

INSPECTION REPORT

WALMLEY INFANT SCHOOL

Sutton Coldfield

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103544

Headteacher: Mrs Carole Phillips

Lead inspector: Mr Anthony Shield

Dates of inspection: 16th – 18th May 2005

Inspection number: 268191

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	311
School address:	Walmley Ash Road Sutton Coldfield West Midlands
Postcode:	B76 1JB
Telephone number:	(0121) 351 1355
Fax number:	(0121) 313 0624
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Gareth Crawley
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Walmley Infant School is a large infant and Nursery school with 311 pupils on roll aged three to seven years, situated in the village of Walmley in Sutton Coldfield. There are more boys (177) than girls (134) and this is most marked in the Reception year. Most pupils come from the immediate locality, and the socio-economic profile of most families in the school is above average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average at 3.2 per cent. Overall attainment on entry is above average, and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is well below average at 5.6 per cent. There is a small, below average number of pupils with statements of special educational need. These needs are related to physical and speech and communication difficulties. The majority of pupils are White British and there are relatively small numbers of pupils from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. Three children in the Nursery have English as an additional language. The school received the Healthy Schools Award in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3569	Anthony Shield	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Music
32677	Brian Horley	Lay inspector	
11642	Carol Parkinson	Team inspector	English History Geography Religious education Special education needs
22157	Mike Roussel	Team inspector	Mathematics Foundation Stage Design and technology Citizenship Physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with some very good features in which well above average standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The headteacher leads with a clear sense of purpose and the school has the confidence of the community. Pupils' achievements are good as a result of good teaching. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils' achieve well above average standards by the end of Year 2.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher has ensured a strong commitment to the school's values and maintained well above average standards.
- The caring approach of all staff, including support staff ensures pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Very good relationships amongst the whole school community encourage very positive attitudes to learning.
- Very good teaching in the Nursery and Year 2 is ensuring pupils achieve well.
- Assessment is not used precisely enough to ensure clear planning for the next step in each pupil's learning.
- Children make a good start as a result of very good provision in the Nursery.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning by subject and team leaders is not consistent enough to ensure self-evaluation is effective at all levels and that good practice is shared.
- Pupils' personal development is supported very well through the very good provision for personal, social and health education and for pupils' social, moral and cultural development.
- The school's very strong partnership with parents makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning.

Overall, the school has sustained the well above average standards reported at the time of the last inspection, and made good improvements elsewhere. Strengths in teaching, leadership and in pupils' attitudes have been maintained.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	A	A	A	C
writing	A	A	A	B
mathematics	A	A	A	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Achievement is good, throughout both the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Achievement is satisfactory in religious education. Although in comparison with similar schools, test results in reading in 2004 were only average, this is contrary to the usual pattern where results are more commonly well above average. Inspectors' evidence indicates that standards of reading in the current Year 2 are well above average. They are also well above average in speaking and listening, writing, mathematics, science and ICT. In RE, standards are average. Children in the Foundation

Stage achieve well in all areas of learning, and all reach the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and make a strong contribution to their achievements. Attendance is satisfactory. Punctuality is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good, and the quality of teaching is good.

Very good relationships in particular ensure a very positive climate for learning. Learning is very well managed and teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through effective use of questions. Literacy and numeracy skills are well taught throughout the school, and in all subjects. Assessment is satisfactory. There are good systems in place, but assessment data are not always used with sufficient precision in lessons to ensure pupils know how to improve. Resources are used well and ICT is being used increasingly and effectively to enhance learning across subjects.

The curriculum is well balanced and enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The accommodation is good and most classrooms are spacious and well planned areas for learning. Pupils are very well cared for and health and safety are given high priority. The school has developed a very good partnership with its parents and this strong link makes a substantial contribution to pupils' progress.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is good; management is satisfactory. The headteacher leads with confidence and insight. She has created a strong culture of achievement and has the confidence of the community. Governors provide good support and know the school well. Financial management is very good. Although management and monitoring procedures are in place, they are not implemented with enough consistency to ensure that best practice is shared and that self-evaluation is fully embedded throughout the school. Statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have a high opinion of their school. Parents in particular feel that the arrangements for their children settling in were well handled, that the teaching is good and that their children like school. Pupils enjoy school and are confident there is someone to turn to if needed.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Use assessment data with more precision when planning lessons to ensure that pupils' individual learning needs are more closely met.
- Monitor teaching and learning more systematically and involve subject and team leaders more consistently.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT. Pupils' achievements are good given their starting point. Children in the Nursery achieve particularly well and, by the end of the Reception year, all achieve well in all areas of learning and are on track to meet their learning goals in all areas.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well above average standards are reached by most pupils in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT.
- Pupils achieve well, particularly in the Nursery and Year 2.
- Children make a good start as a result of very good provision in the Nursery.

Commentary

1. Most children enter school with above average personal, social and communication skills. By the end of the Reception year, children are on track to reach the expected goals in all areas of the curriculum; some exceed them, particularly in their personal and social development. Their achievements are good overall because of the attention and care given to curricular planning and the good teaching. Key literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are taught well.
2. By the end of Year 2, pupils reached standards in the 2004 national tests that were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared to similar schools, results are above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading. All pupils reached Level 2 in teacher assessments in science; this is very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Nearly half of the pupils reached Level 3 in science, this being well above average. The overall trend in results since 2000 has been broadly in line with the national trend, although they have dipped in the last two years, following a particularly good year in 2002.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.0 (17.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.1 (16.6)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	17.7 (17.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 86 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In work seen in the current Year 2, standards reflect these results and are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. They are also well above average in the current Year 2 in ICT. In religious education, standards are in line with those expected. There are fewer higher attaining pupils in this cohort than in previous years and the proportion of pupils reaching Level 3 in writing and mathematics in particular is lower than previously. Nevertheless, the proportion reaching the expected Level 2 remain well above average.

4. Pupils' achievements are good. Because of the strong emphasis placed on the development of core skills in reading, writing, and numeracy in all subjects, pupils are confident in their approach and achieve well in most subjects. Good emphasis, for example, was seen in history on the development of writing skills and the encouragement to use subject-specific vocabulary.
5. Girls tend to do better than boys in reading, writing and mathematics. However, both boys and girls achieve well and although numbers of boys exceed girls, particularly in the Reception Years and in Year 2, the school has taken action and worked effectively to ensure the curriculum is adapted and tasks set which particularly appeal to boys. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who have statements, achieve as well as other pupils and make good progress towards their targets. Gifted and talented pupils achieve as well as other pupils. The very small number of pupils with English as an additional language, currently in the Nursery, also achieve well.
6. Good achievement in ICT reflects the school's investment in resources and staff training and the increasingly good opportunities pupils have to use ICT in different subjects. In other subjects, standards in history and geography are well above average and pupils' achievements are good. No judgements could be made for art and design, design and technology, citizenship, music and physical education as there was insufficient evidence because these subjects were not a main focus of the inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships amongst the whole school community encourage very positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' personal development is supported very well through the very good provision for personal, social and health education and for pupils' social, moral and cultural development.
- Pupils are polite, considerate and behave very well in class and around the school.
- Pupils are keen to come to school, arrive on time and lessons start promptly.

Commentary

7. Very good standards of behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection and this has a very good impact on children's progress. Pupils line up quietly and move around the school with the minimum of fuss. They are polite and are eager to talk about themselves and their school, of which they are rightly proud. Pupils are confident and mature, a fact recognised by parents as a strength of the school. In class, pupils are attentive and respond well to teachers' high expectations. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good. Older pupils are encouraged to act as buddies to those joining the school and, during the inspection, pupils spoke with confidence about how they would be expected to help others who had a problem or who had hurt themselves. No pupils have been excluded in the last school year.
8. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning in lessons, assemblies and in extra-curricular activities. In lessons, pupils listen to each other's opinions very carefully and help when they can. In Nursery and Reception classes, children work well together and share

resources. They are spontaneous in their praise for each other. Children are taught effectively about relationships and how to work and play together. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to their work. They are eager to learn, seek and receive help confidently and expect to be involved, as they are, in all aspects of school life. Their behaviour is not always consistently good because of their learning difficulties but they behave as well as they can.

9. Pupils' personal development is very good. Many make a very good start in the Foundation Stage where provision is very good. All pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. They know the rules and understand that they need to follow them. In the Nursery, the youngest children are introduced to the idea of acceptable behaviour. Pupils react very well to the consistent praise of good behaviour and the correction of inappropriate behaviour. In this way, children quickly learn right from wrong and the rules that apply to a social group. During the inspection, assemblies on the theme of people being happy or sad, encouraged pupils to think about how their actions affected others. The school uses charity appeals to enable pupils to consider their own circumstances compared with others less fortunate. Children are encouraged to raise funds by doing jobs for family and friends and thereby gain a greater sense of commitment.
10. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered successfully through the trusting family ethos of the school, assemblies and the contacts with the local church. The school works well to develop pupils' understanding of their own culture. Visits to the Black Country Museum give children the opportunity to understand the history and traditions of the area and appreciate the changes that have taken place. On one day during the inspection, Year 1 pupils were dressed as Victorian school children. This built on their recent visit to the museum when they took part in a school session in a Victorian schoolroom, led by a curator acting as the schoolmaster. The school celebrates the major festivals of other faiths. During Diwali, parents came into school to prepare authentic food for the children.
11. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average, a decline since the last inspection when attendance was very good. This is largely because of the increasing tendency of families taking holidays during term time. The school has satisfactory systems to monitor pupils' absence, taking action when individual pupils' absence is causing concern. Pupils are very punctual and procedures for registration are quick and efficient and this has a positive effect as lessons start on time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	School data	0.0
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.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching is good, and very good in some years. The curriculum provides a good range of opportunities for pupils. Teachers provide very good pastoral care and support and there are very effective links with parents and partner schools. Community links are good.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching is good. Assessment is satisfactory but teachers do not use assessment sufficiently to set targets for learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching in the Nursery and Year 2 is ensuring pupils achieve well.
- Very good relationships in the classroom ensure that behaviour is well managed.
- Key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT are well taught.
- Assessment is not used precisely enough to ensure clear planning for the next step in each pupil's learning.

Commentary

12. Good quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection, confirming the views of parents that teaching is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (6.1%)	5 (15.1%)	16 (48.5%)	10 (30.3%)	0 (0%)	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.

13. Because of the very good behaviour and attitudes of pupils and the very good relationships within the classroom, there is a very good climate for learning. Most pupils work purposefully and with good levels of motivation. Expectations of behaviour are high and made clear. Staff provide good models of collaborative behaviour through the effective partnership between teachers and teaching assistants.
14. Most lessons are characterised by learning through practical activity, particularly in the Foundation Stage. Teaching in the Nursery is very effective because of the careful planning and thorough organisation of learning activities, and as a result, children are very enthusiastic learners and work hard.
15. In the infant classes, pupils also work hard often because lessons are imaginatively planned and activities designed to enthuse. Introductions are clearly explained and pupils are confident in their approach to the activities and tasks set. Teachers ask searching questions to establish the extent of the pupils' understanding and also to make pupils think more deeply. Interventions in group work are carefully timed to support and prompt ideas. The school is focusing on developing approaches to encourage problem-solving skills to enable pupils to become more autonomous learners. The results of this approach are beginning to show in the way in which pupils are increasingly able to concentrate and persevere when they find the work difficult. In a number of subjects, teachers are planning for pupils to take an investigative approach to their learning. This is particularly evident in science, where investigative work is becoming one of the strengths of the provision. Teachers are increasingly making effective use of ICT to support learning in all subjects. This is helping to develop pupils' confidence in the use of computers and in their ability to solve problems themselves. As yet however, there is only limited use of

interactive whiteboard technology. Homework is very well used to support learning. Parents are kept well informed about the purpose and nature of work to be completed at home and this contributes strongly to pupils' progress. Support for reading and writing are particular strengths.

16. Teaching is particularly effective in the Nursery and in Year 2. Where teaching is less effective, it is usually because planning does not take into account the full range of prior attainment in the class. As a consequence, some teaching lacks challenge, particularly for the most able. Sometimes, the pace of learning is too slow, either because the teacher talks for too long or allows the activities to run on too long before intervening.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and all staff know their pupils well. Teachers and teaching assistants contribute to individual education plans written by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Targets are broad, and day-to-day assessment is not yet recorded often enough in writing to pinpoint pupils' progress and specific areas of difficulty so that teachers can adjust their planning from day to day.
18. Pupils' work is marked, but points for improvement are not consistently highlighted. As a result, pupils are not always sure how they might improve. Informal assessment during lessons is often effective in indicating how pupils can improve, but again is not consistently so. Feedback, for example from teaching assistants to the teacher, is often informal and opportunities to adapt day-to-day lesson planning to match individual pupil's needs are missed.
19. The school uses a good range of assessment data to track pupils' progress and set targets. The use of performance indicators and National Curriculum Levels to set targets in reading, writing and mathematics is well established and works effectively to identify potential underachievement. However, although intervention strategies are put in place, they are not always translated into specific and effective action in lessons. Individual pupil assessment profiles record each pupil's progress against their targets and have examples of annotated work.

The curriculum

The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements, and overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is good. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and enrichment activities such as school visits. Accommodation is good and provides a very good learning environment. Resources throughout the school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned and provides a good, balanced education.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Enrichment produced through extra-curricular activities and educational visits is good.
- Very good curriculum links are being forged with the community.

Commentary

20. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a very good range of additional activities. It is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is well planned. All curriculum policies are regularly reviewed. The school was recently awarded the Healthy Schools Award as a result of its approach to healthy living. In addition,

the school nurse and dental nurse visit as part of the Keeping Healthy topic. Religious education is taught in line with the Solihull locally agreed syllabus.

21. Careful planning of the curriculum and good use of the national strategies for both literacy and numeracy ensure pupils' knowledge and understanding is built on step by step, and provide a very good foundation for later stages of the National Curriculum in the junior school. Schemes of work provide detailed and comprehensive guidance. At the time of the last inspection, the curriculum for design and technology was criticised for failing to enable pupils to see the practical application of their designs. This has now been fully addressed. The school is working towards developing a more child-centred curriculum using a topic and thematic approach. This is progressing well and pupils find the topics interesting and relevant and are beginning to make sensible connections between subjects.
22. Pupils with special educational needs have good access to the curriculum. Individual education plans are clearly written and are apt, although progress towards targets is not recorded often enough. Specialist resources are used well. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning opportunities.
23. The school is strongly committed to inclusion and all pupils are given opportunity to take part in all activities, including sports activities. The curriculum is enriched with a wide range of visits, visitors and clubs. These have included visits to the Black Country Museum, the Jaguar car plant, a local church, and the Midlands Art Centre. A "recycling walk" to the local supermarket gave pupils a good understanding of environmental issues, as well as being the stimulus for some artwork. Visitors to the school including scientists, musicians and theatre and dance groups further enrich the curriculum. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn musical instruments with visiting specialists.
24. The match of teachers to the curriculum is good. Well-trained teaching assistants support in each classroom, and make a significant contribution to the standards reached by pupils. Accommodation is good and well maintained. Classrooms are spacious and attractive learning environments. Resources are good.

Care, guidance and support

There are very good arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The school provides good support, advice and guidance and involves pupils well in its work by seeking and acting upon their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The caring approach of all staff, including support staff, ensures pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Very good induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly into formal education.
- There are very good procedures for keeping records about pupils' medical conditions and acting upon this information when needed.
- There are good procedures for seeking and acting upon pupils' views.

Commentary

25. The school has a very thorough induction process which is widely recognised by parents as being very effective in ensuring that children quickly feel at home. Home visits and an introductory visit for parents and children are arranged during the summer term. This caring

approach is further exemplified by the arrangements made for pupils with special dietary needs, who wear a sticker until the catering staff fully understand their needs.

26. The school provides a safe environment. Site surveys are undertaken every term by the site manager and a school health and safety governor. Site security has been carefully considered and entry to school buildings is controlled by electronic locks. Child protection procedures are secure with all staff recently receiving training. Risk assessments are carried out for school visits.
27. There are very effective procedures for dealing with any medical issues involving pupils in the school. Medical records are regularly updated and care plans are produced in full consultation with the parent where a pupil requires specific care. Notices, complete with a photograph of the child, are prominently displayed near the classroom door with any information that could be needed to ensure appropriate action is quickly taken in an emergency. First aid provision is also very good with all teaching and other staff having had recent training.
28. This is a school where every pupil is well known to the staff who use this knowledge to provide appropriate advice and support. Each pupil's academic progress is monitored carefully and teachers use this information satisfactorily to provide intervention programmes for individual pupils who are likely to underachieve.
29. Opportunities for pupils to make their views known are provided through the 'pupil focus group'. This group is the basis for the school council which will start in the new school year.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are very good links with parents and other schools. Links with the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The partnership with parents is very good and this contributes very well to pupils' learning at school and at home.
- Parents value the easy access to teachers and feel that the school deals very well with their problems.
- The very good provision of a club before and after school, is highly valued by parents.
- The school works very well with the adjacent junior school, which benefits pupils at the time of transfer.

Commentary

30. Parents are strongly supportive of the school and believe that their children make good progress. Annual parent questionnaires are used to inform school improvement planning. Open days for parents of children attending the Nursery and workshops in literacy and numeracy enable parents to be better informed. The school is planning further workshops for parents in areas such as computing. As a result, parents provide very good support to their children's learning.

31. Parents praise the easy access to the headteacher and staff and any problems are quickly and effectively dealt with. Annual reports give a clear picture of children's progress and include targets in English and mathematics for the older pupils. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed and involved in their children's progress. Regular newsletters and the school's new website provide good information about activities at the school. A number of parents help in school, supporting activities such as science week. There is a very active parents' association which provides substantial financial support to the school. They also run a variety of social events including the very popular children's discos.
32. The school runs an Early Birds club for pupils before and after school. The club is oversubscribed and greatly valued by parents and enjoyed by the children who attend. The high ratio of adults to children and the spread of play and learning activities on offer ensure that children are well cared for.
33. Relationships with the adjacent junior school are very good and they share a number of resources to their mutual benefit. Pupils from the junior school visit to act as reading buddies for the infant children and to read stories in the Nursery. At the time of transfer there are a number of opportunities for pupils to visit the junior school. Parents particularly appreciate the welcome letters, written to the infant children by pupils already at the junior school. The headteacher works with a number of local and regional school groups to exchange best practice and to provide professional development for staff. Very productive links exist with local secondary schools. For example, pupils from a local secondary school work with Year 2 pupils in mathematics. Community links are good. Local people, such as police officers and firefighters come into school to talk about their work, and professional sports coaches are used to provide a programme of after school activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The school is very well led by the headteacher in close partnership with governors and staff. Governors are committed and hardworking and overall governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good leadership of the headteacher has ensured a strong commitment to the school's values and maintained well above average standards.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning by subject and team leaders is not consistent enough to ensure self-evaluation is effective at all levels and that good practice is shared.
- Governors provide effective support.
- Financial management is very good.

Commentary

34. The headteacher's leadership is very good because her clear vision and high aspirations have been shared very effectively with staff and governors. The school has maintained very high standards since the last inspection. Working plans and policies are very clear and staff know what they have to do and use the school improvement plan as a working document.

35. The work of governors is good. Individual governors are well informed and able to influence the direction of the school's work because they have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and work closely with the headteacher. They make a very good contribution to strategic planning and monitoring the school improvement plan so they can be accountable for standards pupils attain, and they are involved in all aspects of school life. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
36. Although leadership is good, as reflected in the high standards pupils attain, there is room for improvement in the school's processes for self-evaluation, where the school judges itself slightly better than the inspection finds it to be. Strategic planning is very good and both governors and staff are very well involved and have opportunities to contribute to planning, development and improvement programmes. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive document, shows a clear grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is very well linked to financial planning. Staff motivation is good, and teachers work together well. All leaders are committed to meeting the needs of individuals, and provide good role models for pupils. This contributes strongly to the school's very good ethos.
37. Management is satisfactory. Procedures for monitoring are in place and the school has made a good start in involving all staff in self-evaluation. However, the impact of these management processes on school improvement has not been consistently good in all areas. A number of subject leaders have only recently taken over responsibility for the subject, and as a result, the monitoring of teaching and learning by subject and team leaders is not rigorous enough to ensure best practice is shared more widely. Performance management is effective, and there is a well-organised programme of continuing professional development, but management skills amongst subject and team leaders are not fully developed. As a result, innovative and high quality practice is not consistent. The school gives good support to the training of student teachers and student Nursery nurses by providing work placements.
38. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well led and managed. The co-ordinator is able to put plans to improve provision into effect, for example when setting up the new workroom for groupwork. There is a very good understanding and rapport with parents to enable home and school to co-operate to help pupils make good progress and play a full part in school life.
39. Financial management is very good and is used effectively to raise and maintain the school's high standards. The school reviews its standards and value for money very well, and resources are very well managed. The budget is very well planned to meet the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The bursar has a very clear grasp of financial procedures and systems are very secure. Best value principles are understood and applied successfully, for example in the recent re-structuring of administrative staff and the review undertaken of insurance cover. Recommendations contained in the most recent financial audit have been tackled. Governors are kept well informed through regular and clear budget monitoring statements. At present there is a large reserve, built up through prudent management to raise funds for a joint building project with the junior school. The reserve is now more than can be justified and the school is planning to spend it on improvements to resources, the fabric of the building and on proposals for workforce reform.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	Balances (£)
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Total income	1,076,729
Total expenditure	1,049,269
Expenditure per pupil	3,374

Balance from previous year	120,378
Balance carried forward to the next year	147,838

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for the Foundation Stage is **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures that children make good progress.
- Children make a very good start in the Nursery.
- The attitudes of children to their learning are very good.
- There is no overall co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage.
- The partnership with parents is very strong.

Commentary

40. Attainment on entry is above average and children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all areas of learning with all children achieving the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Children make a particularly good start in the Nursery.
41. Teaching is good overall in all areas of learning and teaching assistants also make a good contribution. Much teaching in the Nursery is very good. Effective planning and organisation of the Nursery curriculum ensures a coherent programme. Planning in the Nursery takes good account of children's targets for learning and adapts well to individual needs. In Reception classes, a greater focus on literacy and numeracy means that some children have difficulty sustaining their concentration throughout. However, the attitudes of children to their learning are mostly very good, because of the very good relationships and the good role models teachers and teaching assistants present. Children with special educational needs and children with English as an additional language are supported well and make good progress.
42. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, but, with no one teacher responsible, there is a lack of coherence for the management of the entire Foundation Stage. Monitoring and assessment procedures are satisfactory. The recently introduced Foundation Stage Profile is used to set targets towards achievement of the early learning goals. Assessment profiles on entry to Reception provide data that supports the teachers in placing children into groups for reading and other activities. Assessments also provide information about children needing more support or early intervention due to special educational needs.
43. The partnership with parents is very good, and parents have considerable confidence that their children are given a good start. Induction procedures are very well managed and parents are informed about how they can support their children's learning at home.
44. Accommodation overall is good. The Nursery accommodation is spacious, colourful and a very stimulating environment. A safe and well-planned outdoor area supports children's physical development well. Improvements to the overall provision have been good since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good relationships and a well-structured environment ensure children feel settled and secure.
- Relationships are very good and children are confident in trying out new activities.
- The quality of teaching is very good and children achieve very well.

Commentary

45. Planning places a strong focus on personal and social development, and by the time children leave the Reception class, all children have achieved and some exceeded the early learning goal. This is due to the very good teaching, very good relationships and a well-structured environment where children feel settled and secure. The planning for learning, whether adult-focused learning or independent learning, is good, and many opportunities are offered to encourage children to interact with others through sharing, caring and taking responsibility with tasks such as helping to put equipment away and tidying up the classrooms. The topic themes are focused within the planning and all areas of learning reflect opportunities for children to work independently or socially through planned activities within the classes and in the outside area. For example, in the Nursery, children share their experiences about hairdressers and take turns in their role-play. As they gain confidence children begin to work more

independently on their tasks, with sustained interest and concentration. Children are keen to learn and this is reflected in their very good behaviour. It was significant how well the children moved around with a calmness and purpose, reflecting the impact of the very good role models presented by adults.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Good use is made of letter sounds to develop reading skills.
- There is a lack of challenge for more able children in the Reception year.

Commentary

40. Children enter the Nursery with above average language skills and children are keen to talk to adults and other children. Support for those with a language deficit is very good. A special language group was observed conversing confidently and animatedly because of the well planned programme and well-devised activity. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are well planned and effective use of questions ensures children make good progress in developing communication skills. Children are particularly encouraged to listen carefully when others are talking. The use of puppets in this respect is very effective. Good use is also made of singing to encourage speaking and listening. Specific skills, such as using knowledge of letter sounds to read and spell, and developing handwriting, are taught well, and children are given very good support in formation of letters. However, there is some lack of challenge for the most able pupils during the Reception year. Pupils from the adjacent junior school visit to act as reading buddies. There is good use of ICT to support the reading of stories. All children are on track to attain the expected level by the time they enter Year 1.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and places a high emphasis on learning through practical activities.
- Planning ensures good opportunities for mathematical skills to be used across many areas of learning.

Commentary

47. Mathematical skills are extended very successfully across all areas of learning. Good teaching throughout both Nursery and Reception ensures good achievement. Children confidently count and recognise numbers. They recognise and name familiar two- and three-dimensional shapes. Reception children develop their counting and subtraction skills well and learn how to apply them in the class shop. Parents are also successfully involved working alongside their children in number games. By the end of Reception all children will attain the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan a wide range of activities to promote children's understanding of the world around them.
- Visitors strongly support this area of learning and enrich the provision.
- Good use is made of computers.

Commentary

48. Teachers carefully plan a wide range of activities to promote children's understanding of the world around them. Imaginative play areas are a strong feature and are changed regularly. Visitors, such as a firefighter, talk about their work and enrich the children's understanding. ICT skills are taught well, so that children can control programmable toys, and learn to manipulate a mouse and use a keyboard. Children learn to design and make their own objects, such as an obstacle course for a hamster. This practical approach to the curriculum allows children to explore and understand why things are as they are. Good use is made of computers and the ICT suite. Teaching and learning in this area are very good and ensure that children achieve very well, and all will achieve the early learning goals by the time they move to Year 1.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good resources for physical development.
- The well planned outside area is safe and secure.
- Staff are well deployed to ensure safety in physical activities.

Commentary

49. Nursery children have regular opportunities to work in the outside area. Staff are well deployed and provide good, thoughtful support and supervision that helps children to play constructively and ensure a good level of safety. Currently, however, Reception children have less opportunity. Children learn to play with control, balance and co-ordination through the access to a wide range of equipment. In addition, the correct use of benches and mats in the hall is well taught.
50. Children develop fine motor skills and control in handling small equipment such as pencils, brushes and crayons and show developing skills in fitting building bricks together, constructing roads for toys cars and creating walkways, where they can practise balancing between two points. Most demonstrate reasonable hand-eye co-ordination. Children enjoy their physical activities and all children are on course to achieve the early learning goal for their physical development by the end of Reception.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities to explore and experiment with a range of media.
- Action songs and rhymes are taught well.
- There is a very good focus on direct teaching to develop specific skills for creative development.

Commentary

51. The Nursery environment is very stimulating and full of colour, and exciting activities are available for the children to develop their creative skills. Children explore a range of methods of applying paint, experimenting with colour, texture and shape, and this was observed in the making of paper plate faces with different hairstyles and firework pictures to celebrate Chinese New Year. Good examples were seen of weaving with scrap materials and prints of shapes. Some children need a lot of support to learn important skills when they first start school and therefore the direct teaching of specific skills is the focus of many activities, along with very good opportunities for play. They are taught, for example the skills needed to mix paint and cut and join materials with scissors and glue. There are good opportunities for imaginative play in the role-play areas and children regularly have a well-planned music session and are building up a good repertoire of action songs and rhymes. Children achieve particularly well and all will attain the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average and pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- The curriculum is well planned and literacy is very well planned in other subjects.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

52. Pupils enter school with above average language and literacy skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils reached well above average standards in the 2004 national tests in reading and writing. Compared to similar schools, results are above average in writing and average in reading. Results have been consistently at this level for several years. Pupils, including those from different ethnic groups, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well in all aspects of English. The school has been concerned that monitoring data suggested standards would be lower this year because of the number of pupils, mainly boys, who have special educational needs. However, the action taken to work with pupils in different ability groups has been effective, and inspection evidence indicates that the school will maintain its well above average standards.
53. Pupils enter school with above average standards in speaking and listening, and they are able to understand what adults and other pupils at school say to them. They make good progress in acquiring new vocabulary and language structures, and all groups, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Pupils are able to concentrate and listen well for prolonged

periods and this, combined with their very good behaviour, means that they have many opportunities to acquire new spoken information. When pupils work in groups, despite the teachers' best efforts, the classrooms are sometimes noisy and pupils have difficulty in hearing what they say to each other.

54. The standard of pupils' reading is well above average. They come into school with very good reading habits instilled in the Foundation Stage. Pupils' knowledge of phonics is very good and they use it well to decode print. They know that books can be used to acquire information as well as for enjoying fiction or poetry, and they use dictionaries confidently to help them discover and learn meanings and spellings. Good speaking and listening skills help pupils to predict words in reading, and to provide a strong structure for writing, so pupils know what they want to write and this helps them to become fluent. Pupils' standards of writing are very high, and are supported well by their vocabulary and opportunities to write in different subjects. They are beginning to write purposefully in different styles. Their basic skills are very good. Most spellings are accurate and plausible. Letters are well formed and even, and pupils use capital letters and full stops reasonably consistently.
55. Pupils' behaviour is very good and they are keen to learn. Teaching is good. Lesson planning is thorough and consistent and uses assessment tracking well to know what different groups of pupils achieve. However, feedback to teachers from teaching assistants is too informal and opportunities to alter teachers' planning from day to day are missed. Some teaching in Year 2 is very good, brisk and invigorating and, as a result, pupils learn at a faster pace. Marking is very good throughout both year groups, so pupils have encouragement and explanation. All teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and there is a safe and trusting atmosphere in which to learn. Homework is very well used by teachers to make a very good contribution to pupils' reading and writing. Where the teaching is less effective, particularly in Year 1, the pace is too slow, and teachers talk for too long so that work is repetitive and pupils are not making best use of their time. Sometimes, questioning is not sharply focused for pupils of different capabilities.
56. The curriculum is good and pupils have many different opportunities to use and acquire skills and knowledge in English. The school has a good supply of new books which invites and encourages pupils' reading. Pupils with special educational needs use additional equipment consistently and this helps them to improve their work. Teaching assistants play an effective role in supporting teachers and working with pupils, especially those with special educational needs. They are involved in planning lessons with teachers and are very well informed about what pupils know, do and understand. Word-processing is used well to present work clearly. Personal and social education is interwoven as an integral part of English teaching.
57. Teachers work very well with parents to encourage reading and writing at home through the use of home/school and reading diaries. This keeps an effective dialogue going so that parents have the opportunity to be kept very well informed, making a very good contribution to pupils' progress.
58. Leadership and management are both very good. The subject manager sets a very good example through her own teaching and use of assessment data. Through monitoring, the school has a very good grasp of the strengths and any potential weaknesses in provision, and the subject manager is not complacent about the school's high standards in national tests. Resources have been very well and consistently managed over time so that there is a rolling progress of improvement. The school has maintained its high standards seen at the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

59. The use of literacy across the curriculum is very good. Pupils already learn subject-specific language and style, and their work is very well presented, often using word-processing. The use of literacy in other subjects is very effective, not only because it improves English skills, but because it helps pupils to become independent learners and to understand and question new information more exactly.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning leads to good achievement.
- Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants.
- The monitoring and sharing of good practice is limited.
- Assessment is not being used consistently well to plan for the next step in each child's learning.

Commentary

60. By the end of Year 2, pupils reached standards in the 2004 national tests which were well above average in mathematics. Compared to similar schools, results are above average. In work seen, standards in the current Year 2 are well above average and pupils' achievement is good overall despite the fact that this cohort has fewer pupils of higher ability compared to previous years. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection as a result of good teaching and the very good attitudes of pupils to their learning. Pupils with special educational needs, of different ethnic heritages and those with English as an additional language all make good progress.
61. The school has identified a need to develop pupils' problem-solving skills. Some challenging work was observed in a Year 2 lesson when pupils were involved in problem-solving using addition and subtraction strategies.
62. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and this creates a good environment for learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, and teaching assistants are effective in ensuring these pupils are focused and attentive throughout. Effective planning across year groups ensures consistent progress. Teachers are very skilled at managing pupils' behaviour and ask questions effectively to probe for understanding. Some very good teaching was seen in Year 2, and pupils respond to high levels of challenge with enthusiasm and excitement. The most effective learning takes place in lessons which follow a three-part structure, encouraging brisk, mental questioning at the beginning and consolidation of learning at the end. Some less effective teaching in other years is not of this quality, and lacks challenge, particularly for the most able pupils. This is usually because assessment has not been used to plan for the next learning step for each pupil. In some lessons, the learning is over-directed by the teacher and the most able pupils are not extended to think for themselves. ICT is used to a limited extent to support mathematics and children work with reasonable confidence at programs which enable them to practise skills in number, shape and data-handling.

63. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject manager has created opportunities for parents to get more involved in their child's learning through setting up a programme of mathematics games in the school. Assessment is satisfactory overall and pupils' progress is tracked carefully through the school. Opportunities for monitoring and spreading good practice however have been limited. The school has maintained well above average standards since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is good. Pupils use graphs to record their findings in science and they use measuring skills in subjects such as design and technology. Their skills are sufficient to enable them to use number confidently across all subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils reach well above average standards because of the emphasis on investigative work.
- Pupils are enthusiastic scientists and their approach to investigative work is very positive.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always encouraged to think carefully about their work and explain what they have discovered.
- The monitoring of teaching is underdeveloped and opportunities to share good practice missed.

Commentary

61. In 2004, teacher assessments indicated that all pupils reached Level 2, which is very high in relation to schools nationally. In addition, nearly one half of pupils reached Level 3; this is well above average. In work observed during the inspection, pupils in Year 2, including those from minority ethnic heritages, were reaching similar standards. Achievement overall is good. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. The key factors in this good achievement are the emphasis given to investigative work and the thoughtfully planned activities which are designed to interest and excite the pupils in their learning.
62. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were able to demonstrate their understanding of different forces and spoke confidently, using key words such as 'gravity', 'friction' and 'resistance'. Some higher attaining pupils brought an intelligent and thoughtful approach to their work and understood the principle of making a prediction and testing hypotheses. However, this was not consistent and in one lesson, opportunities for higher attaining pupils in particular, to explain their discoveries, were missed. Year 1 pupils seen were confidently able to recognise different materials and sort them into different categories.
63. Science makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' language and numeracy skills. Specialist vocabulary is used appropriately, and pupils use bar charts and pie charts to record and represent their findings. There is a satisfactory and increasing use of ICT to support learning.
64. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils work enthusiastically and with interest in their groups, working purposefully together on investigative work and recording their findings

carefully. Behaviour is consistently very good, and very positive relationships in the classroom enable a good climate for learning. The most effective teaching is focused sharply on clear learning targets that are clearly understood by the pupils, clear explanations and good classroom management. Careful thought is given to the management of the learning, and there is good use of praise to build pupils' confidence. Effective questioning ensures pupils are challenged to think more deeply. In one good Year 2 lesson on forces, the teacher intervened effectively by asking questions, and helped to move the learning forward and to encourage pupils themselves to contribute ideas. Support from other adults in the classroom is usually of a good quality. Where teaching is less effective, the activities are allowed to go on too long and the pace of learning stalls. The assessment of pupils' work is conscientiously carried out and is always encouraging. Sometimes however, the assessment of pupils' progress is not sufficiently focused on what the pupil needs to do next.

65. The subject co-ordinator was absent from school during the inspection. However, it is clear from the outcomes that science is well led. However, there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning and spreading of good practice. The subject improvement plan identifies appropriate areas for development, including finding time for the more consistent monitoring of teaching and learning. The organisation of a science week, during which a science focus across the whole school is supplemented with visits and outside speakers, is a valuable enrichment of the science curriculum. Well above average standards have been maintained since the last inspection and improvement since then has been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards across the school are well above average.
- Teaching is good, ensuring that pupils achieve well.
- ICT is well used across subjects.
- Assessment is not being used to monitor pupils' progress and identify how they might improve.

Commentary

66. Throughout the school, standards are well above those expected nationally and pupils' achievements are good. Year 2 pupils competently word-process their stories and link graphics and text to present weather forecasts in both the UK and across Europe. The Internet is used to research information, for example on the African topic or George Stephenson. Bar graphs and pie charts are confidently used to present pupils' findings in relation to their favourite ice creams and pets. Pupils in other years are able to create pictures that show care and imagination. Most pupils use the keyboard and mouse with increasing confidence as they continue to move through the school.
67. There are a reasonably good number of computers and the ICT suite is well used. In addition, each class has access to its own computer. One class has recently been equipped with an interactive whiteboard. As a result, pupils have good opportunities for developing their ICT skills in word-processing, graphics, data-handling and control and modelling.
68. The quality of teaching and learning across the school are good. Teachers' have a secure subject knowledge and understanding and use this well to explain ideas clearly and develop

appropriate activities. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support and help pupils when needed. Interventions by the teacher are effective in ensuring that pupils persevere and try to solve problems independently. Pupils are receptive, understand what they are required to do and are keen to use the computers. Good teaching is characterised by a clear explanation of the task, effective questioning to encourage pupils to explain and consolidate their learning, and very good relationships which help to establish a positive working atmosphere.

69. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are underdeveloped, and day-to-day planning is not sufficiently related to pupils' previous learning. Although a simple and effective system records whether pupils have experienced certain activities, there is no means of evaluating how well pupils manage specific tasks. Consequently, planning does not build progressively on prior attainment and the co-ordinator has no mechanism for monitoring the progress of individual pupils or identifying underperformance.
70. Leadership of the subject is good and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good view of how effectively the subject works across the school and the scheme of work supports staff well. A comprehensive programme of training for staff ensures that teachers' skills are continually updated. However, monitoring is not fully developed. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

71. Pupils make good use of ICT to support learning in other subjects. Year 1 pupils were observed making effective use of a program to research different historical insights into seaside holidays. As a result, they were gaining a good understanding of the differences between 1900 and the present day. Pupils use word-processing skills in several subjects and use computers to practise skills in number, shape and data handling. They download information from the Internet to support work in science, geography and history. Good use is also made of ICT in art to draw pictures.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average.
- Teachers' planning is very thorough and consistent.
- Literacy skills are well developed through history.
- The most able pupils could learn even more.

Commentary

72. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of past and present. This is because of the very good use of time lines in every class and the way pupils' learning, for example about old and new toys or Victorian schools, is compared with the present day. Pupils' achievement is good. Literacy skills are very well developed through good opportunities for writing and carefully delivered subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils bring knowledge from home and this information is used well by the school to raise standards of knowledge and understanding.

Pupils' personal and social skills are developed well through history and this helps to bring the subject alive.

73. Pupils love history, and their behaviour is very good because they are involved and fascinated by their work. Teaching is good, with strengths in the planning and teaching of subject-specific skills and knowledge in all classes. Sometimes the most able pupils do not have enough to do and could learn more, but other groups of pupils are challenged and busy. All groups are enthusiastic because teaching is imaginatively planned and uses good resources well to illustrate points and bring the subject to life. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long, but pupils are well motivated so their behaviour remains very good. The curriculum is good and very well planned. Teachers understand, as a result, that specific-subject skills need to be built up systematically through different kinds of knowledge taught, and that subject-specific knowledge makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills.
74. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject manager has a great love for the subject and understands the need for consistency of planning across the school, and for first-hand experiences of pupils through activities such as visits to the Black Country Museum. During the inspection, pupils dressed up in Victorian costumes and played games of the time in a physical education lesson. This made history come alive for the pupils. As in other foundation subjects, assessment, although judged satisfactory, is not specific enough to help teachers adapt their plan effectively for children of different abilities. The school has maintained its high standards since the last inspection.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average.
- Teaching is good and leads to pupils achieving well.
- Some higher attaining pupils could learn even more.
- Assessment is informal and does not provide enough information for teachers to plan for different groups.

Commentary

75. At the end of Year 2 pupils' skills and knowledge are well above average, and their achievements are good. Pupils develop their mapping skills and sense of place throughout Years 1 and 2 so that by the end of Year 2 they know that there are different countries in the British Isles and many countries in Africa. They learn about simple co-ordinates, and to recognise features such as seas and rivers on maps. Pupils in Year 2 can use a map of an African village and compare different times and types of transport between the countryside in Ghana and in England. Pupils begin to understand the differences especially in money and distance. They have some grasp of cultural differences, such as bartering instead of using money, and the effects of a different climate on food production.
76. Pupils are enthusiastic and interested in lessons and their behaviour is very good. They come into school with above average levels of knowledge and understanding and are keen to learn from good teaching. Teachers plan together well and a good range of resources is used effectively to illustrate teaching. They use literacy and subject-specific language very well to

extend knowledge and opportunities for writing. Pupils use computers to word-process their work and produce high quality displays, for example about Chereporri, a Ghanaian village. Pupils are given a good awareness of multicultural issues through discussion of different ways of life in different countries. However, teaching does not always challenge the most capable pupils enough, because assessment is not focused enough to help teachers plan precisely for pupils of all capabilities. Curriculum planning is good and ensures that lessons build successively on skills and knowledge previously learned.

77. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader is committed and brings a coherent strategy to planning across the school. However, assessment, whilst satisfactory is not well developed, and the monitoring of provision through the school is not consistent enough. The school has maintained the good quality of provision noted at the last inspection.

Religious education

78. No judgement on provision can be made as no teaching was available for inspection.
79. From discussion with pupils, both formally and informally, standards are broadly in line with those expected. In Year 2, pupils display a wide range of knowledge and insight. Average attaining pupils know basic features of Christianity and have some knowledge of the Old Testament. They understand that worship and festivals are an integral part of religion, and that there are other religions with places of worship other than church, and that have different festivals. The most capable pupils can name Muslims, Christians, Jews and Hindus as people of different faiths. Pupils of all abilities know there are symbols for different faiths. Less capable pupils tend to confuse ideas and subjects, and are unclear about their ideas.
80. Pupils are eager to discuss religious education and find it very interesting and intriguing. They want to learn and recall events, such as the day spent on Divali, and making diva pots, with enthusiasm.
81. The school has adapted the Solihull agreed syllabus to its own needs, and specific learning areas are carefully addressed and developed over time with clear specifications on the school development plan. Parents are invited to be involved in planning events, such as the Divali celebrations, and the school has made good efforts to recognise and address effectively the festivals and culture of religions as well as Christianity. Resources are good and well managed.
82. The subject leader has a good understanding of the needs of the subject and has made sure that the subject is planned distinctly from personal and social education, and this gives teachers a clear lead when knowing what they have to teach. There is less emphasis about developing the understanding and needs of pupils of different levels of ability and this is an area not yet addressed. This is because assessment for pupils of different abilities is informal and is not being used to adapt planning for pupils of different capabilities.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

83. No lessons were observed in design and technology or art and design. One lesson was observed in music and one in physical education. There is insufficient evidence to judge provision in these subjects, which were not the focus of the inspection.
84. The lesson in **music** was good. Confident teaching of a Reception class ensured the pupils made good progress in their rhythmic development and in their quality of singing. Teaching

was well planned to build step-by-step on previous learning. Skills were practised carefully and pupils responded positively to the clear direction of the teaching. In assemblies, pupils sing accurately and with a good sense of pitch and timing. A number of pupils have the opportunity to learn orchestral instruments from visiting teachers. Four pupils learning the cello have made very good progress in a relatively short time as a result of skilled teaching.

85. In **art**, a scrutiny of the work on display in classrooms and throughout the school indicates that pupils have experience in a wide range of media. Some pencil drawings of African fruit and vegetables show a good control and careful attention to detail with some understanding of tone and proportion. Pupils have worked effectively to present a collage of rubbish which makes good links to the pupils' developing environmental awareness. Evidence from the art portfolio shows pupils working confidently in painting, with a growing understanding of primary colours and colour mixing, print making and clay work. Pupils are also experienced in computer generated images.
86. The last inspection indicated that pupils should understand the purpose and function of the things they were making in **design and technology**. This has now been fully addressed. Pupils design and make a wide range of well designed and constructed work, including glove puppets, party hats, moving pictures, greetings cards, models of houses and cake boxes. Further examples seen in displays across the school include a well researched project in which pupils were designing and making a bridge. In the Reception class the children were very involved in designing and making an obstacle course for hamsters from scrap material.
87. One lesson in **physical education** was seen in the Reception class. Teaching and learning were good and pupils were developing their physical skills well and thoroughly enjoying the lesson. Good links have been forged with outside sports organisations and include football coaching from Birmingham City Football Club, and a professional sports group to coach for tennis and football. The school is also getting involved in the School's Sports Partnership Programme with a local secondary school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

88. It was not possible to make a judgement about provision, achievement or teaching in personal, social and health education. The subject is taught through all subjects, in circle time and during assemblies.
89. The school ethos and assemblies contribute positively to pupils' development as citizens as well as their personal and social education. Pupils in assemblies were encouraged to think of others and to be aware of their feelings. During the inspection week, the assembly theme of "happy and sad" was developed particularly well. Provision for developing a healthy lifestyle is good. Pupils learn about good eating habits and the importance of exercise. The school's recent "Healthy Schools Award" is recognition of its excellence in this area. Pupils are also learning to be aware of other's space when playing and to share equipment without arguments.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3

The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).