

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **TURVES GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Northfield, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103369

Headteacher: Mr J Crofts

Lead inspector: Mr A C Jolly

Dates of inspection: 13 – 16 June 2005

Inspection number: 268153

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:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	383
School address:	Turves Green Road Northfield Birmingham
Postcode:	B31 4BP
Telephone number:	0121 464 3686
Fax number:	0121 464 6957
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Cooper
Date of previous inspection:	21 <sup>st</sup> June 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Turves Green Primary School, an above average sized primary school in the Northfield area of Birmingham, provides education for 383 pupils, including 56 pupils in the Reception classes who join school in the September of the year in which they are five. Most pupils live locally in predominantly council owned properties. The area has a high deprivation index for employment. There are a small percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, predominantly mixed white and black Caribbean and a very small number for whom English is an additional language although none who are at an early stage of language acquisition. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and more specifically a statement of special needs is above average. Their needs are mainly moderate learning difficulties. The school has a local authority funded, six-place resource base for pupils with physical disabilities. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Attainment on entry to the school, measured by tests taken in the Reception classes each September, is below average. The school holds the Investor in People Award, National Association for Computers in Education Mark and Healthy Schools Award.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
8750	Mr A C Jolly	Lead inspector	English Personal, social, health education and citizenship Physical education
19320	Mrs B Attaway	Lay inspector	
30580	Mr D Bateson	Team inspector	Special educational needs
26405	Mrs C Bond	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Design and technology Music
19897	Mr A Evans	Team inspector	Science Geography History Religious education
1963	Ms S Raychaudhuri	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design English as an additional language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **good** education for its pupils in a stimulating learning environment. The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is a very caring school where relationships are very good. The school has good links with parents and the community it serves. It is well led and managed. It provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- standards in English and mathematics are above average by Year 6;
- there is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs;
- not enough able pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable;
- standards in history are good;
- the total weekly teaching time for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is too low;
- the pupils are very well behaved and have good attitudes;
- the level of attendance for the last academic year was well below average;
- there are very good relationships within the school and the pupils are well cared for;
- the leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good;
- the school has a financial deficit.

The school has made a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. National test results have followed the national trend and standards have improved in English, mathematics and information and communication technology in the work seen in Year 6. Standards have improved in writing, in response to the criticisms in the last inspection report, and they are now good. There is now a secure outdoor play area for children in the Reception classes, although, as it is grass, it can only be used when the ground is dry. However, the more able pupils continue to under perform in most subjects and do not always attain the standards of which they are capable.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is **good** overall. Children join the Reception classes with standards which are below average. They make good progress so that they are on course to attain all the goals children are expected to reach nationally by the end of the Reception year apart from in communication, language and literacy. Standards in the work seen in Year 2 are average in all subjects inspected including reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress so that standards are average in all subjects by Year 6 and above average in the key subjects of English and mathematics. Standards are also above average in history. Standards are average in all other subjects, including religious education which fully meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress but not all able pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	A	C	C
mathematics	B	C	C	B
science	D	D	D	C

*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.*

The results in the table indicate that the school's performance in English and mathematics is average when compared nationally. Standards in science are below average. The least impressive feature is the below average proportion of able pupils who achieve the higher Level 5 in science and mathematics. Boys perform particularly well in English and the proportion attaining the expected Level 4 compares well in all three subjects, with those found in schools in a similar context.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Their behaviour is very good and they have good attitudes to learning. Their attendance level is well below the national average and punctuality is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **good** overall. Teaching and learning are also **good** overall. The key skills of literacy and numeracy are consistently well taught. Good support from teaching assistants ensures pupils with special educational needs learn well to make good progress. There is, in contrast, insufficient focus on the needs of more able pupils, so they achieve less well. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory overall although a few subjects, specifically music and physical education are not taught in sufficient depth. This is a very caring school and relationships with parents and the community are good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school provided by the headteacher and key staff are **good**. The governance of the school is satisfactory. All statutory requirements are met and the governors support the school well. However, the monitoring and self-evaluation processes used by the senior management team and governors lack a critical edge to identify and remedy weaknesses effectively.

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

Parents have very positive views about the school. They believe that teaching is good and members of staff expect their children to work hard and do their best. They believe there are good arrangements to ensure their children settle in when they start school. Some parents at their meeting commented that there was too little physical education on the timetable, which was a view shared by the inspection team. Pupils have positive views about their school. They enjoy lessons and the wide range of activities offered to them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- provide more challenging tasks for able pupils so they achieve the standards of which they are capable;
- increase the total weekly teaching time for pupils in years 3 to 6;
- improve the level of attendance;
- ensure the financial deficit is paid off as planned.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils' achievement is **good** overall. They enter the Reception classes with standards which are below average but by Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and history and average in all other subjects. This reflects an improvement in English, history and information and communication technology since the last inspection report.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in the 2004 Year 2 national tests for reading and writing were better than those for similar schools.
- Results in the 2004 Year 6 national tests in mathematics were better than those for similar schools.
- Standards in English, history and mathematics are above average by Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Higher attaining pupils do not always attain the standards of which they are capable.

#### Commentary

1. Children join Reception with standards of attainment that are below average. They make good progress in the Reception classes so that they are on course to attain the goals children are expected to achieve nationally by the end of the Reception year in all but one area of learning. The key area where they do not achieve the early learning goal is communication, language and literacy.
2. In Year 1 and 2, pupils continue to make good progress in all subjects apart from mathematics where standards have deteriorated since the last inspection and are now average. Particularly good progress is made in English.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.7 (15.9)	15.8(15.7)
writing	15.0 (15.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.7 (16.7)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 53 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. The results in the table highlight the good standards that have been attained in writing. Preliminary results suggest that in the 2005 Year 2 national tests, the school's dip in performance in writing in 2004 has been halted and that good numbers both attained the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3. Standards in reading were average in the 2004 national tests and the 2005 preliminary results suggest an improvement. The least impressive results from national tests were for mathematics, where standards in Year 2 were below average in 2004. It is significant also that the proportion of able pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was below average and has only increased by one per cent in 2005. This is the main explanation for below average standards when compared nationally. The proportion of able



pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was average in mathematics and reading and above average in writing.

4. When the national test results for Year 2 are compared with similar schools, standards are well above average in writing, above average in reading and average in mathematics. Thus the test results reflect good progress in Years 1 and 2.
5. By Year 6, standards are above average in English and mathematics, reflecting the consistently good teaching of the key skills of literacy and numeracy in Years 3 to 6. This reflects very good achievement in mathematics and in writing, where standards were unsatisfactory at the last inspection report. Standards are above average in history, sustaining the standards found previously. Standards have improved in information and communication technology, where they were previously unsatisfactory and in English and mathematics. Standards are average in all other subjects inspected, including religious education, which fully complies with the locally Agreed Syllabus.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.9 (28.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	27.3 (26.8)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.2 (28.3)	28.6 (28.6)

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

6. The table shows that when compared nationally, standards in 2004 were average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. The English result fell, particularly for girls. However, this can be explained by the larger than average number of girls in the year group who had special educational needs. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was average in English and science and above average in mathematics when compared both nationally and with results for schools in a similar context. The school's results compared well overall with results from similar schools and when related to the pupils' prior attainment.
7. The achievement of the few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is in line with other pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs benefit from very good provision to make good progress. However, higher attaining pupils do not always attain the standards of which they are capable mainly because they often receive too little challenge in lessons. There is satisfactory provision for gifted and talented pupils who have been identified recently on a register and given targets. The school recognises that this is an area that needs to be developed further and has sought further advice and support from the local education authority.

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

Behaviour is very good. Pupils have good attitudes to school, reflected in their good overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their personal development and punctuality are satisfactory, but attendance overall is poor. There has been no unauthorised absence.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils respond very positively to the school's high expectations of behaviour and know very well the difference between right and wrong.

- There is an expectation by staff for pupils to think of others which engenders a harmonious atmosphere throughout the school and promotes good attitudes.
- Attendance for a significant proportion of pupils is well below the national average and many of these parents remain apathetic to the school's wide-ranging efforts to improve attendance levels.
- Opportunities to explore other cultures and faiths are limited.

### Commentary

- Pupils say school is fun which is reflected in their good attitudes and very good behaviour. Most pupils listen attentively in class, enabling teaching time to be effective and promote learning. Any instances of misbehaviour are dealt with promptly, making pupils feel secure. Pupils welcome visitors and move around school courteously, especially on the stairs, and show thought for others by opening doors. Their confidence and self-esteem are good and even the youngest children are aware of the need to raise their hands if they want to answer a question. Pupils are taught to appreciate each other for who they are and consequently relationships are very good. They work and play together well in mixed gender groups. The provision for social development is good.
- Pupils willingly take on tasks when asked, such as tidying resources, and enjoy the varied extra-curricular activities. They have supported a range of charities including a local school for the disabled. There has been one fixed-term exclusion.
- Pupils' moral development is very good and they show a good understanding of living in a community. Spiritual development is satisfactory with pupils reflecting in class on their work and discussing issues such as the reasons for rules. Assemblies tend to focus on moralistic issues and lack sufficient spiritual content. Pupils' satisfactory knowledge of other cultures is developed in lessons and by visitors from music and drama groups. There are few opportunities to enrich their learning through first hand exposure to other cultures and faiths.
- The current attendance figure of 94 per cent is an improvement on last years figure but is still unsatisfactory. All classes have been adversely affected by poor attendance. The school has tried a variety of strategies to raise attendance. For instance individuals and classes receive certificates in assembly for the highest attendance the previous week. However, some parents seem unwilling to respond. The school and the Educational Social Worker work closely together to ensure monitoring of attendance and punctuality is satisfactory.

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Black or Black British – Caribbean

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
340	1	0
4	0	0
5	0	0
19	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
2	0	0

Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	0	0

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

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

Authorised absence	
School data	6.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education is good overall. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. The school has a satisfactory curriculum. There are good opportunities for enrichment.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is satisfactory.

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

- There is a very stimulating learning atmosphere.
- The teaching of literacy and numeracy is consistently good.
- Too few lessons provide sufficient challenge for the more able pupils.
- Those pupils who have special educational needs are very well supported.
- There are very good relationships between all staff and pupils.

### **Commentary**

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6 (13)	23 (51)	16 (36)	0	0	0

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

12. Teaching and learning are good overall. In almost two thirds of lessons observed, the teaching was good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. This broadly reflects the findings of the last inspection.
13. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is generally good so that the pupils are on course to meet the nationally agreed early learning goals in all but one area of learning. The teachers have a good grasp of the learning needs for this stage of development and pupils respond well, showing good personal skills that aid independent learning. Planning is often detailed and the management of the organisation of classroom activities is good. The consistent emphasis on high standards of behaviour begins in the Reception classes and it is sustained throughout the school. Pupils are very well behaved and relationships between teachers and pupils are very good.
14. The school ethos is one that fosters learning. The entrance to the school and the general appearance is attractive and inviting. The colourful displays in classrooms are consistently very good and both reflect what has been learnt and stimulate further learning.

15. Pupils who have special educational needs benefit from this ethos. Differentiated planning for these pupils is very good both within group plans and their individual education and behaviour plans. Individual targets are very specific with clear plans to achieve them. The tasks and content for pupils who have special educational needs show a high degree of personalised learning. They have individually tailored timetables allowing a range of input from a continuum of whole class work to withdrawal work with one adult. This work enables progress in physical, educational, emotional and behavioural needs. The quality of support by teaching assistants is good. They know the children well, praise effort readily and work in small steps to ensure achievements that are then recorded. The needs of more able pupils are less well addressed. Lessons often have tasks which can allow pupils to produce work to a range of standards, including above average levels. However, there is not the specific targeting of the more able pupils to ensure they achieve the standards of which they are capable. Opportunities are missed to provide extension activities or set more challenging tasks which will foster the learning of able pupils further.
16. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds but those that are have their learning needs well met by the strong support given to individuals, which is a feature of the school's ethos.
17. The best teaching is in English throughout the school and in mathematics from Years 3 to 6. All teachers have good subject knowledge in those particular subjects and the key skills of literacy and numeracy are consistently well taught in those years. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson when pupils discussed poetry and were introduced to a sophisticated form of annotation, where they identified literary devices and analysed what the poets were trying to say. The lesson engendered an enthusiasm for poetry from all levels of ability.
18. Teaching often features stimulating introductions and pupils are fully absorbed in their learning. Learning objectives are clear and achieved successfully in most lessons. Teachers are reflective and are prepared to change their approach or reinforce a basic skill if they recognise it is necessary. Occasionally, when teaching is only satisfactory, it is because the planned main activity progresses at too slow a pace. The better lessons invariably give pupils timed targets so they have a clear sense of purpose and work with greater urgency.
19. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory apart from English where they are good. The arrangements for other subjects are less well developed. Pupils' work is conscientiously marked, although pupils would benefit from more regular comments on how they could improve, related to National Curriculum levels. This is particularly the case for more able pupils. The tracking of pupils' progress is satisfactory but it could be developed further to provide more individual targets. Homework arrangements are satisfactory.

## **The curriculum**

The school offers a satisfactory curriculum, which affords a satisfactory preparation for secondary education. Accommodation and resources are good overall.

## **Strengths and weaknesses**

- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good.
- Total weekly teaching time in Years 3 to 6 is below national recommendations.
- Physical education and music are under-emphasised.

- The accommodation is very good.

## Commentary

20. The school offers a satisfactory curriculum, which is relevant to the needs of the pupils and which affords a satisfactory preparation for secondary education. There is a strong focus on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and the teachers provide good opportunities for the pupils to use these skills across the curriculum. Provision for information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and the school now meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum. However, total weekly teaching time for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is less than that in most primary schools and nationally recommended levels. In addition, the curriculum lacks balance. Physical education and music are under-emphasised. Religious education meets the recommendations of the locally Agreed Syllabus and the school meets its obligations to provide a daily act of collective worship. There are opportunities for instrumental music tuition for older pupils. The teachers plan carefully for the work which the pupils will do both each term and each week. Teachers in each year group plan closely together to ensure that pupils in the parallel classes cover the same work.
21. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is a good feature of the school. There are informative and comprehensive policies developed effectively into good planning to match the range of abilities and needs. The resource base for pupils with physical disabilities is very effectively managed. There is a commitment to personalised learning which meets the pupils' physical, educational, emotional and behavioural needs.
22. The school regularly looks for ways to develop the curriculum further. In order to provide opportunities for the pupils to study topics in greater depth and to acquire the necessary skills, continuous blocks of time, about a week in length, are devoted to some creative subjects, such as design and technology. During the week of the inspection, all classes were focusing in the afternoons on art skills. The school is looking to extend the use of 'themed weeks', during which the pupils will again focus in depth on a particular subject. Increasing use is being made of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum and this has been recognised by the school's achievement of nationally recognised National Association for Computer in Education Award.
23. Learning is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. There are clubs for sports, dance, circus skills and drumming. There are satisfactory opportunities for the pupils to participate in the arts. They take part in a local dance festival and a Community Art Project. They have participated in dance workshops held by the Birmingham Royal Ballet. Football and netball teams play friendly matches against local schools with moderate success. Learning is enriched further by a good range of visitors and school visits. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from a residential visit to Herefordshire.
24. There are a good number of teachers and teaching assistants to meet the needs of the National Curriculum. Members of the administrative staff provide very good support. Although parts of the building are in need of internal redecoration, the accommodation is very good and it provides a very stimulating learning environment. Strengths include a large hall and stage, a pleasant dining room, a dance/ drama studio, an innovative gallery area and rooms for special educational needs provision. Each classroom has a selection of special desks and chairs, designed to improve pupils' posture. There is very good access for disabled pupils and adults. A centrally located library holds a good range of fiction and non-fiction books. Outside, there are extensive playgrounds, marked out for netball and creative games, with pleasant seating

areas and a small adventure playground. There is no sports field and the outside play area for Reception children lacks a covered area. There are adequate resources to support teaching and learning in all subjects.

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

The school provides a very good level of care for pupils. The members of staff listen to pupils' ideas and provide good support and advice based on monitoring.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good quality of care and relationships with adults throughout the school make pupils feel very safe and secure.
- Pupil questionnaires and the school council are good platforms for listening and responding to pupils' ideas.
- Assessment of pupils' personal development is good and in some circumstances it is very good.
- Academic assessment is not sufficiently developed beyond English, mathematics and science.

### **Commentary**

25. This is a very caring school and the members of staff know every child very well, valuing them for their individual qualities; care for pupils with medical needs is especially good. Health and safety is very good and is seen as an important aspect of daily life. The school is prompt in checking the non-arrival of a pupil for no known reason. Child protection procedures are firmly in place and rigorous records are maintained of administration of medicines in school. First aid training is very good and staff can deal with a wide range of medical needs. The safety of all children at lunchtime has been improved following the school council's suggestion that lunchtimes should be staggered. Participation in the Healthy Schools Initiative has made a good contribution to pupils' understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. After parents and pupils asked for an improvement in school dinners, healthier options are now available at lunchtimes.
26. Induction arrangements for pupils entering in all years are good, promoting their confidence and self-esteem in new surroundings. A film produced by Year 6 pupils enables successive Year 2 pupils to gain a good insight into expectations and challenges as they move into the juniors.
27. Pupils value the rewards available for success in any aspect of school life. Teachers are generous in making awards and monitoring ensures that every child receives some public recognition during the year which raises their self-esteem.
28. The school's 'can do' ethos increases pupils' self-belief, encouraging them to achieve to the best of their ability. Daily monitoring of pupils' personal development, including behaviour and attendance targets, is based on informal observations. When a pupil died, the school enabled pupils to work through their grief by reminiscing and making memory books. In conjunction with local agencies, staff and parents were also offered very good support and guidance, as they were when the closure of the large, local car factory was announced. In conjunction with outside agencies, children in care receive additional support relative to their needs. Review meeting invitations to parents of special educational needs pupils raises the quality of their support, as does their liaison with the Parent Link Worker. Discussion of the learning objective at the start of lessons, and pupils' evaluation of their success at the end, enables pupils to

explore their individual strengths and weaknesses. Targets are shared with parents, but the lack of targets in science does not support academic progress in that subject.

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

Overall links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges are good

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

- The school's open door policy makes a significant contribution to links with parents.
- A good variety of communication methods, including the annual questionnaire, promotes a good partnership between school and home.
- The good quality links with local schools, colleges and the community enriches the curriculum and aids parents' learning.

#### **Commentary**

29. A good variety of media is used to communicate with parents and keep them well informed of school life. The availability of teachers at the end of the school day enables parents to talk over any problems as they arise. The school works hard to ensure that working parents have similar opportunities by telephone and termly consultation appointments are offered to suit different working patterns. Parents know their views are listened to because they receive substantive feedback on the annual questionnaire. A number of parents help effectively in school. Some parents, as part of National Vocational Qualifications, work alongside other parents and their children at the INSPIRE initiative, which encourages the development of parental links to foster the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
30. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory and parents learn about the curriculum covered and their children's achievements in each curriculum area. Targets are included, together with comments about personal development, but there is no guidance for parents to put achievements into context compared with national expectations.
31. The well-established links with neighbouring technology schools support pupil learning, for example through the opportunity to use secondary facilities to study light. There is a coming together of secondary and primary schools with various outside agencies resulting in a sharing of knowledge and skills, increasing the effectiveness of support given to families and individual pupils. Through the Parent Link Worker some parents have benefited from a wide range of adult learning courses held at local colleges. Children from the local playgroup gain confidence by invitations to open days and to watch the nativity play and the school has donated a computer for their use.
32. A variety of links with the local community widens pupils' understanding of their contributions to society. They give their harvest collection to senior citizens and pupils and members of staff support the local children's hospice. Year 5 pupils enjoyed the opportunity to debate in the chamber of Birmingham City Council. Visiting musicians have introduced pupils to a variety of music including classical, panpipes and South American. Other visitors, for instance, a drama group and a senior citizen sharing her memories also make important contributions. Regular visits from the fire service and the police help build relationships at an early age.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**



The leadership and management of the school are good, which reflects the findings of the last inspection report. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher and key staff provide good leadership.
- A very good ethos promotes the welfare of pupils with a wide range of needs.
- The leadership of special educational needs is very good.
- There is a lack of critical edge in self-evaluation and monitoring processes.
- There are good arrangements for induction and professional development.
- The school has built up a significant financial deficit which it is now addressing.

### **Commentary**

33. The leadership of the school is good. The headteacher has led the school effectively since its amalgamation as a primary school twenty two years ago. He has a shrewd grasp of the school's needs and he has built up a good team of staff and an effective leadership team.
34. The deputy headteacher has given good support to the headteacher and has been very adaptable to meet the needs of the school. The assistant headteacher completes the very well balanced leadership team and she has given very good leadership to the special needs provision, which is a major strength of the school.
35. The school's commitment to maximising the participation of pupils with special educational needs has lead to it being recognised by Birmingham local education authority as a centre for mainstream inclusion and by national publications featuring the school's innovative work. This commitment is reflected in the high quality of the physical resources of the school and the ethos of the school, driven by the senior management team. This ethos fosters dignity, respect and confidence.
36. The coordination of subjects is good overall, although the deputy headteacher currently has responsibility for four subjects, which is too many for one person even on a temporary basis. The school development plan is a thorough document but the criteria used to measure its success are at times insufficiently precise and not related to measurable standards for improvement.
37. The governors have given loyal support to the school and they recognise its many good features. They meet regularly, with clear structures and terms of reference. They are highly committed to the school's ethos, which promotes the welfare of pupils with a wide range of needs. They fulfil all their statutory requirements. A race equality policy is translated into effective practice.
38. There are full procedures for monitoring and self-evaluation. Although the monitoring policy dates from 2000, it is still a useful document. The analysis however, from lesson observations and self-reviews, tends to focus on strengths and insufficiently on areas for development. The lack of critical edge from both the governors and the management team is an inhibiting factor in identifying weaknesses and making sure strategies are developed to promote improvement.
39. The school operates very efficiently on a daily basis and is a calm, orderly place for pupils to learn. There are many good management processes. The arrangements for induction and professional development are good which have been recognised by the award of Investors in

People status. However, the total weekly teaching time is below nationally recommended levels for pupils between Years 3 to 6. There are good links with higher education institutions. The arrangements for performance management are thorough. Above all, the school has been successful in recruiting an effective staff who promotes the pupils' learning and welfare.

40. A significant financial deficit was built up two years ago, which, despite a number of extenuating circumstances, reflected unsatisfactory financial oversight. Since then, with the help of a financial management company, the school has an agreed Finance Repayment Plan, which is designed to ensure there is no deficit at the end of the 2005/2006 financial year.

***Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,372,882	Balance from previous year	-180,866
Total expenditure	1,194,725	Balance carried forward to the next	-2,709
Expenditure per pupil	3,144		

## **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, as it was at the time of the last inspection.

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

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Some sessions are too long.
- Adults and children have very good relationships.
- Children's behaviour is very good.
- The outdoor play area needs improvement

#### **Commentary**

41. Provision for children in the Reception classes is good, reflecting well the key features of an early years curriculum. Children's attainment on entry to the school is generally below the levels expected for this age group, particularly in the key area of language development. Children are admitted in the September after their fourth birthday. Most have attended local nurseries prior to admission, and helpful records of progress are shared with Reception class teachers. Induction procedures are thorough and appreciated by parents. However, these would be of more benefit to the children if the pre-school visits took place in the Reception classroom with adults from the Reception team. The curriculum is well planned, covering all areas of learning in detail, and with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and mathematics. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. By the end of the Reception year, most will achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning except communication, language and literacy.
42. Teaching and learning are good overall, and very good in small group teaching sessions. Strengths of the teaching are the encouragement and engagement of the children through positive relationships and the insistence on high standards of behaviour. Sometimes, especially in the mornings, all children are able to take full advantage of the range of attractive learning activities, with very good support from all adults involved. Afternoon sessions are less well structured, and often have too few adults available for appropriate support. Learning is then random, and difficult to track. Sessions after lunch are generally too long for sustained concentration, with no break in the two hours of free-choice activities except for short tasks in groups that are directed by adults. Assessment is satisfactory overall. Detailed observations of children's responses are providing a satisfactory base for assessment, although these are not always anchored firmly enough in the national stepping stones of progression. Teachers plan to transfer this information to a tracking system. The members of staff have been aware of the need for carefully planned transition of pupils from Reception to Year 1, where management and organisation are very different. They have satisfactory ideas to address this issue.
43. The recently appointed Reception teachers have grasped the challenge, identified by the school, to ensure that all Reception children have access to an appropriate curriculum. They have worked hard to re-organise the provision. A new coordinator is already providing satisfactory leadership and management. A new strategy for teaching and learning is being effectively implemented by a committed and professional team. The accommodation is spacious and well resourced. A secure outdoor area is mainly grass and has no covered section. It is unsuitable when wet. Although the members of staff try hard to make the area inviting, it requires

development to become satisfactory for appropriate learning. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

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

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is good emphasis on developing appropriate personal and social skills.
- The members of staff provide good role models and promote very good relationships.
- Children are encouraged to be independent and self-reliant.

### **Commentary**

44. There are some thorough procedures for admitting children to the Reception classes, which ensure that early experiences inspire confidence. Visits to school take place over four weeks, when children learn about school activities in a stimulating environment with parents and members of the school staff. These opportunities clearly help children to settle into school life, but they could be improved by closer links being made with their future classroom and the Reception staff themselves. By this stage of the year, routines are well known and quickly followed, and children are eager to be involved in activities. Good teaching and learning in this area are based on adults' high expectations of behaviour, which are positively reinforced. This results in good achievement by the children. Personal, social and emotional development is a planned element of the curriculum. Children's independence progresses well. They select easily from a range of suitable activities when they are not engaged in focused group work, and show good concentration and perseverance. At times the learning in these activities is not developed appropriately because there is no adult available to extend opportunities. Children know they must behave well, and respond well to the strong emphasis on trust and independence. All adults are good role models for the children in relationships and management strategies. Consequently, the children help one another well and show sensitivity towards others in their play. They make good progress and by the time they transfer to Year 1 most children will reach the standards expected for their age.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Strong relationships encourage children to share conversation and ideas freely.
- The members of staff provide varied, appropriate opportunities for speaking and listening.
- There are regular opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills.
- Some activities require more sustained adult intervention.

### **Commentary**

45. Many children are admitted using single words or phrases in response to questions and levels of attainment are below the standard generally found for this age. By the end of the Reception year a significant number of pupils are not attaining the nationally agreed early learning goal in this area, although achievement is satisfactory overall. Adults in both classes regularly encourage children to talk, and expect them to listen. They provide carefully structured sessions when children respond well to focused questioning about specific activities, giving good opportunities for them to extend their vocabulary and to use more sophisticated structures in their language. Planned activities are set out with clear guidance for adults about the key words

and concepts to be taught. This good strategy ensures that the best use is made of time when adults are developing children's learning. However, adults are not always available to give guidance across the very wide range of tasks provided, particularly in the afternoons. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Children learn to form their letters well and they are beginning to write independently. Play activities for writing are readily available and children enjoy using them. Teachers reinforce key learning in small group work, when writing tasks are well linked to learning in other areas of the curriculum. Children have a very positive attitude to books and have confidence in talking about the stories and characters they hear about. Appropriate prominence is given to developing reading skills, and several children show good progress in learning letter sounds. However, only the most able children are likely to achieve the expected levels of learning in this area by the end of the year. Many need a little longer to develop a satisfactory enough language base to reach the expected goals.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A wide range of practical activities is provided every day to develop mathematical skills.
- Mathematical learning is appropriately planned and promoted regularly.

### **Commentary**

46. Teaching is good and teachers develop children's understanding of numbers well. Children achieve well, and many are very confident in dealing with mathematical concepts. Most will reach or exceed the expected standards for their age by the time they move to Year 1. They develop their learning and language through some good focused activities that adults lead, and several children enjoy re-enacting these sessions in their free-play time. Higher achieving children are able to add and subtract numbers to 20, and most in the two classes can count forwards and backwards to 20. There are number lines and numeral pictures around the room to stimulate mathematical thinking which teachers and support staff use well to enhance learning. Children have good support as they explore the concepts of capacity, linking it well to the week's theme of animals.

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

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a range of stimulating activities and resources to develop children's curiosity and understanding
- Good planning enables children to use learning from other areas to develop their skills and knowledge
- Children find it hard to concentrate on some outdoor activities

### **Commentary**

47. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan well for this area of learning, ensuring that children have regular and appropriate first hand experiences to develop key skills as they widen their knowledge and understanding of the world about them. Most children achieve well throughout the year, and most will reach the expected standards for their age by the time they move to Year 1. A wide range of activities is provided both indoors and outside, enabling children to learn, for example, how to join materials together, or how to ensure that towers remain upright, and what difference it makes to add water to dry sand. Many are able to work independently at a computer, demonstrating good mouse

skills and an understanding of familiar programs, finding the answers to questions raised during discussion times. A newly purchased fish tank provides good opportunities for children to develop their observational skills and to record their discoveries in different ways that they can then share with their friends. Problem-solving opportunities arise outside when, for example, the wind is so strong that lengths of paper for painting are blown away. Such opportunities are well managed by children and adults, but some outdoor activities require more concentration than is possible with so much going on around them. Although teachers work hard to provide appropriate tasks outside, the outdoor area is far from suitable at present for developing children's learning appropriately.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for physical development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- An interesting range of activities is provided.
- Children have regular access to a safe outdoor area in fine weather.

### **Commentary**

48. Teaching is good in this area of learning, and children achieve well. Most children are likely to reach the expected levels for their age group by the time they leave the Reception class. Sound emphasis is placed on holding pencils and paintbrushes correctly, and many children show good hand control when cutting and sticking. They negotiate space well both when moving about the classroom and when using wheeled toys outside. There is a small paved area for the use of bikes and scooters, where a measure of skill is required to avoid obstacles and other children. Children have learned to adjust their speed well. Weekly visits to the school hall enable children to use apparatus and equipment there, and use is also made of climbing frames in the playground and the school drama studio, encouraging children to move with confidence and imagination.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is satisfactory

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a range of opportunities for children to explore a variety of media, make music and use their imagination

### **Commentary**

49. Children develop satisfactory skills and achieve satisfactorily in this area of learning. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but role-play development is well taught. Most children will achieve the levels expected for their age group by the time they leave the Reception class. Painting and drawing materials and tools are available throughout the school day so that children can choose to spend time exploring different textures and techniques, often with the support of adults. Children are encouraged to talk about their work, using appropriate vocabulary. Models they have made are on display with pictures and drawings, giving value to these creations and providing a stimulating environment. There is a box of appropriate musical instruments for free-choice options, and children learn to sing rhymes and songs as part of the daily routine, although this area of creativity is not a sharp focus of learning.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Standards in writing have improved and they are now good.
- Standards in the 2004 national tests were above average in both Year 2 and Year 6 when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds.
- Teaching is consistently good.
- There is some inconsistency in the approaches to developing reading.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

#### **Commentary**

50. Pupils' standards in the work seen are below average on entry to the Reception classes. They are average by Year 2 and above average by Year 6, reflecting a good pattern of achievement. The findings for Year 2 are in line with the last inspection report but in Year 6, standards have improved.
51. This mirrors the performance of pupils in the 2004 Year 2 national tests, where the least impressive feature was the proportion of pupils who achieved the higher Level 3 in reading. Otherwise, test results in both Year 2 and Year 6 were at least in line with the national average and above average when compared with similar schools for pupils of all abilities. The unconfirmed test results for 2005 in Year 2 suggest further improvement in the pupils' attainment. The most impressive feature is that the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading appears to have improved significantly.
52. At the heart of the school's improvement in English has been a successful emphasis on developing pupils' writing. This was identified as a critical weakness in the last inspection report and is now a significant strength. The action plan designed to respond to the previous criticisms was well focused and pupils write accurately and imaginatively both in literacy lessons and across the curriculum. This is more noticeable in Years 3 to 6, although the writing in Years 1 and 2 shows clear progress and development.
53. Standards in handwriting and spelling are good overall. Pupils' work is well presented in all subjects. They benefit from regular opportunities to practise both skills in 'Early Bird' sessions at the start of the day which are successful in raising standards. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory.
54. Standards in reading are satisfactory. All pupils benefit from regular opportunities to read both in group reading sessions and silent sustained reading times. There is a good range of reading material for all abilities and interests. Pupils' reading logs are kept well with regular entries from the pupil, teacher and parents in Years 1 and 2. There is a less clearly understood system for older pupils, so that their reading needs are monitored less closely.
55. By Year 6, all pupils achieve well. In the 2004 national tests, the proportions attaining both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 were in line with the national average and better than



those in similar schools based on pupils' eligibility for free school meals.. Boys have performed particularly well for the last three years. Although girls appeared to attain markedly less well last year, this is not a sustained trend and can be explained by the unusually high number of pupils who had special educational needs. Pupils who have special educational needs, however, progress well, related to their prior attainment, as do the very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

56. Teaching is consistently good and pupils respond very well. Relationships are very good and classroom management is always effective. All teachers have a good command of the subject and plan lessons well based on the National Literacy Strategy. Teaching assistants give consistently good support. They are generally pro-active in responding to the needs of individual pupils and are only occasionally, at the start of literacy lessons, less effective and passive. They are very influential in the good progress made by pupils who have special educational needs.
57. Pupils receive good guidance in lessons and a variety of material is used to stimulate interest. In Year 5, for instance, they were given an imaginary internal school memo recommending the shortening of lunch hour. They had to write a persuasive letter to the governors to abandon the idea. This taught them how to both present and balance an argument.
58. Lessons invariably begin and end effectively. On occasions, however, the main activity proceeds too slowly when pupils take too much time to get started and then do not complete the task. This is a result of the teacher not specifying clearly enough how much time has been allocated to that section of the lesson. Tasks set are well judged to meet the needs of pupils of average and lower ability but the specific needs of more able pupils are not addressed frequently enough.
59. The deputy headteacher is satisfactorily overseeing leadership and management of the subject on a temporary basis after the previous co-ordinator resigned from his position. There are good assessment arrangements overall. Pupils' progress is tracked satisfactorily, although the process could be developed further to set more precise individual targets for all classes. Pupils' work is marked conscientiously and most teachers give constructive advice on how they can improve. There are opportunities for drama lessons in a specialist room. Years 1 and 2 make more use of this facility than the older pupils. The school is well placed to sustain the improvement made since the last inspection.

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

60. The improvement in the standard of pupils' writing is, in part, due to the emphasis given to it in other subjects. In Year 5, pupils reported on a debate in which they took part in at the Birmingham Council House. They have also written in science about the pollution of the planet, including the effects of dangerous gases. In geography, Year 4 pupils have compared Chembekoli with Turves Green and Year 6 pupils have written about avalanches and about how mountains are formed. There is a lot of writing in history where the younger pupils have described famous people and in Year 4 they have written about how communities have changed over time.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching helps pupils to achieve well by Year 6.
- Effective use of teaching assistants makes a significant difference to the achievement of pupils with special educational needs.
- Strong emphasis on the use of literacy skills in mathematics is helping pupils to develop good understanding of problem solving.
- The final part of lessons is not effectively planned for the consolidation of pupils' learning.
- Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently stretched so that they attain the higher standards of which they are capable.

## **Commentary**

61. Standards in Year 6 have improved since the previous inspection from average to above average and the pupils achieve well. However, standards at the end of Year 2 are average and lower than those at the time of the last inspection due to differences between the cohorts.
62. There are several reasons why achievement is good and has improved since the last inspection. The co-ordinator gives good leadership. The deputy head teacher monitors teaching and learning and as a result the quality of teaching has improved in Years 3 to 6. The school has carefully organised the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The teachers and teaching assistants work effectively as a team and know their pupils very well. This means that pupils with special educational needs are offered tasks that are well matched to their needs and they achieve well. However, the higher attaining pupils are not given specific support to reach the upper limits of their capability. This is more evident in pupils' work over time in Year 2 and consequently, their achievement is only satisfactory from their point of entry to Reception. Pupils have good skills in number across the school and their understanding in problem solving and using mathematics is developing well, particularly at the top end of the school. Data handling is used primarily to support other subjects of the curriculum and so there is limited evidence in pupils' books.
63. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good overall. However, teaching over time is stronger in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. The school has fully embraced the National Numeracy Strategy in its consistent approach to teaching and learning across the school. A good feature of the lessons seen was the way that pupils were encouraged to use their reading and writing in mathematics. This is because of the school's recent focus on the development of pupils' understanding in problem solving. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 5, the pupils not only had to read aloud and discuss the problems but they also prepared their own problem-solving questions. The teachers explain the learning objectives well to pupils so that they are clear about the expectations in the subject. In addition, well-planned activities with suitable resources contribute to their interest and motivation in the lesson. Although the revision of previous learning featured at the start of most lessons, the final part of the lesson was not planned effectively to consolidate what pupils had learnt.
64. Teachers use assessment satisfactorily to check pupils' understanding. They set targets to indicate which level each pupil is expected to reach by the end of each year and these are regularly reviewed. Marking generally consists of praise and encouragement but there are few comments to help them to improve their work.
65. Good improvement has taken place since the previous inspection as standards in Year 6 and the quality of teaching have improved. Leadership and management of the subject are good with a vision for improvement. The subject leader has identified the areas for development, based on pupils' needs in the subject.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

66. Numeracy has been promoted well through other subjects. For example, in science and geography pupils use their skills of measurement and data handling. In information and communication technology, pupils give commands on a grid to produce a specific shape. Data handling skills are well used in information and communication technology and science where pupils use pie charts and block graphs to present information.

## SCIENCE

Provision for science is satisfactory.

### Strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong focus on developing the pupils' investigative skills.
- There are now more opportunities for the pupils to use their literacy skills in science.
- There is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Subject leadership is good.

### Commentary

67. Standards are average by Year 2 and Year 6, which reflects the findings of the last inspection. Achievement is broadly satisfactory, although there is underachievement by higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls.
68. It was possible to observe only one science lesson during the inspection. Nevertheless, an analysis of pupils' work indicates that teaching is at least satisfactory. There is a strong focus on developing the pupils' practical investigative skills and on their ability to make sensible predictions as to outcomes. This enables the pupils to investigate, for example, electrical circuits, the effect of friction and air resistance on movement, changes in materials and the optimum conditions for healthy plant growth. The teachers emphasise the need for fair testing and for careful observation. There is sometimes insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils which would help them to attain the higher National Curriculum levels.
69. Sound use is made of information and communication technology to enhance teaching and learning. The teachers encourage the pupils to research information from a variety of sources, including the Internet. In a Year 3 lesson, the pupils made satisfactory use of information and communication technology to create a mini beast database.
70. The teachers encourage the pupils to present their findings neatly and logically. The pupils respond by making good use of their literacy skills in writing up their findings fully. They also make effective use of their mathematical skills in recording results. Older pupils, for example, draw accurate line graphs of the effect of exercise on pulse rates and bar charts of the absorbency of different materials. Younger pupils draw satisfactory block graphs of plant growth in different media. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly and positively, often suggesting ways in which the work might be improved.
71. Subject leadership is good. The coordinator gains an overview of provision through monitoring planning, samples of pupils' work and teaching. She has led training for colleagues which has increased their confidence and expertise. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' progress. Information gained from assessments, and from a careful analysis of national test results, is used satisfactorily to plan subsequent work. This has also resulted in pupils being put in groups according to ability in Year 6 and, for the summer term, in Year 5, to match work more closely to pupils' differing needs. The coordinator recognises the need to increase the proportion of pupils who attain the higher National Curriculum levels and she has developed a clear action plan to address this. Learning is enriched by worthwhile visits to Snibston Discovery Centre, The Think Tank and a local farm.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory** with some good features.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a good improvement in provision since the previous inspection so that standards have risen.
- Pupils achieve well through Years 3 to 6 to reach broadly average standards at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils and teachers are using computers with growing confidence, but there is still insufficient use of information and communication technology to assist teaching and learning across the curriculum.

### Commentary

72. The pupils' overall standard by Year 6 has risen since the last inspection when standards were below average in Years 2 and 6. The findings of this inspection are that standards are average in Year 6 and pupils achieve well. Only two lessons were seen which were in Years 3 and 5 and standards in these lessons were average.
73. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Facilities have improved and there has been an increase in the number of computers. Software has been bought specifically to support literacy, numeracy and science. Members of staff have received additional training and they generally are more confident in using computer technology. Information and communication technology is now taught as a separate subject and, consequently, pupils are becoming more confident in the subject. The school now meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is no separate information and communication technology suite and the subject is taught in classrooms with a good supply of wireless laptops. The arrangements are satisfactory.
74. The quality of teaching and learning observed was good. Lesson planning is based on national guidance and it ensures progression in the development of skills. Teaching methods are generally effective as there is a good balance of time between teaching skills and hands-on activities.
75. At the time of the inspection, the deputy head was co-ordinating the subject as the subject leader was on maternity leave. The leadership and management of the subject have been good because of the good progress made towards tackling the issues identified in the last inspection.

### Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. The available evidence suggests that computers are used satisfactorily in English, mathematics, history and geography. For examples, pupils use information and communication technology to make graphs and bar charts in mathematics or search the Internet to research into the World War II in history. The use of information and communication technology as a tool to support teaching and learning in other subjects of the curriculum is limited.

## HUMANITIES

77. **History** was not being taught at the time of the inspection and it is not possible to make an overall judgement on provision, leadership or on the quality of teaching. Nevertheless, an

analysis of pupils' work indicates that standards are above average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection.

78. By Year 2, the pupils are developing a good understanding of how things change over time. They explore changes in schools, home life, clothes and holidays. They are familiar with some famous people from the past such as Louis Braille and Florence Nightingale and they make good use of their literacy skills to write short pen pictures of them. By Year 6, the pupils have a good understanding of aspects of Birmingham's history and of the role played by personalities such as George Cadbury and Herbert Austin. They use their literacy skills well to write about aspects of life during the Second World War, including the blitz, evacuation and rationing. They use a variety of sources, including the Internet, to research information on people from the more recent past, such as John Lennon. The pupils have a good understanding of aspects of life in ancient Greece and Egypt and of life in Victorian Britain. They use their literacy skills effectively, for example in writing extracts from a Victorian schoolchild's diary.
79. The deputy headteacher is temporarily responsible for coordinating provision. There are satisfactory procedures in place for assessing the pupils' progress. Learning is enriched by worthwhile school visits to places such as Blist Hill, Warwick Castle and Hartlebury Castle.

### **Religious education**

Provision for religious education is satisfactory and meets the recommendations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject is making a positive contribution to the pupils' personal development.
- There are good opportunities for the pupils to write at length.

### **Commentary**

80. By Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average, which reflects the findings of the last inspection. The achievement of all groups of pupils is broadly satisfactory. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection. Nevertheless, an analysis of pupils' work indicates that the pupils are developing their understanding of, and their respect for, peoples of different faiths and cultures. In this way, the subject is making a positive contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Older pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the major festivals of the Christian calendar and of some aspects of Hinduism and Islam. They consider what makes us individuals, whilst at the same time belonging to a community. There is satisfactory use of their literacy skills, for example, in describing Harvest Festival and the story of Rama and Sita. They are familiar with some Bible stories, such as Noah's Ark and Jonah and the Big Fish. Younger pupils know some of the parables of Jesus, including The Runaway Son and the Good Samaritan. They talk about people and places which are special to them.
81. The subject leader has made a satisfactory start in coordinating provision. She has developed a clear action plan to raise standards and she has improved the accessibility of teaching resources. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' progress.

### **Geography**

Provision for geography is satisfactory.

## Strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong focus on developing basic map and atlas skills.
- The subject is making a positive contribution to the pupils' personal development.
- There are good opportunities for the pupils to write at length.

## Commentary

82. By Year 2 and Year 6, standards are average, which reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Achievement is satisfactory. Teaching overall is satisfactory. Some good teaching was observed during the inspection. There is a strong focus on developing the pupils' map and atlas skills. In a Year 6 lesson, this helped the pupils to identify local features on maps of varying scales and to match these to aerial photographs. There is a similar focus on developing the pupils' ability to research information from a variety of sources, including the Internet. This helps the pupils to learn about mountain environments and about the changing nature of the landscape because of erosion. The teachers have high expectations for the presentation of pupils' work, although higher attaining pupils are sometimes insufficiently challenged. The teachers provide the pupils with good opportunities to use their literacy skills effectively. Pupils in Year 6, for example, describe some natural disasters which occur in mountainous areas, whilst pupils in Year 5 use persuasive writing to advertise the attractions of Birmingham.
83. The subject is making a positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are aware of the causes and effects of environmental pollution and the need for conservation and recycling. They consider ways in which the local environment might be improved. In a Year 4 lesson, the pupils investigated and recorded the various sorts of waste produced in their classroom. These pupils compare life in Northfield with that in a village in India, whilst pupils in Year 2 learn about aspects of life in Jamaica and how it compares with that in Britain.
84. The deputy headteacher is temporarily responsible for coordinating provision. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' progress and for using this information to plan subsequent work. There is a clear action plan to raise standards.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

85. No lessons were observed in **design and technology, music and physical education**. Therefore no detailed judgements about standards and teaching are possible. **Design and technology** is taught in two-day blocks each term. Displays of pupils' work completed during these block sessions indicate that all year groups follow a satisfactory curriculum, and generally develop appropriate skills as they progress through the school. Booklets on display show that pupils are able to evaluate the design and make process satisfactorily, although the quality of the evaluations is variable. Very few pupils considered whether their work was suitable for its intended purpose, and many forgot the importance of accurate measurements when reflecting on their methods.
86. Very little **music** was evident during the inspection. However, discussions with the staff and scrutiny of teachers' planning indicate that pupils cover the requirements of the National Curriculum as they move through the school. Timetables indicate that lessons are very short, particularly for junior age pupils. The subject has a very low profile in the school, although a few groups of pupils receive instrumental tuition from visiting teachers. Five pupils are currently learning to play the drums, and there is a steel band that practises regularly. A choral

teacher visits weekly to teach classes in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Music is used to provide a restful atmosphere in classrooms and around the school.

87. **Physical education** was not the focus of the inspection. The school offers a balanced curriculum, which meet statutory requirements. However, the amount of time allocated to the subject each week is too low and well below nationally recommended levels. The school provides sports clubs for dance, football, netball and general games and Year 6 pupils go on a residential visit which includes swimming and outdoor games. The coordinator, who has the background of being a specialist physical education teacher, is providing effective leadership and has a good grasp of the current priorities for the school.

## **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is satisfactory.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum puts a strong focus on the teaching of skills and promotes the development of language.
- Pupils' attitudes are good and they work well in practical lessons.
- Assessment is too informal.

## **Commentary**

88. Throughout the school most pupils are working at the standards expected nationally which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Seven lessons were observed in art and design with teaching judged as satisfactory which is lower than at the time of the previous inspection. Where teaching was good, the teachers planned lessons effectively with a selection of famous artists' work to help pupils to understand the content and style of the art work. For example, in Year 1 lessons, the pupils discussed the similarities and differences in the portraits by artists such as Van Gogh, Lautrec and Picasso. Teachers' questioning was good to help pupils understand the nature of the portraits presented to them. As teachers know their pupils and manage them well, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and they work well in practical activities.
89. Planning is based on the national subject guidelines and there is a strong focus on the teaching of skills every afternoon for a week per term. During the inspection week, the pupils in Year 2 learnt skills needed to shape the parts of a sculpture. They used different media, which included clay, straws, modelling wire and pipe cleaners to create the parts of a sculpture by joining, shaping and twisting them. The lesson was well linked to language development where the pupils had to use words and phrases related to the sculpture and its qualities. Although they were encouraged to describe what they were doing and how they were shaping or joining different media, not all had the necessary knowledge to enable them to contribute to the lesson.
90. Art and design makes a very positive contribution to pupils' cultural development as can be seen from the displays around the school. There is a display of expressive portraits of the school staff drawn and painted by pupils in the after school art club. Another example, a mural called 'England' by Year 6 using papers, pastels and paints in the style of Picasso's 'Guernica' is equally good. The mural represents the feelings of the English as they faced the distress of bombing in the World War II.



91. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Currently, there is no formal assessment in art and the portfolio for the moderation of work is yet to be developed. Therefore, teachers have little knowledge of their pupil's level of attainment. Art is not used sufficiently to promote pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum.

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

There is good provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship

### **Strengths and weaknesses**

- There are regular opportunities for the pupils to discuss relevant issues.
- Subject leadership is good and is a significant factor in provision.

## Commentary

92. The teachers provide regular opportunities for the pupils to talk about issues which are of concern to them, such as feelings, friendships, the need for rules and keeping safe. Older pupils discuss things which they value in their lives and the importance of belonging to a community. They participate in the Lord Mayor's annual Citizenship Week, during which some of them take part in a debate in the Council House. The pupils learn about aspects of road safety by participating in the Truck and Child Safety Demonstration. They develop social skills by supporting many charities and by participating in clubs and school visits. The pupils learn about exercise and a balanced diet as part of a healthy lifestyle. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award and younger pupils participate in the National Fruit Scheme for schools. There is good provision for teaching the pupils the dangers of drugs, alcohol and tobacco abuse, including visits from the police and the Life Education Bus. There is formal sex education for the oldest pupils and the school nurse helps with provision here. Other pupils learn about human growth and development according to their age and maturity. The coordinator works hard to ensure that relevant issues are covered in circle times and, where appropriate, throughout the curriculum.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	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	2
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	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
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).*