since the time of the last inspection, pupils achieve well and their skills are used well in other subjects.
- In the Foundation Stage, children achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development and physical development, and well in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to the targets in their individual education plans.

#### **Commentary**

1. In general, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Some pupils, such as those with special educational needs and the children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. This is because of the good provision in these areas, for instance, the good level of support in class and in small groups for pupils with special educational needs, and the good quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes. Pupils with the potential to attain high standards, however, are not achieving as well as they could. This is reflected in the overall standards the school reached in recent years in National Curriculum tests and also in standards in the current Years 2 and 6.
2. The trend in results from 2002 to 2004 in the Year 6 tests was downward and was below the national trend, which was upward. The 2004 results were well below average in English, mathematics and science but were heavily influenced by exceptional circumstances between February and April last year when the school had to close for reasons of health and safety. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 were at home for two weeks and then divided among 11 different schools and centres to be taught in whatever space was available. Children in the Foundation Stage were at home during the whole period. These circumstances inevitably had an adverse impact on the continuity of teaching for all pupils.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.2 (24.7)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	24.2 (25.1)	27.0 (26.8)

science	25.6 (27.5)	28.6 (28.6)
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*There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the current Year 6 are an improvement on those of last year. The school's targets, which are likely to be achieved, indicate that standards overall are below the average of all schools and average compared to schools with similar proportions of pupils claiming free school meals. Compared to schools whose pupils performed similarly in Year 2, standards are below average. Nevertheless, the achievement of most pupils is satisfactory. There are a number of reasons to account for these findings. There are too few pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in English, particularly writing, and in mathematics and science. A key aspect for improvement is to raise the teachers' expectations of what these pupils can achieve. Boys do not achieve as well as they could and the school has put in place several measures to motivate them, which are beginning to have a positive effect. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average. Many do not reach the nationally expected Level 4 but, nevertheless, make good progress in meeting the targets in their individual education plans. Another reason is the mobility of pupils. In the current Year 6, the pupil turnover has been 20 per cent and this is about twice the national average. Assessment information shows that mobility is a factor in lowering overall standards attained.
  
4. A good range of strategies is in place to promote standards of speaking, reading and writing. Many of these initiatives contribute to the good achievement of lower attaining pupils. However, some initiatives are too recent to be able to judge their impact. Overall, standards of speaking, listening and reading are below average and standards of writing are well below average. The staff are correctly emphasising opportunities to write at length in order to develop pupils' skills. In both mathematics and science, higher attainers are not achieving well enough. In mathematics, solving problems has been identified as a weakness and staff have started to address it. In science, pupils are good at investigating but weak at interpreting results and drawing conclusions. There are two pupils learning English as an additional language, one in Year 4 and the other in Year 6, who have recently joined the school. Both are making very good progress and taking a full part in lessons. They receive some specialist support in addition to their work in class.
  
5. In the Foundation Stage, the children, whose attainment is well below average on starting in the Nursery, achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development and physical development. They achieve well in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Achievement in creative development is satisfactory. By the end of the Reception Year, the children's level of attainment is below average overall, especially in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. Standards in Year 2 are below average. The 2004 results in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average and were influenced adversely by the disruption to teaching described above. Prior to that, standards were showing improvement from 2000 – 2003. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Standards in the current Year 2 are below average in speaking, listening, reading, mathematics and science, and well below average in writing. There is a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 and there are several key initiatives to promote the achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2, such as a *Nurture group*.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.8 (15.3)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	12.1 (13.7)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	14.1 (15.4)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 55 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

6. Standards in ICT are average in Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is good. The school has worked very successfully to improve provision in the subject since the time of the last inspection and as a result, pupils are confident using computers and make use of their skills well in other subjects. Attainment in religious education is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils are achieving well. Other subjects were only sampled during the inspection and few judgements on standards were made. Pupils' skills of designing are underdeveloped in design and technology and pupils' attainment in dance in physical education is above average.

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

Pupils have good attitudes towards school and their work, and their behaviour is satisfactory. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Punctuality is satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The behaviour policy is effective and pupils have good attitudes to learning as a result.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory but improving significantly. The school could do more to discourage holidays taken in term time.
- Pupils make good gains in moral and social development at the school.
- Opportunities to promote spiritual awareness are often overlooked.

### **Commentary**

7. Pupils are pleased with their school. They say that their teachers are helpful and some of their lessons are fun. Pupils have good attitudes towards learning and show respect for their teachers. This sets a good climate for learning in all classes. Behaviour in most lessons is good. However, a few pupils, often boys, can present some challenging behaviour. Such incidents are dealt with well and rarely disturb the learning of others. There are good strategies in place to modify patterns of behaviour, increase co-operation and raise self-esteem. Pupils' good work and attitudes are suitably recognised and rewarded. Pupils are keen to gain house points, certificates and awards. Clear behaviour strategies and good initiatives such as the *Nurture group* and anger management sessions have helped to improve the behaviour and attitudes of pupils with special educational needs. A minority of parents are not supportive of the school's uniform policy, with a few pupils electing to wear denim or street clothing. Exclusions are carefully considered and only used as a last resort. In the last school year, four boys were excluded for short periods.

### **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	286	5	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	3	0	0

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

8. Attendance levels last year were very low compared to national norms, but are now improving significantly. The term's attendance up to the week of the inspection was 95 per cent. This improvement has been secured by good initiatives and rewards, for example, telephone calls home on the first day of any absence and a *walking bus* so pupils can walk safely to school on time. There is a breakfast club for the older pupils; this is appreciated by the children and encourages some to arrive earlier. Pupils are keen to ensure their class has the best attendance figures and so gain extra playtime. There is good monitoring of individual attendance, with particularly effective attention given to those whose attendance is under 80 per cent, but whole-school analysis of year group trends or patterns by groups and gender is underdeveloped. Such analysis would help to focus intervention strategies. Last year, a high amount of absence was due to holidays taken during term time, equivalent to six pupils not attending for a whole year. The school could do more to discourage this.

***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (91.7%)***

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.7	School data	1.6
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

9. Pupils agree that there are relatively few 'short term fallings out of friendships'. The school takes any incidents seriously and resolves them appropriately. Pupils are pleased with the new playtime activities they have and feel that these and the *playground buddies* have helped to make playtimes more harmonious.
10. Spiritual development is satisfactory and pupils develop a good sense of self-awareness and show respect for other people's beliefs and religions. However, other aspects of spirituality are not sufficiently planned for and promoted in lessons. Daily assemblies promote good moral values, but opportunities to invoke wonder or spirituality are missed. Cultural development, including their preparation for living in a diverse society, is satisfactory. Pupils visit theatres, museums, work with visiting artists and enjoy a variety of experiences in themed weeks.
11. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Pupils feel that their efforts are recognised and appreciated and so they respond well. The programme of personal, social and health education is effective. Teachers have been trained in programmes called *You can do it* to encourage pupils to become more confident in their own abilities. There is a *Nurture group*

for the younger children who find it hard to adjust to the classroom environment and a learning mentor to help some older pupils prepare for the expectations of secondary education. Pupils are keen to take part in the good range of school clubs and help to improve their school through the School Council.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching, learning and the curriculum are satisfactory. Provision for the care and welfare of pupils and links with parents, other schools and the community are good.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. Satisfactory arrangements are in place for assessing pupils' progress.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in the Foundation Stage helps younger children to make a successful start to their education.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes not high enough.
- Assessment is not used as well as it might be to provide for individual needs in lessons, particularly for pupils capable of higher attainment.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with class teachers to support pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers are skilled in managing the challenging behaviour of a small minority of pupils.
- Good use is made of ICT to enhance learning.

### Commentary

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	4 (7%)	31 (56%)	19 (35%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

12. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good features throughout the school, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Years 2, 5 and 6. However, not enough of the lessons are very good, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science where only one lesson was of very good quality. A key aspect for improvement is to raise the staff's expectations of what pupils, especially the more able, can achieve.
13. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. They are very effective in developing the children's personal, social and emotional development and skills in music. Good planning and teamwork are the key ingredients and all staff working well together. There are few shortcomings but sometimes teaching is too directed by the adults, for instance in activities developing the children's skills of painting, making and creating.

14. In Year 1, teaching is satisfactory and in Year 2, it is good and lessons make more suitable demands on pupils in relation to their capabilities so that they learn well. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall, with particular strengths in Years 5 and 6, where lessons are generally better paced so that learning is faster and pupils can achieve well. In the better lessons, teachers' planning caters well for pupils of all abilities, lesson objectives are closely related to subject requirements and there is enough intellectual challenge for pupils. However, in some lessons, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and undemanding tasks fail to challenge and extend pupils' learning, particularly for those capable of higher attainment. The pace of learning is too slow, with too long allowed for tasks to be completed. Consequently, a significant minority of pupils do not make as much progress as they should do.
15. Relationships between teachers and pupils are generally good. Throughout the school, teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in pupil management and in dealing with occasional behaviour problems. The generally good behaviour of most pupils enables them to work well together when required to do so and make good progress in their learning. Good collaborative work was a strong feature in successful science, ICT and dance lessons during the inspection. The use of interactive whiteboards is a good feature in many lessons and ICT is generally used well to engage pupils' interest and enhance learning.
16. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and so they achieve well. Work is well adapted to suit their individual needs. The skilled learning assistants, of whom there are good numbers, are well briefed and deployed in helping pupils in class and in small groups.
17. Recent improvements to assessment procedures enable the school to have a good overview of standards in key subjects and of how well pupils are doing as they move through the school but there is room for better analysis of data in order to identify areas for improvement. Regular assessment of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science provides useful information which is used effectively to set targets for pupils. However, this initiative is still in the early stages of implementation and it is too early to evaluate its effectiveness in raising standards. Although the school collects a great deal of information about pupils' progress, this information is not used as effectively as it might be to provide for pupils' needs in lessons, particularly for pupils capable of higher attainment. Teachers' marking of work in most subjects is generally of good quality and gives pupils useful information about how well they are doing. Pupils' self evaluation is a good feature of the assessment arrangements and is beginning to have an impact on standards, particularly in ICT, by helping pupils to recognise what they do well and what they need to do next.

## **The curriculum**

The overall quality of the curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The school has good resources for learning and the standard of accommodation is good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good range of enrichment activities outside the formal curriculum enhances pupils' learning.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs across the curriculum.
- The curriculum is designed to help all pupils although it does not address adequately the needs of more able pupils.
- Collective acts of worship do not meet statutory requirements.

- Good resources support the comprehensive coverage of all subjects.

## Commentary

18. The level of improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection is satisfactory. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good as is the standard of ICT. Schemes of work for all subjects are in place and have sufficient detail. Design and technology, however, lacks direction without a subject leader.
19. The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the curriculum for these is thoroughly planned. Long-term plans operate for all other subjects and indicate satisfactory coverage and learning opportunities. Detailed medium term and weekly plans show that teachers work together as a team. Examination of the timetables indicates that a large amount of time is devoted to literacy lessons in some classes. This, although generally of benefit to pupils' achievement, is not always productive, particularly when extended writing lessons stretch on into the afternoon sessions.
20. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. A wide range of strategies and a good level of adult support to promote progress in literacy, numeracy and behaviour are having a positive effect. The school has good links with outside agencies so that pupils with special educational needs have the benefit of specialist support where needed. The leadership of the school has taken steps to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. However, more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently well.
21. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of activities, visits out of school and visitors to the school. During the inspection, for example, there was opportunity to observe the Tipton Area Band, which is based at the school and has gifted musicians from local schools including Joseph Turner Primary School. There were meetings of the *Buddies club* at which playground buddies meet with the learning mentor as a social event, and a games skills club, which is organised by a local premiership football club and thoroughly enjoyed by those taking part. Other activities include a breakfast club, football, netball, athletics, cycle training, road safety and magazine club. Educational visits are planned for all classes and include theatres, museums and farms. There is also a residential visit in alternate years for the older children, which focuses mainly on practical activities, environmental studies and team building. The school holds special themed weeks such as one in science and technology, which is planned to have a visiting theatre company and a visit to the science laboratory at the local high school.
22. The school provides well for religious education but does not meet the statutory requirements for collective worship. Assemblies, either whole-school or class-based, are held daily but do not constitute acts of worship as they do not have a time for prayer or reflection which acknowledges a superior being or deity. As a result, there is little contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
23. Classroom assistants are effectively deployed and contribute well to pupils' learning. Resources for learning are good, accessible and stored attractively. The school has invested heavily in ICT and equipment is well used. The school budget responds to priorities in the school improvement plan and in addition each subject has an annual amount for maintenance and development. The accommodation is safe and well maintained. A number of improvements have been carried out and further work is to include an *Internet café* and an additional teaching space. Efforts are being made to ensure that all parts of the building are

accessible to all regardless of physical disability. The problems that caused the school to close in 2004 have now been rectified and work to remove asbestos from the boiler house is due to be carried out when the pupils are on holiday at Easter 2005.

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

Pupils are well cared for and they receive good support and guidance. The school has satisfactory procedures for taking pupils' views into account.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Personal guidance is good.
- There is a very good range of strategies to support vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils know that their views matter and this makes them feel valued.

### **Commentary**

24. Nearly all parents say that their children are happy, well cared for and the school promotes good values. Most pupils say that their teachers are helpful if they have problems with their work and that they are well looked after. This reassurance has a positive impact on their learning.
25. There are good induction procedures so that parents and the children can get to know the teachers quickly. Child protection procedures are good and there are very effective strategies to target and meet pupils' individual needs. Pupils with challenging behaviour are helped by sessions on anger management. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and supportive. The school is considerate of pupils' needs, for example helping to provide a breakfast club and some indoor play activities for pupils at lunch times. A learning mentor helps to reassure and prepare pupils for secondary school.
26. Academic guidance is satisfactory and developing. Pupils are starting to be involved in some assessment of the quality of their own work and in setting targets to improve, which is good practice. However, pupils are generally not sufficiently aware as to what level of the National Curriculum they are working at. Target setting has not been in place for long enough to have an impact on raising standards.
27. The school's behaviour policy is effective, so that pupils get along together harmoniously and everyone is included in activities. Teaching assistants give effective support to pupils. The school is well maintained by an efficient caretaker and cleaning staff. Health and safety procedures are effective with appropriate risk assessments in place. Supervision in school and the playground is good.
28. Pupil consultation has been started but is not yet fully embedded in school decision-making. The school council was set up this year and is already having a positive impact. Pupils' suggestions have improved the quality of playtimes. The active and willing involvement of pupils in the running of their school makes a good contribution to their personal development.

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

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

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are effectively involved in their children's learning.
- Written communications are satisfactory; but annual reports on pupils' progress could be clearer about the pupils' attainment.
- Pupils benefit from the good links with local high schools.

## Commentary

29. Parents are pleased with the school. They say that their children like school, are expected to work hard and are well looked after. There was little significant dissent from these positive views, but there were more mixed views about the behaviour of a minority of children and the effectiveness of consultation.
30. There is a good educational partnership with parents. Parents demonstrated their backing of the school by their co-operation and support when the school had a temporary period of closure last year. Several parents regularly help in the classroom. The school provides good opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's education and has hosted several family learning courses. Parents can select games and activities with a literacy or numeracy focus to play with their children at home as part of the *Parents in Partnership* scheme. In a *Science and Technology Day* parents gave impressive support in designing and making futuristic vehicles with their children. Parents said that they appreciate the useful information on topics sent home and like the recently established meetings with the teachers, when they attend with their child and agree new targets for pupils to achieve. There are regular consultations between parents of pupils with special educational needs, class teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinators so that parents are fully aware of their children's progress.
31. Communications are generally of good quality. The written information sent to parents on their child's progress is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. However, the reports would be improved with a clearer picture as to how the child is attaining in the subject and in comparison with the standards expected nationally. The school makes satisfactory effort to consult parents' views, although formal consultation is a relatively recent development. In response to parents' views, the school has revised the length of lunch times and introduced an additional consultation meeting with teachers.
32. The school makes good use of the community to make learning relevant and exciting, for example with special themed weeks. The ceramic tiles, which pupils have made at a local museum, are displayed with pride in the entrance hall. Some pupils take part in choral events at the Birmingham Indoor Arena. West Bromwich Albion Football Club has provided football coaching and runs a breakfast club once a week with activities for the younger children. Pupils also benefit from good sporting and other links with local schools, for example the behaviour improvement project, which is helping to raise behaviour and attendance standards. Pupils can take part in the extended day activities and clubs provided at a local high school, enjoying such activities as cooking. Pupils in Year 5 have a *taster day* at two local secondary schools and then in Year 6 they have two induction days at their chosen school. In addition the Year 7 tutors come to talk to the pupils and staff but do not teach any subjects to pupils. Overall, the school's good partnership working with the wider community enhances its provision for pupils.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance of the school are all satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good collaboration with other schools.
- The many initiatives introduced by the school are leading to improvements but they are not sharply enough focused on driving standards forward at a fast rate.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom is not rigorous enough.
- Good co-ordination of some aspects is helping to improve provision.
- Finances are well managed.

### **Commentary**

33. The headteacher works tirelessly to provide a secure and welcoming environment for the pupils. There is a strong sense of all staff working well together in the best interests of the pupils. This helped staff to deal effectively with the difficult circumstances of having to vacate the premises for an extended period in the spring of last year. A positive aspect of leadership is the way in which the headteacher has introduced many strategies to improve standards, though many initiatives are too recent for rigorous evaluation of their impact to have taken place. The school has a sense of purpose, particularly in including those pupils with special educational needs or who are disaffected with school, through good support in small teaching groups and in the introduction of a *Nurture group* and behaviour management strategies. However, aspirations are not sufficiently high in providing for potentially higher attaining pupils so that fewer pupils than could be expected achieve the higher levels in English, mathematics and science. In a promising, recent initiative, the headteacher has led the school's involvement in the *Triad* programme, whereby three schools are sharing expertise and training to improve the quality of their provision. The school is coming to the end of its three-year strategic plan for improvement, which included appropriate targets for action. Good progress has been made in some areas, for example the Foundation Stage and ICT, though standards achieved are still not high enough in literacy, Numeracy and science. The strategic plan beyond the current year is still under consideration.
34. The headteacher receives sound support from other key staff. Where subjects and aspects are managed well, provision and achievement have improved. The strong leadership of the subject leader for ICT and the good role model she has provided for other teachers has led to good improvement in this subject. Similarly the Foundation Stage and provision for pupils with special educational needs are managed well, leading to good achievement by young children and pupils with special educational needs. A positive aspect of the management of the school is the way in which new staff, including newly qualified teachers, are well supported by the headteacher and by other staff, reflecting the good mutual support in the school. The subject leaders have been involved in monitoring planning and pupils' books in their subjects in order to ascertain progress. The headteacher and mathematics co-ordinator have looked at aspects of the teaching, such as subtraction. However, a weakness in management is the lack of a rigorous programme to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons in order to build on strengths and identify areas of weakness. There is not enough good teaching in some age groups and this has not been checked.
35. Governance of the school is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met. The governing body is supportive of the school and has a sound awareness of its performance. Governors are well involved in the life of the school on an individual level and provided good

moral and practical support during the severe disruptions of last year. The headteacher and key staff keep them aware of what is happening in school. They are fully informed of the contents of the strategic plan for improvement, discuss its contents with the headteacher and contribute suggestions for consideration. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The senior management and governors of the school have the potential to improve provision and raise standards.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,065,325	Balance from previous year	91,763
Total expenditure	1,046,853	Balance carried forward to the next	110,235
Expenditure per pupil	2,670		

36. Financial planning is good. For example, the allocation of resources to ICT has led to a good improvement in standards. The table above indicates a high balance carried forward into the current financial year. However, this disguises the fact that payments, for instance in relation to sickness insurance, were drawn from the budget only after the close of the financial year. The carry-forward was close to the average of five per cent, found in most schools. The cost of educating a pupil at the school is below the average of primary schools nationally.

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

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

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children start in the Nursery class in September or January soon after they are three years old. The class of 33 children takes place on five mornings per week and has a teacher and two qualified support staff. The attainment of the majority on entry is well below average in all areas of learning. Procedures to help the children to settle into classroom routines are good. Most children spend three terms in the Nursery before transferring to the Reception classes, and some spend longer. There are 50 children in the two Reception classes, taught by two teachers and two support staff. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good and a particular strength is the teamwork among all adults. Close attention is paid to the children's attainment and progress, and assessments are regularly made by all staff in the various areas of learning. Parents are kept well informed through meetings after school in which teachers share with them the targets they have set for the children. This continuous assessment helps the staff to identify those children who have particular difficulty in their personal development, speech and language. Provision for these children is good.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. All aspects of the key issue for action identified then have been addressed: planning and assessment are now good and links between the two age groups are very effective. A Foundation Stage unit was established in September 2004, enabling children in both age groups to have very good access to creative activities, role-play, painting, water and sand play as well as a well-resourced and safe outdoor area. Resources for learning are good and have benefited from grants in recent years. Staff are continuing to refine timetables for access to shared areas so as to make best use of available time and resources. There was an occasion during the inspection when the Nursery area was too crowded and teaching and learning were less effective as a result. This is an aspect for review.

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

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

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

- Relationships between staff and children are very good.
- Children make very good progress, sharing things and playing together.
- Children pay attention well and Reception-aged children especially follow the teachers' instructions very well.

#### **Commentary**

37. Many children find it difficult to do things for themselves or to share and co-operate with one another when they start in the Nursery class. All adults work hard to help the children's personal development and through consistency of approach and providing good role models, they help the children to settle in and behave well. As a result, there are few confrontations among children and when there are, the staff quickly and sensitively defuse situations.
38. Children in the Reception classes continue to grow in confidence and they concentrate well. This is particularly evident when they are gathered together listening to the adult taking the lesson. Even the lowest attainers show that they can concentrate on activities for long

periods. The children begin to understand the consequences of what they do and show respect for others. In lessons in the hall, the children showed excellent self-control and followed instructions very well. All these features are the product of very good teaching by staff and the fact that the children enjoy the variety of activities available. As a result, almost all children achieve very well and attainment is above average by the end of the Reception year.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Many children in the Nursery have indistinct speech and poor language skills but they make good progress as a result of the emphasis the staff give to speaking and listening.
- Staff encourage the children to have a go at writing and praise them for their efforts.
- There are too few occasions when adults intervene to promote high quality imaginative play with the children.

### **Commentary**

39. Most children start in the Nursery class with very poor language and communication skills. They make most progress in listening at first and this is because the children are quickly absorbed in what the adults are showing them. They gain confidence in responding to questions but usually their answers are very brief, often one word only. The speech of some children is carefully monitored by staff in order to track the progress of any who may require speech therapy. There are good opportunities for children to dress up and take part in role-play. In the teacher's planning, one adult has the role of interacting with children while they are busy at activities in all the areas of the classroom. However, there were few examples of adults interacting with children in the role-play areas to develop story lines and imaginative play. There are good opportunities for children to share books and listen to stories, whether told by an adult or by listening on headphones. The children make marks using paint and crayons and use fingers to shape letters in a sand tray.
40. These good opportunities continue in the Reception classes. The children have short sessions when they are taught more formally about the sounds that letters make. Teaching is good and the children learn the routine of talking to a partner and how to record themselves, using a tape-recorder. They are encouraged to have a go at writing and examples of their work in books show they make good progress from making marks and squiggles to trying to write letter shapes and identify letters in words they want to write. The children's efforts are carefully presented in books which the teachers annotate conscientiously. Children achieve well but, although a sizeable minority will achieve the national goals for learning, the attainment overall is likely to be below average by the end of the Reception year.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children in the Nursery class learn a lot through number rhymes and games.

- Good whole-group teaching in the Reception classes leads to good progress.
- Occasionally, group activities in the Reception classes are not as effective as they might be when children are not reminded about what they are to do.

### Commentary

41. Children's attainment on starting in the Nursery class is well below average but they make rapid progress counting to ten, recognising numerals and knowing their value. The staff make good use of interesting resources, including Big Books, games, table top activities and sand trays, to promote and consolidate learning. The class teacher takes many opportunities to sing rhymes and action songs with the children in order to help them to learn how to count on or back, add one more or take one away. She used the topic of *Toys* and, in the week of the inspection, puppets to develop their ability to group objects by their characteristics.
42. Teaching continues to be good in the Reception classes and teamwork is particularly effective. Teaching is organised so that while one teacher takes responsibility for language and literacy for a week or sometimes longer, the other teacher takes mathematical development. Teachers alternate the roles. By grouping the children according to how well they are doing, the teacher pitches the work at a good level of challenge, gets a good impression of how all the Reception-aged children are doing and is able to follow through particular weaknesses or strengths. During the group activities in one lesson, however, the children lost the focus of what they were doing when they were knocking down skittles, and time was wasted when they were left unsupervised for too long. Children's achievement in mathematical development is good, some children achieve the national goals for learning but overall, attainment by the end of the Reception year is likely to be below the level expected.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Topics are planned well to include the other areas of learning and outdoor provision.
- Children have good opportunities to use ICT resources but when working independently require more adult supervision to keep them on task.

### Commentary

43. Many children start the Nursery class with very limited understanding and experiences for their age. The teaching is planned well so that they learn more about the world around them through ongoing topics and specific topics, such as the one during the inspection on *Toys*. Role-play and construction areas are often linked to the topics. The outdoor area is resourced to support learning through constructing, dressing up and role-play as well as through observing natural features of the environment. Children make good progress so that by the end of the Reception year, most can build and assemble blocks and construction equipment. Though a good proportion are on target to reach the national goals expected in this area of learning, the understanding of most children about time, place and other cultures is below average.
44. The children are very interested in new technology. In both year groups, they choose to use listening centres and laptop computers as part of their daily activities. Their ability to use the

mouse is appropriate for their age, though it was noticeable that few children were able to follow the verbal instructions and prompts to complete simple tasks, for example identifying numbers, letters, shapes and colours in the computer games. They tended to flit from one game to the next on the menu and their attention soon wandered. Without adult support they were not able to progress in their learning as well as they might.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good opportunities for physical development, indoor and outdoors, promote the children's skills very well.
- Children in the Reception classes learn to control their movements very well and respond to the teacher's instructions exceptionally well.

### **Commentary**

45. Every day the children have access to a range of large-wheeled toys and other equipment in the well-maintained area outside. The children in the Nursery enjoy pushing and pedalling large wheeled toys on the hard area or climbing up and down, crawling and running along the piece of adventurous equipment on the grassed area. They learn to understand the importance of safety but at the time of the inspection, younger children were still prone to doing things too quickly or too close to another child. Adults were watchful to avoid children having accidents. The children make good progress in all aspects of their development.
46. Reception-aged children benefit from access to the outdoor area on a daily basis and, like the Nursery children, can also use soft play equipment in the hall if the weather is poor. They display above average levels of body control and movement. In an indoor lesson, the support assistant made a very good contribution to the efforts of one child with poor co-ordination. The quality of teaching was good and would have benefited from appropriately chosen pieces of music to accompany the children's movements. The children achieve very well and are on target to exceed the national goals for learning in this area of development. The children also handle tools well to construct and make things.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Provision for music in the Reception classes is very good.
- There are plenty of opportunities for the children to explore different ways of making, drawing and painting but sometimes these activities are directed too much by the adults.

### **Commentary**

47. This year the Reception-aged children are benefiting from the weekly visits of a specialist teacher of music. The quality of teaching is very good and the children's achievement matches it. In addition, the class teachers benefit by being present during the lessons, learning techniques and skills from the specialist, and this promotes their own professional development. This is very effective use of financial resources. Children's attainment in this national goal for learning is above average.
  
48. Children in both age groups have good opportunities to develop their creative skills through well-resourced painting and making, role-play and dressing up areas. In using paint and collage materials, however, the children are not given enough chance to cut and fashion things for themselves, and templates are used too much. Opportunities are missed, therefore, for the children to try things out independently of the adults' ideas. On the other hand, in the painting area during the inspection, the Nursery-aged children worked independently but without any real stimulus to direct their efforts. As a result, only the oldest children produced anything more than daubs and splashes. Overall, the children achieve satisfactorily by the end of the Reception year but most are still working towards the national goals for creative development and could be achieving better standards.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Managers have not rigorously monitored the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.
- Pupils with the potential to attain high standards are not sufficiently challenged and so fewer than would be expected achieve the higher levels, particularly in writing.
- The school is making good efforts to increase the opportunities for writing in other subjects.
- Some lessons are too long and this reduces their effectiveness.

#### Commentary

49. Pupils attain standards that are below average overall in Years 2 and 6 and are well below average in writing. In particular, fewer pupils than would be expected achieve the higher levels. This is a less favourable picture than at the last inspection but shows an improvement from last year, when pupils' schooling was severely disrupted and standards were well below average overall. Scrutiny of the work of pupils now in Year 5 shows that standards in writing are closer to the expected level. This bodes well for assessment results next year and indicates an improving trend.
50. Achievement is satisfactory overall throughout the school but is less marked in Year 1 and Year 4 where teaching is less effective. The school has a good range of intervention strategies to support pupils with special educational needs and so these pupils achieve well. There is insufficient challenge for potentially higher attaining pupils and so they do not achieve as well as they could. Although pupils have clear targets for improving their skills, older pupils are not made aware of how they can improve their work to move to the next level in the National Curriculum to focus their attention. Boys do not achieve as well as girls overall. The school has put in place a number of initiatives to rectify this, including good behaviour management strategies, more appropriate books for older boys and a *Nurture group* for younger pupils. They appear to be working well in capturing the interest of the small number of boys involved but they are too recent to have affected achievement.
51. The school has highlighted speaking and listening skills, which are below average, as an area for improvement and has recently introduced specific learning materials in some classes to trial their effectiveness. However, more could be done in lessons in English and other subjects to require pupils to explain their thinking and ideas in order to improve their speaking skills.
52. Although standards in reading are below average, they are improving. There is a good emphasis on teaching the sounds that letters make, in class lessons and in additional small groups, and the school involves parents closely in reading with their children to help them improve. The school has made good use of additional funding and its own resources to enhance the quality and range of reading books in order to attract pupils' attention and this is a good improvement since the last inspection.

53. Sampling of pupils' books shows a steady improvement in writing skills, which is due in part to the whole-school emphasis on encouraging pupils to use a variety of writing styles in English and other subjects. However, there is no clear policy on handwriting, with many older pupils varying between using pen and pencil in a printed or cursive style, and this adversely affects the quality of pupils' work.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching is satisfactory in Year 1 and good in Year 2, where well-structured and well-paced lessons sustain pupils' attention and so the pupils learn well. In the lessons observed in Year 1 some activities were too difficult for the average pupils who were overwhelmed by the amount of printed text presented to them and this restricted their learning. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 3 to 6. In one unsatisfactory lesson observed, the laboured pace failed to engage a significant number of pupils who did not achieve as well as they could. Part of the problem was the fact that the literacy lesson merged into a lesson on extending the pupils' writing and, in effect, the English lesson stretched over the whole afternoon. Consequently pupils could not sustain their concentration. In contrast, in a good lesson in Year 3 on adjectives, the active involvement of pupils in comparing suitable describing words for a boy and a wolf together with very good use of the interactive whiteboard helped all pupils to achieve well. The phrasing of the learning objectives in terms of 'I can..' raised pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
55. In most lessons learning assistants provide good support for lower attaining pupils and so they achieve well. However, not enough demand is made of potentially higher attaining pupils to work speedily and complete tasks in a given time, so they do not always achieve as well as they can. There were no examples of very good lessons that would bring about more speedy improvements to teaching and learning.
56. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' progress though these are not used sufficiently well to plan the next stage of learning, particularly to promote the writing skills of more able pupils. A strong aspect is the number of initiatives taking place to remedy identified weaknesses, for example programmes to accelerate the learning of small groups, the collaboration with other schools to improve assessment and the drive to include opportunities for writing in other subjects. It is too soon to judge their effect overall, but observations and sampling of books are encouraging. An area of weakness is the lack of rigorous classroom monitoring of teaching and learning in order to raise standards. For example, the school has not picked up weaknesses, such as lessons that are too long and in which pupils lose interest and concentration.

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

57. There are good and improving opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects, in line with the whole-school focus. In a good example of this, pupils in a history lesson in Year 2 wrote a diary report about the Great Fire of London, with good support from the teacher. Pupils write up scientific experiments and research information from books and the Internet in geography and religious education. Generally, the pupils use skills of language and literacy satisfactorily in subjects.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average in Years 2 and 6 but pupils make satisfactory progress.
- Good resources and effective use of ICT promote good coverage in mathematics.
- Effective deployment of classroom support ensures that pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Assessment is not responding to the needs of all pupils, particularly potential high achievers.
- Effective behaviour management strategies and the positive attitudes of the majority of pupils contribute significantly to their learning.

## Commentary

58. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are below average. However, this represents an improving picture from the 2004 results, which were adversely affected by the exceptional circumstances that disrupted the school significantly. Findings from the inspection indicate that standards are improving with the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected levels in Years 2 and 6 rising in 2005. Achievement by the pupils is satisfactory, as they enter the school with low levels of attainment.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is variable but satisfactory overall. There were no unsatisfactory lessons, most were satisfactory or good and one was very good. Both teachers and pupils make good use of ICT. In Year 2, for example, pupils can manipulate the interactive whiteboard successfully and in Year 4 they are able to load their discs and work on laptop computers. In a Year 5 class the teacher was able to demonstrate how to measure angles with a 'virtual' protractor, which helped pupils' understanding greatly. There is a good range of mathematics resources for learning. Analysis of pupils' work demonstrates that tasks are clearly tailored for pupils of differing abilities. This is also evident in most of the lessons observed, though there was not always sufficient challenge for the more able pupils. Where there is challenge, the pupils respond, as was demonstrated in an analysis of the Year 6 books when pupils of above average ability showed their understanding of higher level attainment targets such as correct use of coordinates in all four quadrants on a graph and reflection across both axes.
60. Pupils with below average ability and, in particular, pupils with special educational needs are well catered for by good quality help from classroom assistants. The setting of classes for the older pupils according to their prior standards is also beneficial as it allows teachers to focus on a narrower band of attainment but teachers' expectations of what more able pupils can achieve are not high enough. As a result of this arrangement and the good support they receive from classroom assistants, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Positive attitudes to the subject by the majority of pupils assist their learning and the effective behaviour management systems in place reduce potential disruption to a minimum. As a consequence, time is managed efficiently, contributing to better learning.
61. The school is aware of the need to raise standards and a number of initiatives have been introduced, including individual target setting and additional *booster* sessions designed to raise the attainment of pupils who are working at attainment just below average levels. Problem solving is identified as an area in which the pupils are unsuccessful, through analysis of the results of statutory and non-statutory tests. The subject leader has therefore taken steps to correct this by ensuring that pupils' basic skills of addition and, particularly, subtraction are

taught consistently across the school in a format that the children can readily understand. This is now embedded in the teaching and appears to be working well.

62. Assessment, however, does not respond to the needs of all pupils. Marking is accurate and often has constructive comments but there is little evidence to show that these are followed up. The individual targets displayed in the front of pupils' books do not have an indication of whether they have been achieved or what the pupils need to do in order to improve. There is a lot of assessment information which tracks pupils' progress but it is not yet in a format which easily shows the overall picture. Above all, the variable teaching leads to inconsistent learning and this is a key aspect to be addressed. Monitoring is not rigorous enough and there are too few classroom observations to assist in ensuring that pupils of all ability levels are given the opportunities to do as well as they possibly can. Key aspects for improvement are to provide extra help for older pupils who are close to achieving above the expected level in Year 6, and to ensure consistently high standards in teaching and expectations for pupils' achievement.
63. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There are significant barriers to learning that the school has had to overcome, including low attendance, high pupil mobility and low aspirations. Some of the pupils have low self-esteem but appear to be increasing in confidence particularly in their use of mathematical vocabulary. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement in provision and standards since the previous inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

64. Pupils use mathematical skills satisfactorily in other subjects. In a science lesson, for example, pupils in Year 2 carry out data collection and represent their findings in the form of a pictogram. Accurate measuring skills are employed in design and technology. The teaching of mathematics makes a good contribution to ICT, helps to develop literacy skills, such as the spelling of mathematical terms and promotes the development of social skills through working as a whole class, in groups or in pairs.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below the national average in Years 2 and 6. The proportion of pupils in Year 6 reaching the higher Level 5 is well below that of similar schools.
- Teaching in Years 2 and 6 is good but the monitoring of teaching is insufficiently rigorous.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop investigative skills.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.

### **Commentary**

65. Current standards are below the national average in Years 2 and 6. This is slightly better than the results of the 2004 national tests for pupils in Year 6 which were well below the national average and were affected by disruption caused by problems with the school building, the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and high pupil mobility. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 is well below that of similar schools and remains a major weakness. Pupils' achievement is variable throughout the school but is

satisfactory overall. During the inspection, pupils' achievement in some lessons was good, notably in Years 2 and 6. Achievement in these age groups is also better over time, which is due to sufficiently high levels of challenge and higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils with special educational needs in Years 5 and 6 benefit from the teaching arrangements whereby pupils are taught in groups according to their prior attainment and generally achieve well in relation to their capabilities.

66. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good teaching was observed in Years 2 and 6 but there are weaknesses in some other age groups that prevent pupils from learning as well as they could do. In the good lessons, teachers had clearly focused learning objectives for their lessons and challenged pupils' thinking in order to move learning on at a rapid rate. An example of this was seen in Year 2, when pupils learned very effectively in a challenging, exploratory context, how to create a circuit in order to light a bulb. In the less effective lessons, expectations for what pupils could do were not high enough and the scientific focus of the lessons was not sharp enough to enable pupils to make sufficient progress in their learning. Many lessons are practical investigations that provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of scientific enquiry. As a result, pupils make satisfactory progress in learning about how to make a test fair. However, although they are confident in carrying out an investigation and collecting data, they are less good at interpreting the information they obtain and drawing reliable conclusions in order to answer the question they are investigating. Although provision for pupils with special educational needs is invariably good, provision for pupils capable of higher attainment is not as good as it could be and lessons do not always contain sufficient intellectual challenge to enable these pupils to reach their potential.
67. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Much effort has gone into improving provision since the last inspection and overall improvement has been good, particularly in subject planning and assessment procedures. However, there is insufficiently rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning to identify where improvements are needed, particularly in the scientific focus of lessons and the levels of intellectual challenge in the tasks given to pupils. Resources for the subject are sufficient and used well in practical lessons.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is effective in promoting pupils' learning.
- Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school and standards in Years 2 and 6 are average.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The school has made considerable progress since the last inspection.
- The subject is used well to promote learning in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

68. In Years 2 and 6, standards are average and a significant proportion of older pupils exceed the expected levels. This represents considerable improvement since the last inspection, when standards in both age groups were judged to be not high enough. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in relation to their capabilities and boys and girls do equally well in developing their computer skills.

69. The quality of teaching is generally good throughout the school. The programme of learning is planned effectively to provide pupils of all abilities with a rich variety of learning opportunities and they make rapid progress in learning key skills. Teachers have worked hard to develop their own skills and this is an important factor in the success achieved by pupils. Lessons in the computer suite are well organised and focused. Pupils know what is expected of them and behave well. Lesson planning is very effective in providing opportunities for collaborative learning, simple procedures to assess pupils' progress are good and pupils develop very positive attitudes to the subject. Pupils in Year 5 worked very well in pairs to plan and cost purchases for a party, using a spreadsheet. The task provided a high level of challenge and was very effective in developing pupils' understanding of the functions of spreadsheets.
70. Information and communication technology has benefited from considerable financial investment since the last inspection and the school now provides well for all areas of the subject. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader's expertise and enthusiasm have played a very significant part in developing the provision. She provides a very good example through modelling lessons for her colleagues in the effective teaching of ICT, introducing them to new equipment and helping them with planning.

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

71. Pupils' ICT skills are used to good effect in many subjects across the curriculum. The readily accessible laptops and interactive whiteboards in classrooms play a significant part in maintaining pupils' interest in lessons and in enhancing learning. Older pupils use the Internet well, for example in researching history topics. Word processing skills are used well to enhance the presentation of work in literacy. In mathematics and science, data handling packages help to develop learning in all age groups. A digital microscope, digital cameras and digital video cameras greatly extend and enrich learning. In a Year 3 dance lesson, pupils were able to film their performances using a *Digital Blue* camera and see for themselves how well they were doing.

### **HUMANITIES**

72. **Geography** and **history** were sampled during this inspection and no judgements on overall provision are possible. No lessons were seen in geography but three were observed in history, involving pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6. The quality of teaching in these lessons was good with strengths in the organisation and planning of the lesson as well as effective management of the pupils. Good use was made of sources of information, including the Internet, in lessons in Years 4 and 6 in order to develop the pupils' skills of enquiry and historical research. Coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study in both subjects is satisfactory and each subject makes a good contribution to pupils' skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils wrote a diary entry imagining they were watching the Great Fire of London. This was planned to coincide with the opportunity to write a diary entry for Cinderella in the week's English lessons and thus reinforced the teaching points. In the scrutiny of work it was evident that pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop their mathematical skills in, for example, calculating four-figure coordinates for places on simple maps and plans.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A comprehensive scheme of work supported by good resources provides a good range of learning opportunities.
- Good teaching promotes good achievement.
- Religious education makes a significant contribution to skills of literacy.

### **Commentary**

73. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, which is similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. In lessons, pupils experience a variety of practical activities, from making booklets to recording eye-witness interviews, displaying thoughtful responses, good attitudes to the subject and co-operative working. There are good opportunities to practise writing skills, listen to poetry and music and participate in drama. Through skilful questioning pupils are encouraged to think about and discuss sensitively how the main characters in Bible stories would have felt. These factors contribute to good learning and pupils achieve well over time, including those with special educational needs.
74. The curriculum is in line with the locally agreed syllabus and is enhanced with selected units from nationally recommended guidelines and developments from the school staff. This provides good coverage of the subject and includes predominately Christianity, together with other world religions such as Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. The school has responded to local needs by taking into account the minority of pupils who are Jehovah's Witnesses for whom special arrangements are made. The quality of teaching is good. All the lessons observed were taught well and had many good features. There is good use of ICT, for instance, *Power Point* presentations to a 'virtual' tour of a synagogue downloaded from the Internet. Teachers have good subject knowledge and encourage children to raise their own questions for which they use religious vocabulary confidently. Artefacts such as the Torah Scroll are introduced appropriately to add realism to teaching and to maintain pupils' interest. There are challenging subjects for older pupils such as Rites of Passage and Auschwitz Death Camps both of which were handled appropriately.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and have good features. The experienced subject leader has used the annual budget for maintenance and development of the subject wisely, to build up a bank of resources to meet the needs of the subject. In the past the subject has been enhanced by visits to places of worship and a range of visitors into school. Indications are that these are now less frequent as other subjects have a greater priority and costs are prohibitive. Overall, improvement has been satisfactory since the last inspection. The subject leader has recently attended a course on opportunities for assessing progress in this subject and there are plans to set up procedures, which will facilitate the understanding of levels of attainment and assist reporting back to parents. However, these procedures are not yet in place. The subject enjoys good resources, which are used well to improve pupils' understanding. All staff have software for world religions and a good range of artefacts is available.

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

## Commentary

76. These subjects were only sampled during the inspection. It was possible to observe only one **art and design** lesson so there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on provision. In the good lesson observed in Year 2 the teacher demonstrated well the techniques of collage to help pupils to improve the quality of their pictures of the Great Fire of London. However, only a limited range of pupils' work was on display through the school.
77. As only one lesson was observed in **design and technology** during the inspection, no overall judgement has been made about provision, standards and the quality of teaching. Available evidence shows that teachers' planning covers a satisfactory range of projects every term and that the pupils use tools including drills and saws with a variety of materials to produce artefacts. For example, in 2004, the pupils took part in a themed week, during which they produced futuristic vehicles by recycling waste materials. Resources for the subject are good and accessible. However, pupils' designing skills are underdeveloped as they do not evaluate and modify their work with sufficient rigour. The school does not have a leader for this subject and this is impeding progress in developing the curriculum and pupils' design skills. Regular monitoring and assessment are insufficient to determine standards and help learning.
78. No lessons of **music** were seen and no judgement about provision is possible. Each year a specialist teacher leads the teaching for one year group. In the current year it is the turn of the Reception children. The quality of the provision is thus enriched and class teachers, who work alongside the specialist as she teaches, enhance their own skills in the subject. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn a variety of instruments as well as to take part in a choir and the local schools' brass and wind band. Pupils have performed in concerts both in the area and further afield.
79. Not enough lessons were observed in **physical education** to make an overall judgement about provision across the full range of activities. Evidence from three dance lessons in Years 1, 3 and 5 indicates that teaching is generally good and pupils achieve well in this area of the subject. Standards in composing and performing dance routines are good. Dance lessons enable pupils of all abilities to achieve well. A very good lesson in Year 5 was notable for the very good achievement of boys, because of the high quality teaching in a context that appealed to boys and promoted very good learning of dance moves. Where evaluation is used well, it has a significant impact on the quality of learning. This was particularly evident in a Year 1 dance lesson when pupils made great progress in performing and refining a *bubble dance*. The quality of their learning was improved significantly during the course of the lesson when they were encouraged to watch and evaluate the performance of others. This helped them to recognise how they could improve their own dances and they put huge effort into their final performance.
80. Planning for physical education indicates that the subject is well catered for over the course of the school year and meets requirements. Swimming takes place in Years 4 to 6 and the great majority of pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave school. Team games, athletics and orienteering take place during the summer term and cover all required aspects. Boys and girls have equal access to activities such as football and netball. The subject is well managed but there is room for improvement in the extent to which the subject leader is able to influence and lead her colleagues in developing the subject. Resources are of good quality and sufficient to enable all aspects of the subject to be taught fully.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

## Commentary

81. No detailed inspection of the subject was possible. The subject covers sex education and drugs awareness well. Three lessons were observed involving pupils in Years 5 and 6. In a good lesson focusing on dealing with bullying, the activities helped to raise the pupils' awareness of how they could cope with incidents using the school's anti-bullying procedures. In a satisfactory lesson on anger management with a group of eight Year 6 pupils, the learning mentor helped the pupils well to think about the consequences of their actions but the rewards in the lesson were inappropriate, giving incorrect signals to pupils. In a satisfactory Year 6 lesson, the class teacher focused effectively on helping pupils to resist peer group pressure. Class and whole-school assemblies were observed and in each case the topics, for instance on equal opportunities, made a good contribution to the pupils' personal and social development. Classes also have *Circle time*, when pupils have the opportunity to discuss matters of relevance to them.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>4</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	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	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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