

INSPECTION REPORT

YORKSWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kingshurst

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104077

Headteacher: Mrs. Deborah Wilson

Lead inspector: Mrs. Carol Worthington

Dates of inspection: 14 – 16 June 2005

Inspection number: 268328

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 – 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 345 |
| School address: | Kingshurst Way Kingshurst Birmingham West Midlands |
| Postcode: | B37 6DF |
| Telephone number: | 0121 770 3144 |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs. Julie Cobley |
| Date of previous inspection: | 12 July 1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Yorkswood is a larger than average primary school with a nursery of 40 part-time places. There are slightly more boys than girls in the school. Pupils almost all come from the local area, which has significant social and economic deprivation. Over 50 per cent are entitled to free school meals, which is much higher than the national average. Most pupils are white British; the rest are of mixed race. A small percentage (1.8) speaks English as an additional language. Nearly 21 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, similar to the national average, as is the percentage with statements. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulty or social and emotional problems. Attainment on entry is well below average. Pupil mobility is high. The school holds awards for achievement, and Investors in People.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|--|
| 20609 | Carol Worthington | Lead inspector | Science Design and technology |
| 19436 | Michael O'Malley | Lay inspector | |
| 5020 | John Burnham | Team inspector | English Citizenship History Geography |
| 32021 | Andrew McClean | Team inspector | Mathematics Art and design Physical education |
| 12764 | Wendy Thomas | Team inspector | The Foundation Stage Music Religious education Information and communication technology |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Yorkswood is a school where children are happy, well behaved, and fully included in all social activities; pastoral care is very good, but the school fails to give its pupils a satisfactory academic education.

Standards in literacy are too low. Attainment on entry is well below average: children make a very good start in the nursery but their progress is not evenly sustained and their achievement is, therefore, unsatisfactory. The quality of education is unsatisfactory. Leadership and management are also unsatisfactory because too much responsibility for the curriculum is delegated and is not being thoroughly checked. The school does not give satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The standard of literacy is generally well below average, except in Years 5 and 6.
- Standards in science and mathematics are approaching the national average in Year 6.
- Attendance is poor and punctuality unsatisfactory.
- A high proportion of teaching and learning in reception and in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory; in the nursery and Year 6 both are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Extra-curricular activities are good and well attended.
- Some statutory requirements are not met.

Improvement since the previous inspection in July 1999 has been unsatisfactory. Standards in literacy have fallen, attendance remains well below average, and standards in mathematics are still below expectation for younger pupils. Teaching and learning have not improved. These serious issues now need to be addressed urgently. Whilst younger pupils have improved their standard of information and communication technology (ICT) as a result of better provision, older pupils have not. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and standards in design and technology have shown good improvement, and target-setting is better, though the use of literacy and numeracy targets is not extended across the whole curriculum. The headteacher is focusing on improving the partnership with parents, and in this is having some success. The governing body now has a satisfactory involvement with the school.

In accordance with section 13 (7) of the School Inspections Act 1996 I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E – lowest 5% of the country
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Current standards are well below average in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and below average in Key Stage 2. The school's performance in the national tests at the end of both key stages has been falling steadily over the past three years and in 2004 was very low for English and well below average for mathematics for 11-year-olds. Literacy, particularly spoken English and reading, is poor, except in Years 5 and 6 where it is improving to below average. In mathematics and science, standards are close to average by Year 6. The standard of religious education is well below average by Year 6 and that of ICT is below average. **Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, but satisfactory in the junior classes because pupils make good progress in Years 5 and 6.**

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. **Their overall spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is also good.** Attendance is well below average and punctuality unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall but there are differences between the key stages. In the nursery they are very good but in reception they are unsatisfactory. Key Stage 1 is poor but Key Stage 2 is good, with some very good practice in Years 5 and 6. The teaching of reading is poor; the school does not have consistently applied methods to improve literacy. All teachers manage behaviour well. Assessment is not being used well enough to plan work appropriate for children of all abilities. Those with special educational needs are well catered for, particularly in the Nurture Group, but average and above average pupils do not have their needs fully met in class, even when set for ability.

The curriculum is unsatisfactory overall because it fails to provide religious education according to the Local Agreed Syllabus in Key Stage 2. The nursery curriculum is good. Literacy and numeracy are not developed well enough in the whole curriculum and ICT is not used to support learning in all subjects because resources are inadequate. The curriculum is enriched with a wide range of good quality and popular extra-curricular activities. Arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are generally good. Pupils receive good support and guidance. Partnership with parents is satisfactory, and links with the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory because the curriculum, teaching and learning are poorly led and managed. Teaching is not effectively monitored and evaluated; a high proportion is unsatisfactory. The whole-school strategy for the improvement of literacy is not effective because it is not being applied or checked consistently. School development planning is unsatisfactory because it does not focus strongly enough on raising standards of literacy. Management of social inclusion and pastoral care is good. Governance is satisfactory but some statutory requirements are not met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The few parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and the relatively small number who completed the questionnaire view the school in a positive light. Several parents said they did not want their children to be pushed academically. Many do not fulfil their statutory obligation to send their children to school regularly. Pupils enjoy being at school; like their parents, they appreciate the care and support they receive, and like the way they are consulted.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards of literacy by devising consistently applied and checked methods by which teachers can
 - make guided reading more effective and make reading assessment more rigorous;
 - ensure that pupils get regular practice in paired and small-group discussions to widen vocabulary and to gain confidence in speaking;
 - use fewer worksheets requiring single-word answers, and ensure that written work is completed;
 - avoid excessive use of positive comments in marking so that inaccurate spelling, weak grammar and poor handwriting do not persist.
- Raise the standard of teaching and learning all round by
 - providing all pupils of average and above average ability with appropriate challenge in every subject so they may reach their potential;
 - improving the consistency with which lesson objectives are conveyed to pupils and making more use of plenary sessions to consolidate learning.
- Raise the level of attendance by involving parents more constructively.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Make sure religious education is taught in all years, according to the Local Agreed Syllabus
- Make sure the prospectus contains national comparative data for seven- and 11-year-olds
- Ensure that auditing of health and safety procedures is systematic and that all risks are assessed.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards are well below average in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. They are below average in Key Stage 2. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall. Standards have been falling steadily in national tests in both key stages for the past three years.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in literacy are well below average in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1
- Literacy standards have improved to below average by the end of Year 6 because of the good teaching in Years 5 and 6
- Achievement is unsatisfactory except in Year 5 and 6 where it is often good
- Standards in science and mathematics are close to the national average by the end of Year 6
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well; many of average and above average ability do not.

Commentary

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 13.2 (13.0) | 15.8 (15.7) |
| writing | 12.6 (14.1) | 14.6 (14.6) |
| mathematics | 14.0 (15.2) | 16.3 (16.3) |

There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 23.1 (24.4) | 26.9 (26.8) |
| mathematics | 25.2 (25.8) | 27.0 (26.8) |
| science | 27.9 (27.5) | 28.6 (28.6) |

There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Current standards are well below average in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and below average in Key Stage 2. The school's performance in the national tests for 11-year-olds has been falling over the past three years, due mainly to declining English standards, which fell sharply in 2004 when the school's test results were very low and in the lowest five per cent of the country. Statutory targets were missed by a long way in English. Standards were also well below the average of schools who had a similar intake of pupils in Key Stage 1. In mathematics, over a similar period, standards rose until 2002 but have been falling ever since, and in 2004 were well below average nationally though in line with the average of similar schools. In science, standards have fallen from average to below the national average over the past two years, but were above those of similar schools in 2004.
2. In all three core subjects in 2004, few higher ability pupils gained the above average level 5, though in science, a much higher proportion attained the expected level 4 than in most schools. In mathematics, the proportion gaining level 4 was in line with the national average, but in English, this proportion was very low. Over half failed to gain level 4 or above; nearly one fifth failed to reach level 3. These pupils

went on to their secondary schools without the basic qualification in English necessary to read secondary textbooks.

3. Standards in English and mathematics tests for seven-year-olds in 2004 were well below the national average; reading was worse than writing. Compared with similar schools, reading and mathematics were below average but writing was average. Standards in the current Year 2 have not noticeably improved. The school has an average percentage of pupils with special educational needs, and standardised performance indicators done in Year 1 show that there was serious underachievement, with a far greater number failing to gain level 2 and far fewer gaining level 3 than was predicted in both English and mathematics. The reasons for the decline in English in Year 6 stem from unsatisfactory provision in the lower school, which leaves too much to be done to raise standards in Years 5 and 6.
4. Children make a very good start in the nursery but this is not maintained in reception where language and literacy development is unsatisfactory. Very few children are on course to meet the standards expected by the time they are five, so they are not ready to start the National Curriculum in Year 1. Teachers in Year 1 have satisfactory understanding of the National Literacy Strategy but do not consistently apply literacy targets in all subjects, and foundation subject work contains too many worksheets requiring one- or two-word responses, from which children achieve little improvement in written work. In Year 2, not enough use is made of assessment of what pupils know; this results in pupils of average and lower ability struggling while the learning of the more able is not extended to allow pupils to achieve their potential.
5. Standards in speaking and listening are low because younger pupils are not consistently encouraged to speak; no structured role play or speaking were observed during snack times, for example, and older ones are not consistently encouraged to discuss their learning with each other in pairs or small groups in lessons. The standard of reading is below average because there are weaknesses in its teaching in all years and the school has been focusing on parental help rather than improving the provision for guided reading in school and reading for pleasure to widen vocabulary.
6. Standards in mathematics are below average in Year 2 but average in Year 6. There has been a steady improvement this year in Key Stage 2. However, work seen consisted mainly of number. Current un-validated national test results for Year 2 show overall standards to be below average again. Mathematical competence is not developed well enough across the curriculum, however, even though skills are satisfactory in Key Stage 2.
7. Standards in other subjects vary and depend on the quality of leadership. In science, they are currently close to average in Year 6, though below average overall. Standards and competence in ICT have risen in Key Stage 1 and are now similar to those found nationally, but they remain below average in Key Stage 2 because the school does not have sufficient hardware or software to support the full development of ICT in the curriculum. In religious education standards are below average in Key Stage 1 and well below in Key Stage 2 because provision is inadequately planned and does not meet the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus. Standards in design and technology have improved considerably since the previous inspection and are now average because of the work that the co-ordinator has done with outside consultants. In other subjects, it was not possible to make a judgement because insufficient evidence was gained: literacy and numeracy were the focus of the inspection.
8. Achievement is unsatisfactory overall. Pupils' very good start in the nursery, with some improvement in Year 1, is not good enough to improve standards overall by the end of Year 2, leaving much to be done in Key Stage 2. Achievement is much better in Years 5 and 6 where good to very good teaching results in similar learning and achievement, but this is too late for standards to improve enough. Many pupils of average and above average ability do not reach their potential.
9. Gifted and talented pupils achieve satisfactorily, not through extended classwork but through programmes run in partnership with the Excellence Cluster. Pupils with special educational needs do well, particularly in mathematics and science, but the long tail of pupils who do not achieve the expected level 2 at the age of seven and level 4 at eleven indicates that there is some underachievement, given the normal percentage of pupils of average ability identified. The few children who do not speak

English as their first language generally achieve satisfactorily and the school has had some successes amongst them, particularly in Key Stage 2. There is no significant difference between the achievements of boys and girls; these fluctuate yearly.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good. Punctuality is unsatisfactory and attendance is poor.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is still well below the national average.
- Pupils take a keen interest in their lessons and other school activities.
- Pupils know what is expected of their behaviour and respond well.
- There are good relationships amongst pupils.
- Pupils' personal development is good.

Commentary

10. Pupils like school. They work hard in lessons, and many take part in activities outside class. They behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and well-mannered because the school sets very high expectations for their conduct and staff work very effectively to ensure that these are met. There were two fixed-period exclusions last year, and both were appropriate in the circumstances.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 6.7 | School data | 1.1 |
| 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.

11. Attendance remains well below the national average. There has been no improvement in the last four years. About a quarter of the pupils attend school for less than 90 per cent of the time and this disrupts their education. Unauthorised absence is well above average. Too many pupils arrive late to school, which interrupts lessons, and too many (one in seven) take holidays during term time.
12. The procedures for addressing unsatisfactory attendance and following up unexplained absence are good, but they have not been established long enough to have had full effect. The education welfare service gives good support. A number of initiatives are used for promoting attendance and punctuality, including weekly assemblies and awards, but the importance of good attendance is not stressed enough in newsletters to parents, and term-time holidays are not rigorously discouraged. Teachers discuss children's attendance with parents, but the formal referral system does not include senior teachers, who are therefore not sufficiently involved in the process. Learning mentors monitor attendance and punctuality closely and speak to parents. Procedures for monitoring lateness are good but they have not been audited.

13. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and their moral development good. Assemblies on themes such as forgiveness include stories and reflection that help pupils to consider values and a wide range of beliefs. The school is very effective in promoting mutual respect and concern for others. All pupils mix very well, regardless of background, and make sure no-one is left out. There is little bullying and no racially motivated incidents have been reported; disagreements are quickly dispelled. Pupils distinguish clearly between right and wrong, and they are encouraged to think through the consequences of their actions.
14. Pupils' social development is good. The school takes every opportunity to build their self-esteem and help them to understand their community responsibilities. All pupils, therefore, develop confident attitudes to school. They are keen to take responsibility as school council representatives, for example, or in the Squabble Squad (mediators who help others sort out disagreements in the playground), and carry out these duties well. However, they are not given sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils regularly raise funds for charity, and they look after the school environment well.
15. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school gives good opportunities for pupils to learn about their own cultural traditions through assemblies, visits and visitors, a good range of extra-curricular activities, and studies in class. Pupils are taught about other religions in assemblies and religious education, but overall there are too few opportunities for them to learn about other cultures to prepare them for life in multi-cultural Britain.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall; they are unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage, poor in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Key Stage 1, two in every five lessons seen were unsatisfactory.
- In Year 6 and the nursery, teaching and learning were very good; teachers have good expertise and plan well.
- Behaviour management is good throughout the school.
- Assessment is not being used to plan work appropriate for all abilities.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 11 (29%) | 10 (26%) | 10 (26%) | 7 (18%) | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

16. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. In Key Stage 2 they are good overall, in Key Stage 1 they are poor and in the Foundation Stage they are unsatisfactory. The best takes place in Years 5 and 6, the nursery and the Nurture Group for pupils with special educational needs. In these classes a high proportion of very good teaching was seen which led to good and sometimes very good achievement. Features of these lessons were very well planned activities which captured pupils' interest and stimulated a desire to learn and succeed. In the nursery, for example, the very good planning for a variety of activities in an exciting environment led to good language development and progress in numeracy work. Samples of pupils' work also show a similar pattern in learning over a longer period of time.

17. A serious weakness is the lack of expertise in developing literacy, particularly in reception, Year 2 and, to a lesser extent, Years 3 and 4. The school has concentrated on improving writing and in this has had some success but the teaching of reading is unsatisfactory for younger pupils and speaking and listening are generally not developed satisfactorily. Consequently, pupils' vocabulary remains limited. Teachers develop subject-specific vocabulary in science, design and technology and humanities, particularly for older children, but the all-round breadth of vocabulary which comes from being well-read eludes the majority of pupils who do not experience reading for pleasure at home. There was little evidence of homework being set or a homework club being held regularly.
18. Teachers in Years 5 and 6 have good expertise in developing literacy in English lessons, and also through science, history and geography, encouraging discussion in history and imaginative writing in science. This enables good and often very good progress to be made in these years, which raises attainment considerably at the end of the key stage. Expertise in these years also extends to mathematics, and by the end of Year 6, mathematics standards are approaching average, though mostly in number work. Work samples from all years showed a distinct difference in progress which tallies with the differences in teaching in various years.
19. In the best lessons, teachers encourage and engage all their pupils in learning, which enabled, for example, very low ability groups in Year 5 English to write several verses of a rap poem successfully. Where there is good challenge and high expectations, pupils achieve the high standards of which they are capable: pupils in Year 5, for example, achieved close to level 5 in a mathematics lesson on mental visualisation of two-dimensional shapes.
20. A major weakness in teaching is a lack of planning for all abilities in each class, which usually results in higher ability pupils not being sufficiently challenged in mixed-ability groups. In reception, for example, planning for children's independent activities does not have enough focus or assessable objectives to enable children to make enough progress when engaged, for instance, in playing pirates or colouring in rainbow fish. Lesson objectives are not always conveyed to pupils and plenary sessions do not always consolidate learning to help pupils reflect on what they need to do to improve. Furthermore, the over-use of worksheets discourages pupils' independent and creative thought.
21. The school is well resourced, particularly in the Foundation Stage, where the outdoor area is used well for team activities such as the parachute game, and resources cover all the areas of learning for the under-fives. Although the ICT resources are not yet sufficient in Key Stage 2 for the full coverage of curriculum requirements, teachers are greatly assisted by the presence of a part-time technician to ensure that resources are in good working order and can be used to full effect. Some very good use of the interactive whiteboard gave high challenge in a Year 6 multiplication task to consolidate knowledge and use of tables.
22. A feature of nearly all lessons is the teachers' insistence on high standards of behaviour, which results in pupils being attentive and having good attitudes to learning, irrespective of the standard of teaching. This is a real strength of the school, and even in some classes, such as a Year 1 science lesson on senses, which proceeded at a very leisurely pace, pupils generally behave well. Slow pace and low expectations, particularly for pupils of average and above average ability, are significant reasons for lessons being unsatisfactory. Books also show that pupils are far less productive than they should be in written work. Time slippage is also apparent when pupils observed in several classes, after having had a full break-time, then spend a further ten minutes eating toast and drinking milk before lessons begin.
23. Teaching assistants are used well in the Nurture Group, but not in all lessons. Sometimes those attached to one particular pupil make little effort to assist, as seen in physical education in Year 3 where the assistant sat and watched the whole lesson without helping. There are not enough assistants in reception, however, nor in Key Stage 1, and this severely compounds the problem of giving all children sufficient attention.
24. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory, though good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers' marking has recently been reviewed and work samples showed improvements, with more diagnostic comments in books aimed at improving pupils' work. There is little evidence of corrections being done, however,

especially regarding spelling. In the lower school, there is too little expectation in some classes for pupils to finish work. Untidy presentation is not remarked upon nor corrected; in many cases, pupils do not know how best to improve.

25. Over the longer term, the school collects data for every child every year, based on national statutory and non-statutory tests and some other standardised tests used to predict performance. Comprehensive records are kept by the assessment co-ordinator. Benchmarks against which to measure attainment in literacy and numeracy have been allocated to each year and, in Key Stage 2, pupils have been grouped according to their own targets for improvement. These data are not yet being used satisfactorily in all classes, however, nor are they being effectively checked by managers, so their collection is not yet having the desired effect of raising standards in the lower part of the school.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is unsatisfactory because it fails to provide adequately for religious education and cross-curricular skills, particularly literacy. The quality and range of learning resources are good in Foundation Stage. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Extra-curricular activities are good and well attended.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy and numeracy are not sufficiently embedded across the curriculum.
- Provision for religious education is poor.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support.
- Enrichment of the curriculum is good, with a wide range and quality of extra-curricular activities.
- Information and communication technology is not used to support learning in all subjects.

Commentary

26. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, but does not meet statutory requirements for religious education; planning for this subject is weak, indeed non-existent in some classes, and does not fulfil the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus.
27. The curriculum is fully inclusive in that boys and girls receive equal opportunities to experience the whole curriculum, and pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. Early identification of pupils' needs results in pupils receiving good support on entry to school, with good support from external sources. Regular review of pupils' progress and updating of pupils' individual plans ensure good progress. Very good use of a Nurture Group results in pupils with specific behavioural difficulties receiving focused support. Pupils with English as an additional language, though few, also receive regular focused support which enables them to participate fully in all school activities. The provision for many average and higher ability pupils, however, is not satisfactory because they are not given enough help or challenge to achieve as well as they are able.
28. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been implemented, but there is still a lack of teacher expertise in the improvement of children's oral ability, and the school's methods of teaching reading are poor, even though the school has laid great emphasis upon the teaching of literacy in recent years. Evidence of acquired literacy skills being employed across the curriculum is limited.
29. Subjects other than literacy and numeracy are taught in blocks. In Year 6, so much time has been devoted to preparation for National Curriculum tests that other subjects have suffered. Religious education has not been taught at all recently, for example, and the scheme of work is incomplete and does not meet the full requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus. Information and communication technology has yet to be fully developed as a tool to support learning in all subjects. Curriculum policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects in the National Curriculum. Sex, drugs and alcohol education are integrated into the teaching of personal, health and social education, supplemented by visits from nursing services.

30. Enrichment of the curriculum is good, with older pupils participating in outdoor education residential visits. The school is regularly visited by local authors and artists, as well as visiting theatre groups. Pupils experience support from visiting musicians and poets. There is good extra-curricular provision incorporating music, dance, and a variety of sports, with local coaches actively involved. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is at present limited, but links with the local high school are good. Preparation of pupils to transfer from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory because too many are not ready to start the National Curriculum, despite their very good start in the nursery.
31. Teaching staff have the necessary qualifications and experience to meet current curriculum needs, but some have not fully taken on the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. A high proportion of teachers have been in the school for a long time and are being paid for management responsibilities. The school has less money than it needs for classroom assistants, which results in some aspects of the curriculum being inadequately supported. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and good in the nursery, where it enhances the curriculum well.
32. The school is well resourced in some curriculum areas but there are shortfalls in religious education and ICT in Key Stage 2 which result in inadequate coverage of some parts of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are good. The provision for support and guidance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school takes very good care of pupils and takes good account of their views.
- There are very good arrangements for supporting pupils' personal development.

Commentary

33. The school cares very well for pupils' medical, social, and emotional needs. Teachers make sure that all pupils are secure and confident to get on with their learning. Good additional provision is available for childcare before and after school through the breakfast club, and extended care for nursery children. Outside agencies support the school very well. Procedures for child protection are good. Arrangements for first aid are satisfactory and staff make sure that pupils learn and play safely. However, inspectors saw no risk assessments for playground equipment.
34. New pupils are helped well to settle into school, and this includes home visits. Pupils are confident there is someone to turn to if they have problems, and the school takes good account of their views both formally and informally.
35. Pupils' personal development is monitored and supported very effectively. The teachers and staff know the pupils very well and they are quick to note where pupils need extra help. They provide many opportunities for pupils to build confidence and practise their social skills. There is very good support for those with emotional and behavioural problems including the Nurture Group, friendship groups, and workshops on anger management.
36. Satisfactory systems are in place for tracking pupils' progress with their studies. Good support is available for pupils with special needs and for those with English as an additional language. All pupils taught in ability groups from Year 2 onwards for English and mathematics so that teaching can more closely match their needs. They are set targets in literacy and numeracy, and these are discussed with parents. Some extra help is given in booster groups to pupils who need help with reading and writing, though this is dependent on the availability of classroom assistants.

37. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into the life of the school. Good support by the teacher and teaching assistants for these pupils is evident. Pupils' specific needs are identified in individual education plans, which are regularly updated and reviewed. Parental support is welcomed and pupils themselves benefit from this close liaison between home and school. Parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress and regularly attend review meetings. An up-to-date action plan is regularly reviewed and evaluated. Individual education plans with clear targets have been drawn up for all pupils on the register. Review dates are monitored and actions regularly evaluated. Good statistical evidence of tests is also well used to inform all staff of the needs of these pupils.
38. The Nurture Group, for selected pupils in Years 1 and 2 (currently ten), who have specific behavioural needs, is particularly successful. This results from very effective liaison between the special educational needs co-ordinator and the teacher in charge of the group. The most successful aspect of this provision is re-integration into mainstream schooling for all such pupils with enhanced self-esteem and confidence.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents and good links with the community and other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works closely with parents so as to help them support their children's education.
- The school continually looks for ways to involve parents but comparatively few take part.
- Links with the community and other schools provide a good range of opportunities to enrich the pupils' education and support their personal development.

Commentary

39. The school keeps parents well informed through regular newsletters, diary updates, and meetings. The prospectus and governors' annual report are well presented but they do not fully meet statutory requirements because they do not include comparative results for national tests. There are satisfactory arrangements for keeping parents informed about their children's progress. End-of-year reports are satisfactory.
40. Parents know what is taught and how they can help their children from information given in termly summaries, induction meetings and booklets. The school encourages parents to raise concerns and is quick to involve them when there are problems. It surveys parents' views and takes good account of their suggestions and concerns. Teachers are readily accessible; homework planners and reading diaries are used for communicating with parents. Procedures for introducing parents and their children to the school are good. The school provides additional support and advice for families who have special needs. The learning mentors have worked closely with parents to promote school attendance, but overall there has been no improvement.
41. The school encourages parents to get involved with special occasions such as the nursery lunch, talent day, and the anti-bullying campaign, but relatively few take part. The parents' action community team invites parents to activities such as the community picnic, and Solihull College has run courses for parents. The extended schools initiative will provide more opportunities for parents to get involved through the community room. Many parents support their children at events such as sports days, assemblies, and concerts. Some parents help in school with fund-raising, trips, and working parties. Few parents, however, attend meetings about National Curriculum tests or the school curriculum.
42. Links with the community are good. Pupils visit museums, farms, and other places of interest. Many visitors to the school - including authors, artists, and theatre groups - broaden pupils' first-hand experience and significantly raise their interest in learning. Residential visits contribute well to pupils' personal development. Church leaders take assemblies and pupils visit the local church. Pupils swim at the local pool. They take part in competitions and festivals. Pupils have entertained local residents.

The 'Green Scheme' supports pupils work on the environment. The choir contributes to local events. Community sports coaches lead activities in school.

43. Partnership with other schools and transfer arrangements are good. The local cluster of schools shares resources, training, and expertise to provide many opportunities to support pupils' education. There are joint initiatives, such as the Beacon literacy project and the programme for gifted and talented. The "cluster" behaviour improvement programme makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils compete with other schools in sport; sporting links with the local secondary school are good. The school is working closely with others to develop the neighbourhood nursery, community room, and children's centre. The school supports initial teacher training and work experience students.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The curriculum, teaching and learning are poorly managed, but pastoral care and social inclusion are managed well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the development of social inclusion and children's personal development.
- Too much of the leadership responsibility for teaching and for the curriculum is unsatisfactorily delegated.
- Teaching and learning are not consistently and effectively monitored or evaluated and have yet to make an impact upon standards, except in Years 5 and 6.
- School development planning is unsatisfactory in that it does not focus enough on raising standards.
- The deputy head has worked hard to improve pupils' literacy and this is effective in Years 5 and 6.

Commentary

44. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The headteacher has good clarity of vision and sense of purpose relating to social inclusion and pastoral care. She is well respected locally for her work with the Excellence Cluster and is very involved in projects which will involve the school in further aspects of day care at either end of the school day. One of her major areas of focus currently is partnership with parents. The extended school project, which is intended to bring more parents into the school, is one that is very time-consuming, but slowly bearing fruit. However, the headteacher has delegated responsibility for the leadership of the curriculum, teaching and learning too far. Of the long-serving, staff, many have historic salary increments and have been given responsibilities to manage a key stage or part of a key stage, but this is not wholly successful because their monitoring work is not being adequately checked or evaluated. Leadership and management of teaching, learning, and the curriculum are poor, resulting in unsatisfactory teaching and learning, and an unsatisfactory curriculum.
45. The deputy head has responsibility for literacy in the school. He is hard-working and his methods have made a real difference to the provision of literacy in Key Stage 2. He keeps extensive assessment data relating to every pupil and can show their progress or lack of it. He has also devised methods whereby intervention can take place in order to raise the attainment of individuals and groups of pupils. Whilst this has been successful in Years 5 and 6 where the standard of literacy is rising, it has not been so lower down the school. This is due to the lack of a whole-school focus on what exactly needs to be done in every class to improve literacy and a lack of monitoring by senior staff to check that it is being done effectively in each class. Subject leaders do not always 'lead from the front' in teaching, and so the expertise of the best teachers is not shared with others. This produces a wide disparity in the standard of teaching - especially of literacy - in the school.
46. The school development planning is unsatisfactory because it does not concentrate enough on raising standards. The school priorities were satisfactorily identified through whole-school review: these are literacy (reading and writing) and ICT. Throughout the school development plan, however, the focus is on putting systems in place. Success criteria are too vague to be measurable and there is a greater emphasis on social inclusion than on academic achievement. Whilst it is good that subject leaders are

given specific time to monitor and evaluate provision for their subject in the curriculum, there is no whole-school policy on how this is to be done nor are there criteria to reflect whole-school needs, such as the development of literacy across the curriculum. School self-evaluation is not being used well enough to have the desired effect on raising standards, and is, therefore, poor.

47. Leadership and management of pastoral care are good: leaders are committed to inclusion, and social inclusion is good. Relationships in all aspects of school life are particularly good, and pupils feel secure as a result. Leadership of special educational needs is good, thus ensuring that such pupils receive very effective support and challenge in their work. The overall management of this group by a specialist teacher is good. Academic inclusion, however, could be improved if more attention were paid to raising the attainment of pupils of average and above average ability in class.
48. The governing body is relatively new and has not had time to help shape the direction and vision for the school; overall governance is satisfactory. Governors are highly committed to the school and are ably led by their chairman, who has a productive relationship with the management team. Governors readily identified literacy as the main weakness in the school and showed their knowledge of other issues, such as attendance. The breach of the statutory requirement for religious education on the curriculum was not known to them and there are other breaches of statutory requirements, such as omissions from the prospectus and some health and safety matters.
49. The school has adequate performance management procedures but staff development is not sufficiently focused on training to improve the teaching of speaking and listening, reading or ICT. Staff difficulties due to redundancy issues have been resolved for the coming academic year. The staff is top-heavy; high spending on staff with management responsibilities prevents the employment of more classroom assistants which are badly needed for younger children in particular. This is not the best value the school can achieve. It is well-funded but, because of its relatively high spending, the falling standards, and unsatisfactory quality of education, it gives unsatisfactory value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 963,135 |
| Total expenditure | 963,847 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,885 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 13,783 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 13,071 |

50. The school has not improved sufficiently since the previous inspection. Standards in literacy have fallen, as has attendance; standards in mathematics are still below expectation for younger pupils. These serious issues need to be addressed urgently. Whilst there have been satisfactory gains in ICT provision and standards among younger pupils, these still need to be extended to older ones. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and standards in design and technology have shown good improvement, and there has been satisfactory improvement in target-setting, though the use of literacy and numeracy targets is not yet extended across the whole curriculum. The headteacher is focusing on partnership with parents, and in this area is having some success. The governing body has a satisfactory involvement with the school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children join the nursery part time after their third birthday; their attainment is well below average, particularly in the areas of social development and language skills. Before they start school, staff visit the children at home to get to know them. Parents are then invited to bring their children to school for some story sessions. The school prepares a home/school book for parents to complete with their children over the summer holiday. The outdoor learning area has recently been developed and provides a stimulating range of activities in each of the six areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. The area is used by both the nursery and reception classes.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between adults and children are good.
- Children settle well in the nursery and make good progress towards the early learning goals, but this slows down in reception.
- Adults are good role models and help children develop their social skills.

Commentary

51. Adults provide opportunities to help children develop their social skills through a good range of activities in the nursery; they settle in quickly and become familiar with the nursery routines, responding well to staff. They play nicely together, sharing toys and taking turns. They greatly enjoy playing parachute games in the hall as a large group, and also playing together with the sand or exploring the rock pool outside. They co-operate well when playing in the small- world pirate ship.
52. In the reception classes, children remain happy and generally get on well together, but the rate of progress in this area of learning slows. In class and group activities children respond well, but the independent activities are not well planned to promote learning in this area. Many children do not choose to play together. The available activities are not well planned to encourage children in co-operative play.
53. Overall, teaching in this area is satisfactory. The planning for independent activities in the nursery is good and all activities are closely linked to the early learning goals. In the reception classes, whilst the direct teaching activities are satisfactory, planning for independent activities is not sufficiently rigorous. The majority of children are likely to meet the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of the reception year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's attainment in all aspects of this area is well below average
- Adults in the nursery take every opportunity to develop children's language skills
- There is a lack of continuity in learning experiences from nursery to reception, particularly in writing

Commentary

54. When they start school, most children's attainment in this area of learning is well below average. Teaching and learning are very good in the nursery but unsatisfactory in reception. In the nursery there is a strong emphasis on developing children's speech and enriching their vocabulary to develop language and communication. Children do not have well developed speaking capability and many lack confidence to utter. Their speech is immature and often monosyllabic, so they gesture or nod to make their needs known rather than asking for help. The younger children often play alongside one another but do not converse readily. When introducing some new musical instruments the teacher talked about the shapes, and children named circles, squares and rectangles. In an activity where children explored which objects would float or sink in water, the teacher took care to ensure that children understood the vocabulary. In a movement session in the hall, children listened well, but many needed more explanation and demonstration before they understood what to do. Children in the nursery enjoy listening to stories and doing puzzles to recreate them. They recognise their written names and collect their name cards when they arrive in school each day. They like writing and know it means something.
55. In the reception classes, opportunities for developing children's skills in his area of learning are less well developed and so skills sometimes regress. There are limited opportunities for children to develop their writing skills through role play in the reception classes. In the work samples provided, there was an emphasis on formal writing skills which did not provide continuity of experience from the writing experiences provided in the nursery. The samples showed a definite regression. Teachers have not established clear procedures as to how children move from their early reading and writing experiences towards the expectations of the National Curriculum. By the end of the reception year, very few children are likely to attain the early learning goals for this aspect of learning.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's attainment in this area of learning is well below average.
- Children in the reception classes do not make the progress they should
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in the reception classes

Commentary

56. In the nursery teaching is very good and children receive a good start in this area of learning. They practise counting and recognise numbers: they count how many are present each day and find the written number on a chart. They enjoy singing number rhymes, such as *five little speckled frogs*. Most count reliably to three and match objects as they count. Some count reliably beyond this. A small proportion says the numbers but do not count objects accurately. Much of the work in the nursery was centred round the story of *Noah's Ark*. Staff provided many opportunities for children to count two by two, such as making pairs of animal shaped biscuits. Staff take every opportunity to develop children's mathematical language. When playing with sand or water, they encourage children to think about whether one container holds more or less than another, or how many small containers are needed to fill a larger one. They introduce the necessary vocabulary –for example, 'more or less', 'full or empty'.
57. In the reception classes such opportunities are less well developed and pupils' progress slows as a result. When making pictures to illustrate *The Rainbow Fish*, many children could not name shapes or colours accurately. The independent activities in sand and water play were not well focused to develop children's mathematical skills. Teaching is unsatisfactory and the majority of children are unlikely to attain the early learning goals for this area of learning by the end of the reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An interesting range of activities to develop children's knowledge and understanding is provided
- Children's attainment in this area of learning is below average

Commentary

58. When children start school they have limited knowledge in this area of learning. In the nursery, teaching and learning are good: staff provide a rich range of experience to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding. Children enjoy exploring which objects will float or sink, and like using computers, confident in their use of the mouse to move objects on the screen. The stimulating environment in the nursery class provides good opportunities for children to explore and investigate. This is supported by activities outside such as the rock pool, where they were seen enjoying using fishing nets to catch the starfish and other creatures.
59. In the reception class, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory; fewer opportunities are planned to develop children's skills. Children used a remote control to guide the movements of a toy duck, but this did not involve making logical sequences expected to enhance their ICT skills; there is little for children to develop in this area of learning. They do have access to the outdoor area. Most are unlikely to attain the early learning goals for this area by the end of the reception year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor learning area provides good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills
- Children's attainment in this area of learning is below average.

Commentary

60. In addition to using the outside apparatus, the nursery and reception classes have physical education sessions in the hall. They make good progress in moving safely, with co-ordination and control. They work with energy and understand the effect of exercise on their bodies. The outdoor area provides opportunities for climbing and balancing and for using wheeled toys. Many children do not have well-developed hand control. This affects their writing and their use of small tools, pencils and paintbrushes. Many of them are unlikely to meet the early learning goals for this area. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

61. Very few opportunities for creative development were observed during the inspection so no judgement can be made on provision. Standards in this area of learning are well below average. Children in the nursery enjoy a range of songs and rhymes. There are collections of musical instruments inside and out for children to explore sounds. Children have opportunities to paint and use a variety of materials for printing and collage. Children in reception were observed taking part in role play pretending to be pirates, but this activity had no specific learning purpose and children's play did not improve their vocabulary.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standard of English is well below average for seven-year-olds and below average for 11-year-olds.
- Pupils' progress in reading is unsatisfactory.
- The subject leader promotes a clear vision for improvement, but this is not being followed effectively in all classes.
- The teaching of the pupils in Years 5 and 6 is often good and they make good progress.
- Planned units of work contribute well to promoting overall improvements for the older pupils, but do so inconsistently for younger ones.

Commentary

62. Standards in English have fallen since the time of the previous inspection. In the 2004 national tests for 11-year-olds, standards in English were very low and in the bottom five per cent of the country. They were well below the average of similar schools. In the tests for seven-year-olds, standards in reading were well below the national average and remained below those for similar schools. Standards in writing were equivalent to those in similar schools.
63. In the current Year 2, standards in reading and writing have not shown sufficient improvement and are much lower than predicted from Year 1. Pupils of average and above average ability in particular have underachieved. Overall standards in reading at age seven have improved only slowly in recent years, although writing has shown more improvement. Weaknesses in the identification and provision of support for individual pupils in the past have led to underachievement in all aspects of English. The school is beginning to address these weaknesses more systematically and effectively. Achievement overall in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, but this is because it is often good in Years 5 and 6.
64. Current standards in Year 6 remain below those expected for pupils of this age, but show a marked improvement compared to the very low standards evident in the tests in 2004. This is partly due to the overall higher ability of the pupils in the current year group, but is mainly because of the good teaching in the top two years. Current test predictions for level 4 and above, however, would at their best keep the school in the well below average band, compared with the very low national test results of 2004. The school has not kept pace fully with national developments in literacy, such as the systematic use of additional support strategies, and has been slow to respond to the issues raised in the previous inspection.
65. Standards in speaking and listening are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. Many pupils enter the school with poor speech and language skills; early good progress in the nursery becomes erratic and too slow overall in the following infant years. Progress is usually satisfactory in Years 3 and 4, and is often good in Years 5 and 6. Pupils listen well, and improvements in their vocabulary are beginning to show as, for example, in the vibrant language used by more able Year 5 pupils in their persuasive writing. Overall, insufficient opportunities are taken through the school for paired work where pupils articulate and try out their ideas, either in response to what they have read or when preparing for writing. Improvements in literacy are largely due to the more varied and lively teaching seen in the best lessons, where teachers use the enthusiasm generated by speaking and listening to provide motivation for writing.
66. Pupils' progress in reading is unsatisfactory overall, and the school recognises weaknesses in the provision for guided reading. The amount of time devoted to the teaching of reading to ensure that pupils make maximum progress is uneven. Guided reading sessions do not consistently provide for

structured discussions about aspects such as inference and deduction, or about the effects authors want to create. Key reading assessments are insufficiently rigorous and this impairs pupils' progress, not only in reading, but in the use of reading to support further improvements in their writing. As a consequence, too many pupils fail to reach the level expected for their age. The school is aware that the partnership with parents to help their children read at home is not strong enough, and is seeking to improve this.

67. On balance, the teaching of English is satisfactory in Key Stage 2, although there are differences within and between year groups. Teaching is good, and occasionally very good, for pupils in Years 5 and 6. In these classes, teachers are well organised and confident about what they want pupils to learn; clear, well-paced sequences of activities support pupils' learning well, building effectively on what pupils know and can do. Teachers in the junior classes provide clear models for the tasks set to help ensure pupils know what is expected of them; relevant and stimulating activities successfully capture pupils' interests so they generally concentrate well and work hard. Teaching for infant age pupils is more varied, ranging from very good to unsatisfactory, and is unsatisfactory overall. Across the school, pupils behave well, even when the teaching and learning lack sufficient challenge. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and the activities set for them, and achievement is very good in the Nurture Group of ten pupils.
68. Unsatisfactory teaching does not take enough account of what the pupils know, and levels of challenge are inappropriate. Average and less able pupils struggle to cope with the demands of the planned writing tasks; some other tasks are completed easily and do not extend learning for more able pupils. In some otherwise satisfactory lessons, clear objectives for learning are not consistently shared with pupils, who are thus not always fully aware of what they need to do to achieve success. Plenary sessions sometimes do not help pupils reflect sufficiently on what they have learned and what they need to do to improve.
69. Assessment is satisfactory in Years 5 and 6, but unsatisfactory elsewhere. Marking of pupils' writing is more consistently helpful in Years 5 and 6, where there have been some noticeable improvements. Here, teachers provide useful comments that highlight not only the strengths in pupils' writing, but also clearly set targets to help them improve. In other classes, this is not consistent practice. Progress in writing is slowed where marking and verbal communication with pupils are not sufficiently precise, or because excessive use of positive comments fails to provide enough challenge. Consequently, inaccurate spellings, weak punctuation and poor handwriting persist for too long. Pupils are introduced appropriately to a cursive handwriting style in Year 2, but standards of handwriting and presentation deteriorate, particularly in subjects other than English, when teachers' expectations are too low. Further improvements in writing standards, including handwriting, are hampered by weaknesses in speaking, listening and reading, and by inconsistent opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in writing at length from an early age. Teachers often do not promote targets effectively, and worksheets are too often used for most written work by younger pupils.
70. Leadership is good but management is unsatisfactory. The subject leader promotes a very clear vision for improving achievement in English, and identifies areas for attention. He is enthusiastic, providing a good example for others through his own teaching and his drive for improvement. There are, however, some weaknesses in the management of the subject through the school. Insufficient priority has been given by senior managers to the identified need for simultaneous improvement in reading, in conjunction with speaking, listening and writing. Benchmarks have been developed to guide further improvement, but these do not yet fully guide teaching and learning. Analyses of pupils' performance and checks on planning and teaching by managers are not regular enough or sufficiently rigorous to establish strengths and weaknesses. As a result, the most effective practice is not always identified, shared and adopted as quickly as it might be, and this contributes to the delay in eliminating weaknesses.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

71. Language provision is unsatisfactory. Pupils' skills are well below average in Key Stage 1 and below average in Key Stage 2. Teachers provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to make use of, and further develop, the full range of language and literacy skills in some subjects, such as science, but pupils' generally low standard of literacy hampers their efforts in other subjects, as for example their written recording in religious education. There has been some improvement in the development of older pupils' higher order reading skills through challenging topics, such as those in history and geography, but these skills are still relatively underdeveloped, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Several examples were seen where pupils were developing good listening skills and expressing themselves with increasing confidence as they move through the school- for example, in mathematics, geography and physical education. Whilst a few worksheets help provide an appropriate structure for pupils' extended writing, too many require only single- word answers or short phrases, which make little or no contribution to raising the standard of English.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Key Stage 1 are below average in numeracy.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.
- Standards are slowly improving in Key Stage 2.
- Evidence of the application of mathematical skills across the curriculum is sparse.

Commentary

72. Standards in the national tests in 2004 were well below average for pupils aged seven and 11; compared with similar schools, they were below average in Year 2 and average in Year 6. The school has concentrated on number work, and standards in this are below average but the recent, un-validated, Key Stage 1 test results for 2005 show mathematics likely to be well below average, based on 2004 comparisons. Standards in numeracy are below average in Key Stage 1 and average in Key Stage 2. Achievement is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 because of the quality of teaching and satisfactory in Key Stage 2.
73. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall, though satisfactory in Key Stage 2. There is a wide variation indicating that good practice seen in some years is not being disseminated to weaker teachers. All staff plan with consistency, set learning objectives and provide some differentiated work for all abilities. In the more successful lessons, teachers question pupils of all abilities, asking them to explain their reasoning and they give pupils ample time to discuss their answers in pairs before demonstrating their methods to the class, sometimes using the interactive whiteboard. The direction and pace of the best lessons challenge pupils to think independently and to use known facts and strategies to come to mathematical conclusions, as seen in a vibrant and very competitive Year 5 lesson, which resulted in all pupils showing great enthusiasm in their mathematical learning. Direct support for pupils with special educational needs results in the best lessons being very inclusive, where pupils enjoy their mathematical experiences and make good progress. However, pupils of high ability are not challenged appropriately.
74. Teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 lack opportunities for pupils to interact and discuss their learning with their peers. Pupils of average and above average ability are given work that is undemanding and which they can do already, so they are underachieving. Lessons concentrate largely upon numerical activities without the experiences of investigations and the use of shapes and data.
75. Opportunities are few for pupils to show how their mathematical learning can be used in real life. The regular use of ICT to help pupils with mathematical learning is very limited. Whilst some teachers use interactive whiteboards successfully to demonstrate particular aspects of mathematics, pupils are given

few opportunities to use such aids to learning. Investigation is limited; most teaching is to do with basic numeracy.

76. Marking of work is regular but without suggestions for improvement and how to tackle the next steps. Standards of presentation of work vary widely, with pupils' work in Key Stage 1 lacking clarity and tidiness. By the end of Key Stage 2, greater insistence upon neatness and accuracy of recording results in better presentation.
77. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. Whilst the school has used external assistance to identify areas for development, at present there is little evidence to show that evaluation of teaching and standards has resulted in more effective learning at Key Stage 1. Standards are rising in Key Stage 2 as a result of teaching methods that show greater challenge and engagement of pupils in discussions about their mathematical learning. Because of this, pupils' knowledge and understanding of key concepts of numeracy have a much sounder basis. This leads to their increased confidence to tackle more challenging work set by teachers who understand how pupils learn mathematically.

Mathematics across the curriculum

78. Numeracy development across the curriculum is unsatisfactory because a whole -school approach to planning the use of numeracy skills in all subjects is absent and, as a result, provision is patchy and progress is uneven. It is evident in such subjects as music, where pupils count out the beats in a tune, in ICT, where pupils enter data to produce tally charts, and in art where measurement and estimation are used to produce drawings that show equal proportion and correct scale. Basic skills of numeracy such as weighing, measuring, estimating and predicting are seen in such activities as baking, clay modelling and physical activities. In science, numeracy is underdeveloped: there is no use of line graphs, correct units are not insisted upon for measurements, and bar charts are scruffy.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy is developed well in science in Years 4 to 6, but not well enough for younger pupils, who are given too many worksheets.
- Standards in science by Year 6 are approaching the national average.
- Subject leaders work hard to develop curriculum enrichment through local and national schemes.
- Numeracy and ICT are not developed well enough through science.

Commentary

79. Science was not a particular focus for this inspection as standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have generally been above the average of similar schools, although just below the national average, as they were in 2004. Current standards remain below average, though in knowledge and understanding of science, they are average in Year 6 because the school has a very effective revision programme which was completed earlier in the year. No science was timetabled in Years 2, 5 or 6 during the inspection period and some science was being taught off-site.
80. Work samples from Key Stage 1 indicate that standards are below average. The curriculum is appropriate for the age of the children and follows the National Curriculum programme of study closely. The skills of scientific enquiry are starting to be developed with the idea of predicting the outcome of an investigation, but the idea of a fair test has not yet been introduced and the development of numeracy across the curriculum is not helped by the untidy presentation of bar charts. Opportunities are missed to develop ICT skills and literacy is not developed well enough in Key Stage 1. There are far too many worksheets, which limits the amount of writing children can do for themselves.

81. Only one lesson was seen in Year 1. Teaching and learning were unsatisfactory because there was some evident lack of expertise and the pace was slow, which led to many pupils losing concentration and not gaining knowledge and understanding of senses. Work sampled elsewhere, particularly in Years 4 to 6, indicated better teaching and better achievement. Revision notes of Year 6 pupils covered a broad range of aspects of science up to level 4 and showed the development of scientific reasoning to higher levels. Pupils have gained a sound knowledge of the skills of scientific enquiry which have been developed satisfactorily throughout Key Stage 2, and well in Years 4, 5 and 6. The work of Year 4 pupils shows them learning more formal and scientific presentation. Year 5 pupils checked each other's knowledge of a fair test by asking a friend to describe it.
82. Work samples from Key Stage 2 indicate that pupils' knowledge and understanding of science are close to average by the end of Year 6. Literacy develops well through science in Year 4 to 6 in particular, and the attention paid to it in several imaginative ways contributes to pupils' greater achievements in science than in English and mathematics. A good example was seen in Year 5 where pupils had been asked to write a letter to a friend giving reasons why they should believe air exists, though they cannot see it. Pupil showed they had learned from both historical experiments and everyday experiences and produced responses with understanding and use of correct scientific language. By contrast, pupils in Year 3 have not developed their literacy well. Presentation of work is poor and teachers' expectations are low, particularly in investigative work and the skills of scientific enquiry.
83. There is little evidence of numeracy and ICT being developed through science. Graphical representation of results is usually by bar charts, which are untidily presented. No examples of line graphs were evident in Year 5 or Year 6 and the use of the correct units for measurement was not consistent. Many opportunities for computer use are missed; the school is still in the process of developing ICT in the wider curriculum.
84. Leadership of the subject is good. Co-ordinators have developed the curriculum to include many opportunities for enrichment, including making full use of the Solihull Green Scheme and local secondary school facilities. The school has also now met objectives for the Eco-school silver award. All these are helping pupils to gain awareness of their environment and the necessity to take care of and preserve it.
85. There has been some improvement in widening the curriculum since the previous inspection, but standards could still be higher and ICT and numeracy are not yet being addressed adequately.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in ICT are improving and are average by Year 2 but are below average by Year 6.
- Technical support is good, but resources are not yet sufficient to meet curricular demands fully in Key Stage 2. (The school has suffered from two burglaries).

Commentary

86. Standards in ICT in Key Stage 1 match those expected nationally, but at the end of Year 6 standards are below average. This is because resources in the past few years have not been sufficient to ensure that all aspects of the subject have been covered. In those aspects that have been taught standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory and often good progress.
87. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In Year 1, pupils are confident in entering data into a graphics programme to produce a pictogram. Year 5 pupils responded enthusiastically to their lesson on how ICT can be used to control devices. They made rapid progress in learning how to programme sequences for traffic lights and showed great enjoyment in their learning. Pupils' work on display shows that a satisfactory range of work is covered. Pupils use programmes for word processing, for art and music and in mathematics.
88. Resources for ICT have improved considerably since the previous inspection. The school has recently purchased some interactive whiteboards and there are plans to buy more. Staff have received training in their use. There have been difficulties with hardware in the past year which have slowed developments in ICT but these are now resolved and the school is now poised to develop the subject further. Internet access is now available in Key Stage 2 and is about to be connected for the younger classes. The school employs a part-time technician for ICT who provides very good support for teachers.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

89. This is an area that is being developed in the school. Past resourcing difficulties have had an impact on the use of ICT in other subjects. In mathematics, pupils use programmes to produce graphs and charts of different kinds. Several classes have used drawing programmes, and Year 3 pupils have used a music programme to produce short pieces. Use in science is insufficient. There have been difficulties with Internet access, so pupils have only been able to make limited use of this for research.

HUMANITIES

Provision in history and geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Literacy develops well except when worksheets are used
- Marking does not consistently help pupils to improve
- Teaching of history is particularly good in Year 5
- Map-work develops well in geography
- Teachers use photographs well to engage pupils' interest in and enjoyment of geography.

Commentary

90. In geography, standards are broadly average and levels of achievement satisfactory by the ages of seven and 11. There are particular strengths in the standards achieved and provision for the subject in Year 5. Work in pupils' books indicates that overall curriculum coverage meets requirements, and is good in Year 5.
91. Only two lessons were seen. In one teaching was satisfactory and in one it was very good. Both lessons were well planned with good use of appropriate resources. Pupils show a keen interest in their work. Their knowledge, specialist vocabulary and skills of geographical enquiry are developed systematically. Of particular note is the good progression in pupils' map-work skills as they move through the school. Year 1 pupils draw and label simple maps showing their routes to school, and Year 2 pupils extend this in their maps of a fictional island. By Year 6, pupils demonstrate competence in a range of map-reading skills, using large- and small-scale maps.
92. Teachers use photographs well throughout the school in geography. These contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment of and interest in the subject so that they talk knowledgeably about features on aerial photographs and note similarities and differences in photographs from other countries of the world, such

as those depicting life in towns in Kenya and their 'link' school in The Gambia. Visits to undertake geographical studies in the local area and on residential study trips enhance the provision of first-hand experiences.

93. Teachers promote literacy effectively through the use of specialist vocabulary to describe aspects such as river features and rock types. Numeracy is developed appropriately through grid references and the production of tally charts and graphs so that pupils in Year 6 use four-figure co-ordinates with confidence. In a Year 6 lesson, ICT was used well to illustrate how differing permeability of rocks affects the water table and allows aquifers to form. The use of worksheets in both history and geography sometimes limits pupils' opportunities to make a personal response, or to write at length on a given topic. Work is marked regularly, although the attention given to marking pupils' writing is too variable and does not consistently help pupils to know what they have to do to improve.
94. Only one history lesson was observed (Year 5), which was very good. Other observations of work in books, displays around the school and conversations with pupils indicate that standards are in line with national expectations by the ages of seven and 11. Levels of achievement are satisfactory overall, and good in Year 5, where the strengths identified in the previous report have been maintained. Coverage of the syllabus is good and well linked to literacy. Older pupils are successfully encouraged to imagine themselves as characters from history and to write from that perspective. They support their writing through systematic use of secondary sources, such as documents, artefacts and personal accounts. A visit by an outside speaker elicited a very positive response from pupils in Year 5. He provided a powerful insight into working conditions and children's toys in Victorian times, and the career of Thomas Burt, the first 'working man' to become a Member of Parliament. This gave rise to several very good examples of comparisons with current days and to some empathetic writing.
95. Pupils in Year 5 achieve well in their study of the local area, which combines historical and geographical skills. A study of Coleshill using a 'town trail' showed that these pupils have a good knowledge of building features through the ages. They recognise the ways in which buildings have changed over time and suggest good reasons for these changes.
96. The school has developed a broad range of approaches to history. These include mind-mapping in Years 2 and 3, and good quality diaries in Year 2. In Year 4, pupils composed letters, from the perspective of King Philip of Spain, detailing issues relating to the Spanish Armada. Well-focused topics enhance pupils' abilities to develop systematically their skills of enquiry as they move through the school. This good use made of visits by pupils and visitors to the school significantly enhances the quality of resources experienced by pupils, and represents an improvement over the position identified in the previous report.
97. Leadership and management in history and geography are satisfactory. They are a shared responsibility. Progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory overall, although subject leaders continue to have insufficient time to monitor teaching and learning. Resources are now good and used well.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **poor**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Religious education does not meet the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus.
- Standards of attainment are well below the expectations of the syllabus.
- The subject is not planned for in all classes.
- Management is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

98. Religious education is taught in Years 1 to 4. Pupils' recorded work shows that standards are below those expected by the Local Agreed Syllabus. The work consists mainly of completing photocopied worksheets, which are of a low level and consist mainly of sequencing pictures and colouring. Pupils' weak literacy has a negative impact on their work in religious education. In Years 5 and 6 no planning was evident, nor was there any recorded work available after a very limited amount done in the first half of the autumn term. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 showed very limited knowledge and understanding.
99. Pupils' learning is poor. One lesson was able to be seen in Year 1, in which teaching was barely satisfactory. Further evidence from scrutiny of pupils' recorded work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils showed limited learning and weak teaching. In Year 5, the subject is supported by a local Christian group who teach pupils about the Bible. No evidence of this work was available apart from samples of the workbooks used, but these samples had not been completed by pupils. The activities in these books were unchallenging and do not match the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus.
100. The curriculum is not planned effectively. Each Year group has a file of topics to be covered along with supporting materials. However, there is no overall framework to ensure continuity and progression. The work seen focused on learning facts about religion. There was no evidence that the required topics are taught, and nothing to suggest that the second strand of the agreed syllabus - learning from religion - is covered. Monitoring is very limited. The subject leader has collected samples of work but these have not been evaluated. Management of the subject is unsatisfactory, and improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

101. During the inspection, no **art and design** lessons were seen due to timetabling and thus, no secure judgement can be made about standards, teaching or overall provision. A variety of styles and subjects was evident in pupils' sketchbooks and in displays around the school. In Year 6, pupils had used the stimulus of Warhol and Lichtenstein for their drawings and paintings, as well as using common symbols to create a very effective collage. Pupils in Year 3 had used Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" to paint very colourful images. For pupils in the Nurture Group, the use of paint and pasta resulted in very effective seascapes.
102. **Design and technology** was an issue at the previous inspection. Only one lesson could be seen during this inspection, in which Year 4 pupils were designing and making money containers. This was a good lesson. Pupils had evaluated commercial purses and wallets and come up with a simple design brief from their four best ideas. Most showed satisfactory skills in joining materials and making simple decorations to personalise them. Some pupils demonstrated above average skills in creating embroidered designs including their own initials. Boys and girls achieved well because of good preparation. Those of lower capability also did well because there was an adult helper for each group.
103. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. The National Curriculum programme of study is now in place and taught through nationally recognised guidelines. The school has focused well on this subject; staff have received effective training and, as a result, standards are similar to those expected for children of this age. Pupils' designing and making skills improve as they get older. Literacy is developed well through the emphasis on specific vocabulary, writing design briefs and evaluating products. Pupils learned the use of the imperative when describing how to make sandwiches, for example. Assessment is an area the co-ordinator acknowledges to need more work. She leads well and produced photographs and completed project books to substantiate the improvement.
104. As only one **music** lesson was observed it is not possible to make a judgement on teaching and learning. The Year 1 lesson observed was taken by a visiting teacher. This was a very effective lesson which modelled techniques very well for the class teacher and teaching assistant. Other staff are very appreciative of the support and professional development this provides. In assemblies and singing practices, pupils sing enthusiastically and at the expected standard. The extra-curricular programme for

music is good: pupils have opportunities to learn a variety of instruments. Year 2 pupils have a short residential visit which involves taking part in a musical production.

105. During the inspection only two **physical education** lessons were seen. No judgement can be made on overall standards and provision in the subject. In these lessons – one in Year 3 and one in Year 5 - teaching was typified by careful attention to the health and safety of all pupils. A spacious field is well used for the practising of cricket and athletics skills. Pupils display very good behaviour. They enjoy the catching and throwing games played, as well as relay races between teams of equal ability. Teacher's use of the most skilled pupils to demonstrate best practice is also effective.
106. Team games such as football and rugby for boys and girls, swimming and outdoor education are all present in the curriculum. Good use is made of local coaches and clubs who regularly support teaching activities in school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

107. Provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship was sampled during the inspection. No lessons in PSHE were observed. Evidence from pupils' work, displays and discussions with pupils and teachers indicates that, by the age of 11, pupils' overall personal development is good. The school emphasises personal, social, health and citizenship education as a key foundation for pupils as they progress through the school. The policy has recently been suitably revised; links with the sex and relationships education, behaviour and anti-bullying policies have been satisfactorily established.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
|---|--------------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 5 |
| How inclusive the school is | 3 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 5 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 5 |
| Overall standards achieved | 5 |
| Pupils' achievement | 5 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos) | 3 |
| Attendance | 6 |
| Attitudes | 3 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 3 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 5 |
| The quality of teaching | 5 |
| How well pupils learn | 5 |
| The quality of assessment | 4 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs | 5 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 4 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 3 |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils | 3 |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views | 4 |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents | 4 |
| The quality of the school's links with the community | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 5 |
| The governance of the school | 4 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 5 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 5 |
| The effectiveness of management | 5 |

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