

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SUMMERBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Tunstall

LEA area: Stoke-on-Trent

Unique reference number: 123980

Headteacher: Mrs. S. Wedgwood

Reporting inspector: Mrs. J.E. Platt  
11565

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>ND</sup>. – 26<sup>TH</sup>. January 2001

Inspection number: 190645

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior with integral nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Summerbank Road Tunstall Stoke-on-Trent
Postcode:	ST6 5HA
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. T. Bamford
Date of previous inspection:	29 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> March 1999

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Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11565	J E Platt	Registered inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language Equal Opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9928	A Dobson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22740	M Leah	Team inspector	Geography History Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
3191	J Curley	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Religious education	
23081	C Waine	Team inspector	Science Foundation stage  Design and technology	
29504	S Herring	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Summerbank Primary School is bigger than other primary schools having 394 boys and girls on roll. It is situated in an area of high unemployment. Economically and socially, the area served by the school is rather less favoured than the overall picture nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (38 per cent) is above the national average. The number of pupils speaking English as an additional language is considerably higher than normally seen. Currently, 75 pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and three pupils have formal statements of need and this is broadly in line with the national average. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an effective school. Previous difficulties have been mainly overcome and the school is now thriving and standards are rising. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on the learning that takes place throughout the school. From a very low level of attainment on entry to school the vast majority reach average standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave. This is a significant achievement for many pupils and notably for those who have English as an additional language. Management is effective and all work together with a determination to raise standards. Funding per pupil is high by national comparisons; however the school provides sound value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and this aids learning in other subjects.
- Overall the quality of teaching is good and pupils learn well in lessons. Older pupils achieve much as they respond to lively teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership. She is well supported by governors, the deputy headteacher and staff and together they have been effective in bringing about improvement.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who have English as an additional language is good and enables them to make good progress.
- Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The school promotes a caring atmosphere that leads to racial harmony and very good relationships.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in science and information and communication technology.
- The way in which pupils' work is assessed in all subjects except English and mathematics.
- The quality of marking of pupils' work and the use of assessment information to match tasks to pupils' needs.
- Planning for history, geography and science in Years 3 to 6 to take account of the different ages in the mixed age classes.
- The management role of staff with responsibility for subjects (excluding English and mathematics) so that they can check on the implementation of the new schemes of work.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

This is a far better school now than it was at the time of the previous inspection in October 1996. Subsequent inspection visits have recognised this and the school continues to improve and no longer has serious weaknesses. The turn round has been brought about mainly by better teaching and by the effective leadership of the headteacher. At the time of the last inspection 37 percent of the teaching seen was less than satisfactory whereas on this occasion only one lesson was seen that was less than satisfactory. National test results do not give a true picture of the standards seen due to the rapid improvements. Currently, standards in English and mathematics are in line with the national average. Individual targets are set and pupils know what they have to do to improve. Teachers have a better understanding of the levels pupils are working at and in Year 6 this knowledge is being used effectively to challenge the higher attaining pupils. Science and information and communication technology have not received the same emphasis as numeracy and literacy and consequently standards remain below the nationally expected level. There has been improvement in the provision for pupils who are learning through English as an additional language. Teachers have a better understanding of the needs of these pupils and along with better assessment procedures and support in lessons these pupils are now making good progress. The curriculum has improved and new planning guidelines have been implemented. Classrooms are more attractive and this has raised morale and pupils are proud of their school.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	E	E	D	Well above average A above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E
Mathematics	E	E	E	D	
Science	E	E	E	E	

These results show that as pupils leave school at age 11 standards are well below the levels expected. In comparison with similar schools the picture was slightly better although results were still below average. In interpreting the above table it must be borne in mind that pupils start school with very low levels of attainment and a very high proportion of pupils come from homes where English is not the first spoken language. Over the last three years the proportion of pupils achieving the national average has gradually been increasing. However, few pupils exceed this level and this has been holding down the school's overall performance in national tests. Assessment has improved and as a result more attention is given to the needs of the higher attaining pupils and in English and mathematics more pupils are now achieving above the level expected nationally. The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies have given teachers clearer guidelines and teaching has improved. These initiatives have successfully raised standards. Currently, the work seen in Year 6 shows that standards are much better this year and in English and mathematics are now in line with the level expected for their age. Considering the low level of entry of many pupils this is a significant achievement. Although there are signs of improvement in science standards remain below the national average. The school has set challenging targets for English and mathematics and is well placed to achieve them.

In 2000 results of national tests for seven-year olds were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared to similar schools results were below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. Each year has seen more pupils reaching the level expected for their age although in the present Year 2 overall standards remain below average in reading, writing and mathematics. From a very low starting point pupils are achieving well enough although higher attaining pupils are not always provided with sufficiently challenging work and could achieve more. Consequently, the number of pupils exceeding the national average remains low. Teacher assessment for science in 2000 was well below the national average and although there are signs of improvement standards seen during the inspection were below the national average.

In religious education pupils reach the recommended level in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Standards in information and communication technology are below average, as pupils are not taught the full requirements of the National Curriculum. In geography and history in Years 3 to 6 insufficient attention is given to the differing ages in the mixed age classes and standards are below those of pupils of similar age. In all other subjects standards are wholly satisfactory.

Children in the nursery and reception class have a good start to their education and make good progress in all aspects of learning. They meet the nationally recommended level in their personal, social and emotional development but as yet do not reach this standard in other areas of learning.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are enthusiastic learners and have good attitudes to their work and to the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' good behaviour supports their learning in most lessons. Only occasionally does misbehaviour disrupt learning and this is usually managed effectively by teachers. Behaviour around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good and pupils respect one another and relationships are very good. Pupils support each other and this is beneficial when pupils provide translations and clarify mis-understandings for those pupils whose knowledge of English is limited.
Attendance	Below average but current figures show an improving trend.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Overall the quality of teaching is good. In the lessons seen, teaching was good or better in 58 per cent of lessons and in 15 per cent was very good. One lesson in music in Year 6 was excellent. Only one lesson seen was poor and this was due to weak management of pupils and was not typical of teaching in the school. The proportion of good and very good teaching was higher in Years 3 to 6 and as a result pupils' learn at a faster rate as they move through the school. Overall teaching is good for children in the nursery and reception classes and teachers provide an interesting range of activities that excite children so they make a good start to their education. The teaching in Years 1 and 2, while always satisfactory, sometimes fails to capture pupils' interest as the pace of lesson is too slow or tasks do not always closely match pupils' needs resulting in underachievement.

The majority of good teaching was seen in English and mathematics and basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught thoroughly. This has a positive impact on improving standards. Teaching of religious education is good and there are pockets of good teaching in most subjects except information and communication technology. Basic computer skills are not thoroughly taught and pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their skills in other subjects.

Teaching is good for pupils with special educational needs and for those who are learning through English as an additional language. Classroom assistants are particularly good at helping these pupils when working in class or when taught separately in small groups.

Particular strengths in lessons include the warm relationships between all staff and pupils that effectively builds up pupils' self-esteem and boosts their confidence. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and are able to offer good advice as pupils work. Management is generally confident and firm, which means pupils have opportunities to work uninterrupted. Activities are interesting and pupils enjoy their lessons and are proud of their work. The marking of pupils' work does not always tell pupils what they have to do to improve. Sufficient homework is not provided to extend pupils' learning at home.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides satisfactory learning opportunities with an emphasis on numeracy, literacy and personal and social development. Insufficient attention is given to information and communication technology. Visits, visitors and a good range of extra-curricular activities enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is good and pupils make good progress particularly when receiving specific support on well focused activities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils have individual plans and targets for improvement. They receive good support from staff and pupils who provide translations if required.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall and has improved considerably since the last inspection. The school celebrates the rich diversity of cultures in the school. Social and moral development is successfully promoted throughout the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures exist to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. Pupils' progress in English and mathematics is tracked through effective assessment systems but these are not in place in other subjects.

The school has effective links with parents and information about how their children are getting on in school is good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a very good leader and has been the driving force behind the school's improvement. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and together they have raised morale and created a determination to raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are fully involved in the school and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Statutory requirements are met except the curriculum for information and communication technology does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school makes good use of assessment information to evaluate its performance. Effective action is taken to remedy perceived areas of weakness.
The strategic use of resources	The budget and specific grants are put to good use. Support staff are used very effectively to support learning and have a positive impact on raising standards. Resources are generally used well although more use could be made of computers.

The school is well led and managed. The management of English and mathematics is good but is less effective in other subjects as co-ordinators have limited opportunity to check on what is happening in classrooms. The school has limited spare funds but decisions about allocating these are linked closely to school's identified priorities. Money is spent prudently based on a sound understanding of the principles of best value.

There are enough staff, and the accommodation and learning resources are adequate. Currently, resources for information and communication technology are inadequate.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children enjoy going to school.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable to approach the school with questions and problems.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More work being set to do at home.</li> <li>• The information they receive about their children's progress.</li> <li>• Some parents thought behaviour in school could be improved.</li> <li>• Some parents thought the school could work more closely with parents.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree completely with parents' positive views. Inspectors find that provision of homework is unsatisfactory and agree with parents' comments. Pupils in Year 6 do not receive enough work to prepare them for secondary education. Inspectors do not agree with parents on their other points for improvement. Inspectors judge that the quality of information on a child's progress provided to parents is good. The behaviour in school is generally good. The school tries very hard to work closely with parents and further enquiry may reveal how this can be further developed to the increased satisfaction of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. When children enter the nursery standards are well below those expected for their age. Personal and social skills are poor and literacy and numeracy skills are very low. In response to lots of support and a stimulating curriculum children make good progress in the nursery. When children start in the reception class a formal assessment shows standards have improved but are still low. Good teaching ensures that good progress is maintained in the reception classes and much is achieved in personal, social and emotional development and children reach the required standard in this aspect of their development. Children achieve well in their mathematical development, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development but do not reach the early learning goals<sup>1</sup> by the end of the reception class.

2. At the end of Year 2 the most recent test results (2000) show standards are well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics and this has been the picture since 1998. Compared to similar schools, results were slightly better in reading and mathematics being below average but remain well below average in writing. The low results are partly explained by the number of pupils from ethnic groups who have poorly developed language skills as well as lacking confidence in their own language. A closer examination of the results shows few pupils exceed the national average and this is holding down overall results. Over the last four years results have fluctuated but the number of pupils gaining the national target (level 2) has been gradually rising. The proportion of pupils exceeding this level has not improved significantly although in reading, this number has started to rise and this is a significant achievement for these pupils.

3. The work of the present Year 2 shows continuing improvement in reading, writing and mathematics although by the end of Year 2 overall standards are still below average. The number of pupils exceeding the target level is slowly increasing but fewer pupils than would be expected are working at the higher level and appropriately challenging work is not always set for the higher attaining pupils. Considering these pupils start school with very limited attainment the current standards show pupils are achieving well enough.

4. The results of Year 6 in the national tests (2000) were well below average in English, mathematics and science. A slightly more positive picture emerges when comparing with schools with a similar intake. English and mathematics improve to being below average whereas science remains well below average. Trends show that every year more pupils are gaining the nationally expected level for this age group. However, the number of pupils exceeding this level has consistently remained low. Looking at the results between 1996 and 2000 results have been rising broadly in line with the national trend. The 2000 results dipped as this group included more pupils with special educational needs and a higher than usual number of pupils transferred to the school between Years 2 and 6. There is ample evidence to show that pupils who had remained in the school from Year 2 to Year 6 had made at least satisfactory progress. Analysis of test results reveals pupils with English as an additional language had made good and often very good progress.

5. Current standards in Year 6 show a significant improvement and in English and mathematics standards are in line with the national average. This reflects the higher attainment of this cohort but also the impact of the many initiatives the school has put in place in their determination to raise standards. The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies are now firmly embedded in the school and basic skills are being taught more thoroughly. Assessment procedures have improved with individual targets being set for pupils so that they know what they have to do to improve. Reading resources are much better and the range of texts is impressive and pupils are now enthusiastic readers. Similarly, in mathematics the focus on practical activities has enabled pupils of all abilities to get a clearer understanding of mathematical concepts. Teaching has improved and work is more challenging and pupils show a great determination to improve. This has had a significant impact on the number of pupils now exceeding the national average. This is more apparent in reading and mathematics. Writing is the weaker aspect but still shows improvement and overall is in line with

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<sup>1</sup> Early learning goals are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the reception class.

the national average. Standards in science although improving remain below average. The standards as pupils leave school represent a good level of achievement for the vast majority of pupils. In Years 5 and 6 pupils achieve a great deal as they tackle harder work that leads more pupils on to exceed the national average.

6. The targets set for pupils in English and mathematics are based on an analysis of test results plus teachers' expectations of the current performance of the pupils. Targets set in 2000 were based on realistic expectations for this group and although results were lower than previous year the school celebrated the high achievement of many pupils. Current targets are higher but remain realistic and the school is well placed to achieve them.

7. One of the major factors for the improving standards is the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who learn through English as an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed targets for improvement and these are closely monitored and adjusted so that they make good progress relative to their prior attainment. The previous inspection identified low standards and underachievement for pupils with English as an additional language. These pupils now make good progress as a result of effective support by classroom assistants and ethnic minority achievement teachers. A 'buddy' system is also in place that leads to pupils helping each other with translations if required. Assessment of pupils competency in English as well as in their own language is carried out as children start school and effective individual programmes put into place quickly so maximum learning takes place as quickly as possible. These procedures are maintained throughout the school so that as soon as pupils begin to show confidence in English rapid progress is being made.

8. Data show a fluctuating pattern in the attainment of boys and girls and no consistent difference was detected during the inspection. Current data show Pakistani boys are scoring below other groups and the school has plans to buy more 'boy friendly' books and adjust the curriculum to address this. Against the national trend boys in Year 6 are enthusiastic readers. The school did not identify any highly talented or gifted pupils in school.

9. In work seen in English during the inspection standards are below average in all aspects of the curriculum by the end of Year 2 and in line with the national average by the end of Year 6. Satisfactory progress is made in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6. Speaking and listening skills are very low as pupils start school and these improve in Years 1 and 2 as pupils gain in confidence to share their ideas. Listening remains weak and pupils do not listen with sufficient care to the teachers or to each other. This improves significantly by Year 6 when in formal debates pupils reflect on the opinion of the previous speaker. Reading has shown most improvement since the last inspection and most pupils learn to read competently. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy reading and use a wide range of methods to tackle new words. Writing is the weakest aspect of English and remains low at the end of Year 2 with many pupils lacking sufficient skills to write an extended piece of independent writing. This gradually improves with good progress in Years 3 to 6 with pupils writing for a range of different purposes. Presentation was a weakness at the previous inspection and has now improved and as pupils leave school, most have a neat, legible joined-up style. The previous inspection identified literacy skills depressing standards in other subjects. This is no longer the case. Pupils use their skills confidently in other subjects. In history they write about their experiences in the Blitz and in science record their investigations. Reading is used well for research although not all pupils read with sufficient confidence to extract information and then write it in their own words. This led to copying in history rather than interpreting the information.

10. The previous inspection identified low standards in mathematics and these have significantly improved. Progress is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 good in Years 3 to 6. In Year 2 pupils have sound number skills and are able to explain their calculations. Through regular practice these skills improve and in Year 6 pupils have good arithmetic skills and use mathematical vocabulary to explain their methods. Pupils are confident interpreting information using a wide range of graphs. Pupils' mathematical skills are now at a level to support learning in other lessons. For example, in recording results in science and in geography carrying out a traffic survey and analysing the collected data.

11. Science has not received as much attention as mathematics and English and standards remain below average at the age of seven and eleven. Pupils acquire a sound knowledge of materials and their differing qualities but in Years 1 and 2 have insufficient knowledge of physical processes. As pupils get older their investigative skills improve and results are recorded in a variety of ways. Progress overall is satisfactory but there is underachievement in Years 3 to 6. This is caused to some extent by the organisation of the curriculum that means in mixed-age classes pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and they could work at higher levels.

12. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and standards have not improved since the previous inspection. Pupils have acquired the basic skills of word processing but there is underachievement in all other aspects mainly linked to lack of opportunity to develop the required skills. Pupils have limited understanding of using computers to handle data and in Years 3 to 6 are unfamiliar with the use of simulated programs to explore problems. Teachers give insufficient attention to teaching computer skills and management of the subject has been unsatisfactory. Progress in ICT has been hampered by the lack of resources but as funding is becoming available the school has good plans to improve standards.

13. In religious education pupils attain the level recommended in the Locally Agreed Syllabus and this is a good achievement for many pupils. Pupils have a secure knowledge of the different faiths in the school and are beginning to relate this knowledge to their own experiences. Standards in history are satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and this represents good achievement and pupils have a good understanding of how people lived in the past. Standards in geography are below average at the end of Year 2. The organisation of the curriculum means history and geography skills receive insufficient attention in Years 3 to 6 and standards are below average as pupils leave school. In all the creative and physical subjects standards are wholly satisfactory.

14. Most parents are satisfied with the academic standards achieved by their children. Taking into consideration the very low levels of attainment as pupils start school the vast majority achieve well enough in almost all subjects. Many pupils now leave school with satisfactory standards in numeracy and literacy and this represents good achievements and is a significant improvement for the school.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

15. Pupils show a good attitude to school. They like going to school, a point confirmed overwhelmingly by parents, and the pupils wear their uniform with real pride. They think their school is great.

16. In the classroom most pupils are eager to learn. They settle down quickly, are attentive and generally obey instructions first time. They are keen to join in all activities and most work hard, particularly in well-structured lessons. They respond well to challenging work. Pupils are proud to talk about and show off their work, which is generally neat. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

17. Behaviour is good overall and at times very good. Some parents expressed concerns about behaviour but this is not confirmed by the inspection. In the classrooms, most lessons are very orderly. Pupils understand the rules, most of which they have had a hand in devising and which they think are applied fairly. A few classes have one or two pupils who can be difficult to teach, particularly if the class management is not firm enough. Generally, but not always, the strategies used by the teacher ensure a minimum disruption to the lesson. Movement around the school is orderly. The atmosphere is quiet and conducive to learning. Behaviour in assemblies is good and pupils show a correct respect during prayers. Periods for reflection are treated appropriately. Behaviour in the dining room is good and pupils are polite. The playgrounds have a happy friendly atmosphere with pupils not showing any concerns about oppressive behaviour. Pupils report that neither bullying nor racism are problems within the school, however if an incident occurs they know who to speak to and express confidence in the staff's ability to sort out any problem. In the last year there have been two temporary and one permanent exclusion.

18. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils of all races get on very well with each other and with the adults in the school. There is a strong feeling of harmony. Pupils show a very clear respect for the different beliefs represented within the school. This ranges from their appreciation of different faiths during assembly, to the pride with which they feel about the way their uniform has been adapted to cater for different traditions. The school is very active in developing this respect for others and they provide an area for Muslim pupils to pray and also a room for them to use during Ramadan.

19. Pupils are polite and courteous. They collaborate well in the classroom, sharing, taking turns and generally helping each other. This is particularly effective in the partner systems where in certain lessons specific children are paired so that a more able child can help a less able one. This partner system works very well for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Equally impressive is the way older children help younger ones through the 'buddy system', already well established for reading and translations and being introduced for playtime activities.

20. Pupils have great enthusiasm for showing initiative and taking responsibility. The School Council, with representatives from throughout the school, is active and full of ideas, for instance considering how to raise money to buy additional play equipment for the nursery. The popular Eco Council is working hard on making the school a more attractive environment, by very effectively combating litter and developing the grounds in conjunction with a landscape architect. Monitor duties throughout the school are undertaken very seriously. Most pupils, by the time they are in Year 6 are maturing into sensible, responsible and interesting individuals and developing views of their own.

21. The pupils' enthusiasm for school life, their generally good behaviour and the very good relationships within the school all make a positive contribution to their learning.

22. Attendance figures for the school are unsatisfactory. The rate is well below the average for primary schools nationally, however attendance is on a rising trend. There has been a steady improvement over the last three years and the figures for the most recent term (autumn 2000) are significantly better than the equivalent term the previous year. Extended holidays to Pakistan, whilst not a major problem, have a very detrimental effect on the learning of those children affected. Punctuality is generally good. Registration is prompt and efficient.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

23. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. In 58 per cent of lessons seen teaching was good or better. It was very good or better in 15 per cent and in one lesson in Year 5/6 the teaching was excellent. Teaching was good for children in the foundation stage<sup>2</sup> and in Years 3 to 6 and learning is good in these years. The teaching was always at least satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and pupils achieve well enough but on occasions tasks set did not fully match pupils' abilities and they could achieve more. Although good teaching was seen in most subjects it was best in English, mathematics and religious education with other good examples in history in Years 1 and 2 and music in Years 5 and 6. Teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory as all the required skills are not taught.

24. Teaching in the foundation stage is good. Teachers and nursery nurses plan together to provide a stimulating curriculum that enables children to make good progress. All staff have a good knowledge of how young children learn and provide activities that hold their interest. This leads to children being eager to try out new ideas and so extend their knowledge and understanding. A very positive aspect of the teaching is the focus on spoken language and this is particularly important for the children for whom English is an additional language. Staff are insistent about the correct use of language and children learn new words to explain their activities; this is very obvious in the use of mathematical terms when explaining what they are doing. Management is firm and positive so children learn in an orderly atmosphere as well as appreciating what is acceptable behaviour. Early assessment information is used well to match tasks to the wide range of ability.

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<sup>2</sup> Foundation stage is the provision for pupils from nursery to the end of the reception classes.

The assessment identifies children who have limited English vocabulary and teachers then include new words into their planning. It was impressive to see bi-lingual staff focussing on the new words in the structured play corner. The children enjoyed the activity and extended their vocabulary in a very natural way.

25. Throughout the rest of the school teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and so they give good advice to aid pupils in their learning. Teachers and support staff are well able to sort out any misunderstandings so that pupils learn from their errors. Teachers have a good understanding of teaching reading and particularly in Years 5 and 6 have developed an enthusiasm for books. Teachers are more confident teaching mathematics and the use of correct terminology has led to pupils learning the correct way to explain their calculations. In Years 5 and 6 a very good knowledge of music led to an outstanding lesson, which challenged pupils to perform at a very high standard and learning was excellent. Due to the lack of ICT in lessons it is less apparent if teachers have a secure knowledge of this subject.

26. Overall the teaching of literacy skills is good. In the early years the focus on practical activities leads to effective learning of sounds and letter shapes. In Year 2 these skills are not taught as regularly and pupils' knowledge of sounds and spelling patterns could be further extended. However, all staff give good attention to the use of books and pupils enjoy reading stories. The teaching of numeracy skills is good and often very good with effective and quick questions extending pupils' problem solving skills. Teachers are confident delivering both the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies and this has led to significant improvements in standards over the past year. Computer skills are not taught sufficiently for pupils to gain the required standards and the vast majority of activities are not closely linked to learning in other subjects.

27. Planning for lessons is satisfactory and for numeracy and literacy it is good. Most subjects now follow the newly adopted schemes of work so that all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered. However, a lack of detail about the skills to be taught leads to a lack of challenge in a few lessons. This is more of a problem in science, history and geography lessons for the mixed age classes when teachers do not always give sufficient attention to the differing ages. This led to a mis-match in task to pupils' previous learning and pupils could have achieved more. A positive feature in planning is the close liaison with support staff so pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs receive effective support. Teaching for these pupils is good. Targets set are clear and teachers consider their needs in their daily planning. For example, forward planning led to a small group of pupils discussing the text that was to be used in the class next day. This meant that pupils were well prepared for the lesson and so able to take a full part in the activities.

28. A very positive feature in teaching is the emphasis placed on raising pupils' self-esteem. Expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work is good and pupils respond with a determination to complete their work and since the last inspection presentation has significantly improved. The setting of individual targets in English and mathematics shows that most teachers have realistic expectations of what pupils can achieve. In Years 1 and 2 higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and fewer pupils exceed the standards normally seen. Expectations are higher in Years 5 and 6 when teachers set challenging tasks and pupils strive harder to improve and achieve much in their final years in school. The impact on standards is that more pupils are now working at levels higher than the national average in English and mathematics.

29. Another strength in many lessons is the use of a range of interesting strategies to make lessons interesting for pupils. This variety is one of the reasons for the very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 when in some lessons teachers inspire their pupils and fill them with confidence so that they are eager to learn more. The school's focus on speaking and listening leads to many lessons including drama and role-play and this is very helpful for pupils with English as an additional language as they extend their vocabulary in an interesting way alongside their classmates.

30. The management of pupils is another strength in teaching. Teachers are positive and firm and behaviour is rarely an issue, which allows pupils to learn uninterrupted in an orderly atmosphere. Only on one occasion was teaching less than satisfactory and this was a result of weak management of pupils but this is not typical of teaching in the school.

31. One of the best features of teaching is the use of support staff. They are seen as a real asset by all staff and play a major role in lessons. Their support for pupils needing extra help is invaluable and a very significant reason for the good progress these pupils make. Time is generally used well and in Years 5 and 6 the pace of lessons is brisk, moving pupils quickly on in a lively manner. This holds pupils' concentration and the rate of learning is good and often very good. Some time is wasted as pupils wait for snacks and this could be put to more purposeful activities. Except for computers learning resources are used well. In mathematics the new games and practical equipment are a feature of most of the good lessons and lead to pupils of all abilities quickly grasping new mathematical concepts. In history in Years 1 and 2 artefacts and costumes are used imaginatively so that pupils get a real idea of life in the past. A strength in the good teaching seen in religious education is the emphasis on handling religious items and pupils develop a true respect for the beliefs and faiths other than their own.

32. The use of assessment to help pupils improve in lessons is satisfactory but has some weaker features. Marking of work is up-to-date and there are a few examples of comments that tell pupils what they need to do to improve. However, this is not a consistent feature and many pupils are not clear how to move their learning on to the next stage. In English and mathematics teachers record daily evaluations of lessons that often lead to future lessons being adjusted when a weakness is identified. This is usually effective but on occasions in Years 1 and 2 previous learning was not always taken into consideration in lessons. This led to some tasks being set that were either too easy or too difficult and this hampered the progress of a few pupils.

33. Parents were concerned about the small amount of homework pupils are given to do at home. Inspection evidence finds that limited amounts of work are set and this is not on a regular basis. Work set for pupils in Year 6 does not match the national recommendations and pupils are not sufficiently prepared for the amount of work they will be expected to do when they transfer to their secondary school.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

34. Good improvements have been made to the curriculum since the previous inspection and the school's provision is now satisfactory. The school works hard and successfully to provide a range of interesting and relevant activities which takes account of the diverse backgrounds of its pupils.

35. The school's provision in the nursery and reception classes continues to be sound. An appropriate range of interesting activities, enhanced by visits and visitors, promote the children's progress towards the nationally set early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

36. Comprehensive schemes of work, which incorporate national guidance, support teachers in their planning for all subjects of the National Curriculum, from Year 1 to Year 6. The curriculum in ICT, however, is not fully in place and insufficient attention is given to teaching modelling and control. The school has detailed plans to remedy this shortly, as funds become available. Religious education is appropriately taught in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

37. The school rightly puts an emphasis on teaching literacy and numeracy. Careful and thorough implementation of national strategies is raising standards as pupils move through the school. The special attention given to the teaching of speaking and listening skills and to using and applying mathematics practically has a beneficial effect on pupils' progress.

38. English, mathematics and to some extent science are taught as separate subjects. Other subjects are taught in topics, which are planned on a rotational two-year basis. In the junior department, topics are planned for Years 3 and 4 or for Years 5 and 6. This provides coverage of the National Curriculum over time. However, work is not planned in sufficient detail to meet the needs of each specific age group within and across classes. This results in some over expectation or lack of challenge, which slows the rate of learning for some pupils especially in science, geography and history.

39. A good range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, dance and choir enhance pupils' learning. Particular care is taken to ensure that all pupils are encouraged to take part and have full access to experiences provided. Gymnastics and dance clubs are held before school, and choir practice at lunchtime. This enables pupils who attend the mosque at the end of the day to take part. The organisation of Urdu lessons outside the school day, also, indicates the high level of the school's commitment to provide equal opportunities. A very good range of relevant educational visits and visitors make a significant contribution to pupils' understanding in many subjects. Interesting topic weeks, for instance, in creative arts, ecology or around festivals such as Eid, are regularly organised. They promote interest and enthusiasm, which supports pupils' learning and positive attitudes to work.

40. The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education. Great care is taken to respect pupils' ideas and promote self-esteem in lessons and in the daily life of the school. Weekly personal, social and emotional lessons enable pupils to consider moral and social issues and prepare for citizenship. Pupils are taught to express their own opinions and consider those of others, for instance, in the School Council and Eco Clubs. The school is currently discussing sensitive issues of sex education with parents, but does not yet have a sex education policy in place. Pupils' awareness of the use and misuse of drugs is appropriately raised in a science topic.

41. Good provision is made to support pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who learn through English as an additional language. The work of non-teaching assistants is carefully co-ordinated and successfully targeted to ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate curriculum to meet their individual needs.

42. The curriculum is enriched with good links with industry and the local community. A teacher has specific responsibility to develop these links and this has led to a high level of pupil involvement in out of school activities. Links with two league football clubs enhance extracurricular provision for sport. Pupils' recognition of local firms and services is fostered during a week that focuses on local industry. Pupils have been involved in the Stoke-on-Trent Our Town Story project and have improved their performance skills at the Millennium Dome and closer to home at the Victoria Hall.

43. Links with other schools are satisfactory. Pupils are involved in the Shropshire, Staffordshire and Stoke Arts in Schools Project. Close links with Brownhills High School involve appropriate liaison as pupils transfer from Year 6, and curriculum development is established as teachers from the high school visit to teach Year 5 classes.

44. The curriculum is enriched by very good provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development and this represents a marked improvement since the last inspection.

45. There is very good provision for spiritual development. Pupils take part in a collective act of worship each day, which is broadly Christian in nature. Staff and visiting clergy sensitively create a quiet reflective atmosphere through appropriate music and behaviour. A strength in the provision is the insights into the spirituality of non-Christian faiths. Pupils visit a Muslim mosque and a Christian church. As well as celebrating Christian festivals the pupils take part in a week devoted to the Muslim celebration of Eid. Pupils are well aware of the diversity of religions and traditions in our society. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to pause and reflect in many subjects. For example, in science the solar system is studied and pupils contemplate the vastness of the universe and in English pupils appreciate the beauty of language in poetry.

46. Provision for moral development is good. Staff take every opportunity to emphasise right from wrong and pupils have a clear understanding of what is acceptable in the school. In religious education lessons pupils become familiar with the Ten Commandments and the Five Pillars of Islam. Building on this knowledge the school has established the school's Five Golden Rules, which cover general areas of behaviour. When a pupil does misbehave they are sometimes excluded from the group for a short while and then encouraged to ask if they may rejoin the group when they are prepared to behave properly. In this way the pupils make a positive decision about their own behaviour. Moral questions inevitably arise in class discussions called Circle Time and these successfully promote pupils' understanding of the impact of their behaviour on other people. The

school has an effective policy to combat bullying and discussion with pupils indicates this type of behaviour is rare and pupils know what to do if an unpleasant incident occurs.

47. Provision for social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to show concern for others and willingly support charitable collections like the Non Uniform Day for Kosovo. The school provides ample opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility. This gives pupils a sense of importance and they carry out their tasks diligently. The School Council gives the pupils the opportunity to taste democracy and make some decisions for themselves. For example, the Council decided that pupils would make bookmarks to raise money for playground equipment. Pupils are encouraged to look after each other and this develops a happy sense of community in the school.

48. The provision for cultural development is very good. The previous inspection identified a lack of display that celebrated cultural diversity. This has now improved and several beautiful displays record the work done during the Eid festival. Pupils are very knowledgeable about the way Muslim people worship. Muslim pupils bring artefacts to school and say Muslim prayers that are listened to with reverence. Teachers celebrate the cultural diversity in the school. Pupils are fully aware of the many traditions that make up society and accept that all cultures should live happily together. In art lessons pupils are familiar with famous artists like Van Gogh and Cezanne and also have some knowledge of the art of other cultures like Africa. Pupils are introduced to a range of music including from other cultures. Visiting musicians play Sikh music. Cultural development is promoted through a wide range of visits and visitors. During the inspection a visiting drama group introduced the pupils to the work of Charles Dickens and this was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

49. The school has good procedures for the care of the pupils. The school's aim to create a 'Learning Family' is reflected in the way all staff know the pupils and value them as individuals and treat them with respect. Pupils are well supervised at all times. Good provision of bilingual assistants ensures that those pupils who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language feel comfortable and a valued part of the school. For the pupils, the school is a welcoming, happy, and secure environment.

50. Child protection procedures are good. Training has taken place and all staff are very familiar with the school's procedures. Relationships with the outside agencies are good. Health and safety issues are treated seriously. Equipment is regularly tested, all accidents are correctly recorded and there is adequate first aid cover. The school has a systematic programme for inspecting the building with very good follow-up procedures for any points requiring attention. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Healthy living is actively promoted, for instance with the provision of fresh fruit during the infant snack time.

51. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school is aware that its attendance rate is below the national average and is trying hard to improve it although there is no published target. Registers are marked correctly and the data is easily accessible. This is used effectively to maintain a high profile for attendance within the school, for instance awards are given weekly to the class with the best attendance and termly to those pupils with very good attendance records. All awards are well publicised. Regular reminders to parents effectively drive home the importance the school attaches to good attendance. There is very good liaison with the educational welfare service.

52. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are effective. The rules are simple and well understood by the pupils. Teachers apply them consistently. The very strong emphasis on recognising good behaviour has a positive effect on the vast majority of pupils. The acquisition of awards is taken seriously by the pupils and receives wide recognition in award-giving assemblies. There are clear procedures for recording incidents of inappropriate behaviour both in the classroom and at lunchtime. These records are well kept.

53. The school has very good anti-bullying procedures. The need to tell someone if an incident occurs is regularly reinforced by the use of assemblies on the subject and by class discussions in Circle Time to air problems and boost confidence. The staging of an anti-bullying day last October has had an enduring positive

effect on pupils who talked about this to inspectors. The provision of a confidential ‘concern box’ for any pupils who are reluctant to talk about an incident ensures that no pupil need fear from bullying. Pupils do not think bullying is a problem in the school.

54. Racism is not tolerated. Very good records are kept of any incident and parents informed. Pupils report that racism is not a problem in the school.

55. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils’ personal development are satisfactory. Class teachers know their pupils well. Even though records are informal, the written sections in the pupils’ annual reports produced by the teacher and the head teacher are of good quality.

56. Since the last inspection systems to assess pupils’ academic performance have improved. Procedures are now satisfactory overall and good in English and mathematics and this is already helping to raise standards of attainment in these subjects. To resolve a major weakness identified in the previous inspection a new system of record-keeping has been devised over the past year. Half-termly individual targets in literacy and numeracy are agreed and parents informed of what their child has to do to improve. Pupils’ progress is monitored and when targets are reached pupils are moved on to the next level. Teachers use this assessment information effectively to plan work for the differing needs of pupils in literacy and numeracy. Lessons are evaluated daily and future plans are amended for the class or for individuals if necessary. Currently, this is having a more positive impact on standards at the end of Year 6. In Year 2 teachers do not make as effective use of on-going assessment information and this leads to tasks that do not build sufficiently on previous learning. For example, in English pupils were set tasks that were too difficult and this restricted the rate of learning of a small group of pupils who could have learnt more.

57. Further information on progress in English and mathematics is obtained from the results of optional national tests. Areas of weakness thus identified are subsequently addressed. For example, additional work on the interpretation of graphs was provided for older pupils and standards have improved in mathematics. Information of test results is shared with older pupils and they are made well aware of what they need to do to attain the different levels in the statutory assessment tests.

58. The school analyses results according to gender and ethnicity and the information is used well to identify pupils who need extra language support and to check that suitable improvement is being made. The most recent data has been analysed and identified that reading is an area to develop for Pakistani boys and more ‘boy friendly’ books are to be ordered.

59. A strength in assessment is an analysis of spoken language for children who have English as an additional language. When children start school an assessment is carried out and clear records are kept, identifying the language spoken at home and other relevant information. An individual language programme is devised and good bilingual support is given enabling pupils to make good progress. Teachers build targeted vocabulary into their activities and meticulously monitor pupils’ confidence in language. This system has effectively raised staff’s understanding of difficulties caused by language as opposed to a learning difficulty. This was a concern at the time of the last inspection and staff are far more confident supporting these pupils as help is focused on clear targets. When pupils receive extra adult support progress is closely monitored. These systems have been most effective in enabling these pupils to make good progress relative to their prior attainment.

60. The results of assessments are also used well to identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Individual educational plans are drawn up with specific targets and these are adjusted as progress is made.

61. The school has no agreed system for assessing pupils’ progress in subjects other than English and mathematics, though the school is currently trying out a new system to assess pupils’ attainment in science in Year 3 and Year 4. This makes it difficult for teachers to plan work to meet the specific needs of different groups of pupils in the class, and is a major factor affecting the attainment of pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

62. There is a good partnership between the school and the parents. Parents are predominantly supportive of what the school is trying to do. Parents report that they find the staff approachable, they think the teaching is good and that the teachers have high expectations of their children. Parents also think their children are making good progress. The inspection team agrees completely with the parents' positive views. At the pre-inspection parents' meeting, inspectors were left in no doubt that parents think the school has improved considerably in the last two years.

63. At the parents' meeting and on the questionnaire completed before the inspection, some parents had concerns about homework. Inspectors found that the provision of homework is unsatisfactory. The setting of work to be done at home is often inconsistent both from week to week and within classes covering the same year group. Year 6 pupils reported that their written homework takes 10 to 15 minutes per week and this is insufficient to prepare pupils for their next phase of education. The homework policy lacks detail and so parents are unclear about what is expected from their children. The inspectors find that the parents concerns are justified.

64. The school tries very hard to build a close relationship with parents, starting with home visits by staff before the children start nursery. Bilingual staff visit those homes where English is not the mother tongue ensuring a full understanding by all of the school and its procedures. Children are sensitively and gradually introduced into school life with parents being kept fully involved. Within the school, parent helpers are encouraged although the numbers participating are small. Parents are invited to be more actively involved in their children's learning by joining the Family Literacy Courses however, the take-up is relatively low. The school sensibly consults parents on developments, for instance checking that when the pupils chose a new colour for the school uniform, it would be possible to make the shalwar chemise favoured by many Asian parents in the new colour. Parents help in school events, for instance, bringing food and artefacts for cultural days and helping to clear waste land in preparation for the school ecological area. There is an active Friends of Summerbank Association that organises social events and raises money for the school. The inspectors do not agree with those parents who expressed concerns that the school does not work closely enough with parents.

65. The quality of information for parents is good and is an improvement since the previous inspection. This good level of information applies to all parents and documents are translated into Urdu when appropriate and bilingual assistants are available at formal and informal meetings. The prospectus is informative with good sections on ethos and parental involvement. Parents are well informed of their children's progress through termly meetings with teachers. The school has very good procedures to ensure that alternative arrangements are made for parents who miss or cannot make these meetings. The level of useful information has been boosted recently by letting parents know each term, their children's individual targets in English and mathematics. This helps parents to be more involved in their children's learning. Pupils' reports are satisfactory. They are easy to read, state progress clearly and meet statutory requirements. The sections on personal development are of good quality, however, the sections on religious education, information and communications technology and the foundation subjects often do not give a sufficiently clear picture of what a child can do. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed on their progress and are invited to attend all formal reviews. The view expressed by some parents, that they are not kept well informed on how their child is getting on, is not substantiated by the inspection.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

66. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has been the leading force in bringing about improvements in the school. She is a very good leader and has very successfully raised morale and developed a strong team spirit in the school. The deputy headteacher sensitively and successfully led the school through a difficult time as they awaited the arrival of the new headteacher. The governing body plays

a major role in leading the school and together with the headteacher and deputy gives a clear direction for future development and is fully committed to raising standards. Following the last inspection the management team made a realistic decision to focus on standards in English and mathematics. Success can be measured by the gradual improvement in national test results. There is ample evidence to show the school has also tackled effectively the support for pupils who have English as an additional language. Effective systems are in place to identify the needs of these pupils and to provide effective support in class and if required in small group sessions. These pupils are now making good progress related to their prior attainment.

67. Procedures to monitor the school's performance are in place and the headteacher collects and uses detailed assessment data to track pupils' progress. In 2000 monitoring shows that although overall results of the national tests at the age of eleven had dropped school data revealed the vast majority of pupils who had been in the school from Year 2 had actually made at least satisfactory progress. Many of the pupils with English as an additional language had made good progress. With this knowledge staff were able to move forward on a more positive footing feeling more confident that their efforts were raising standards. Analysis of test results showed boys, particularly boys for whom English is not their mother tongue, were underachieving in reading and new resources have been identified to address this concern. The headteacher, governors and English and mathematics' co-ordinators have carried out monitoring of teaching and the unsatisfactory teaching identified in the original inspection has been eliminated.

68. The headteacher delegates responsibility efficiently to the deputy headteacher and teachers with management roles for subjects and other aspects of the school. The deputy headteacher plays an important part in leading the school not least in maintaining enthusiasm for teaching and in raising the expectations for the pupils in the school. Co-ordination of English and mathematics has been good and with the co-operation of all has led to improved standards. Co-ordination of other subjects is satisfactory except in information and communication technology when it is unsatisfactory. This subject is currently without a co-ordinator due to long-term absence and the subject has not kept up-to-date with standards seen in other subjects and the full curriculum is not taught. The deputy headteacher has taken over in a temporary capacity and has drawn up a clear action plan for the introduction of a new ICT suite. Staff training and new resources support this initiative. In other subjects co-ordinators have introduced new guidelines but currently do not have opportunity to check they are supporting teaching in the classroom. The management of provision for pupils who have English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs is good. New systems are in place to assess and support these pupils and the setting of clear targets is having a significant impact on the good progress these pupils are making. All the statutory requirements for special educational needs are met and records are kept meticulously. Although the special needs co-ordinator is only in school for one day a week the links with support staff are very effective. They keep good records of what has been learnt and this leads on to new targets being set that enable pupils to learn at a brisk pace.

69. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities diligently and is well informed about what is happening in the school. The committee structure is very effective in following up aspects in more depth and then reporting back to the full governing body. Links with subjects are in place and governors have carried out formal monitoring of teaching so that all decisions are based on a secure knowledge of what is happening on a day-to-day basis. The vast majority of statutory requirements are met although the curriculum for ICT does not contain all the required elements of the National Curriculum. The governors have set targets for the headteacher and scrutinise results to check on how these are being achieved. Appraisal is linked to staff development interviews and training is clearly linked to priorities in the school's development plan. This plan is a collaborative document with issues raised being prioritised by all staff and governors. The governing body has made great strides forward in their strategic planning and the school's development plan is a regular item on agendas. Targets are appropriately aimed at improving standards and have evolved from a review of previous targets, national initiatives and areas for development identified through the school's self-review. The school development plan is a well structured document with clear success criteria identified. For major initiatives like provision for ICT and early years additional more detailed plans are drawn up.

70. Financial planning by the headteacher and governors is good. Over recent years difficult decisions have had to be made to balance the budget and this was managed efficiently. Currently the school has a balanced budget and all spending is carefully linked to the educational priorities set out in the school development plan.

The finance committee meets regularly to monitor the budget and governors seek to find best value for all their spending. Effective use has been made of funds to support numeracy and literacy and extra books have played a major role in developing pupils' enthusiasm for reading. Funds for ICT are only just becoming available and the school has a detailed action plan to make best use of these additional funds. Funding for special educational needs is used appropriately and support for these pupils is good and they make good progress.

71. The school administration is effective and administrative staff provide a welcoming greeting to visitors. The most recent audit made a number of recommendations and the school has addressed these.

72. Management has coped with recent reductions in staff required to balance the budget and staffing is adequate now although some classes are large. Teachers are well qualified and share expertise to help each other. The school benefits from a high proportion of support staff who are deployed effectively in the nursery and to support pupils with English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs. These assistants have attended appropriate training and their support has a significant impact on the good progress these pupils make. Accommodation is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection as the school has given considerable attention to the refurbishment of classrooms. This has had a positive impact on the ethos in the school and pupils have a great pride in their school. The new library is attractive although it is not yet used sufficiently for independent research and it is not easily accessible for pupils in the infant department. The outdoor play area for under fives is used well by the nursery but is not available for the children in the reception classes. The school is spacious with large halls and extra rooms for parents to meet and a toddler group also meets weekly. Learning resources are satisfactory overall and in some subjects have increased dramatically since the last inspection. The range of books is now good and has had a tremendous impact on pupils' enthusiasm for reading. Mathematics lessons are more fun as apparatus and games make learning more enjoyable. In other lessons the use of artefacts have made learning more interesting. Only in ICT have resources not kept up with current developments and this has led to aspects of the curriculum not being taught. Funding is now available and the school has a good action plan and a prepared classroom to develop a new computer suite.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

73. To improve further the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in science by:
  - improving assessment procedures
  - improving teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum levels
  - giving more attention to the scientific skills required by each age group in Years 3 to 6.  
(see paragraphs 5, 11, 27, 38, 61, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108)
  
- (2) Raise standards in information and communication technology by:
  - teaching all the requirements of the National Curriculum
  - providing training for teachers
  - extending resources in line with the school's action plan

(The development of information and communication technology is a priority on the school's development plan)

(see paragraphs 12, 23, 25, 26, 31, 36, 61, 69, 70, 92, 100, 113, 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 149)
  
- (3) Further improve and extend assessment procedures by:
  - implementing procedures in all subjects (except English and mathematics) to enable progress to be more closely monitored
  - make better use of assessment information in Years 1 and 2 to ensure work is set that more closely matches the needs of all pupils

- include more comments in marking books so that pupils know what they have to do to improve.  
(see paragraphs 32, 56, 61, 92, 107, 108, 114, 121, 132, 140, 146)
- (4) Adjust the planning for science, history and geography in Years 3 to 6 so that more account is taken of the needs of different age groups in the mixed age classes.  
(see paragraphs 11, 13, 27, 38, 102, 120, 124)
- (5) Provide more opportunities for subject co-ordinators (excluding English and mathematics) to check that the new planning guidelines are being effectively implemented.  
(see paragraphs 68, 108, 114, 127, 133, 152)

In addition to the key issues above the following less important aspects should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- give further attention to the amount of work being set for pupils to do at home (see paragraphs 33, 63, 92, 100)
- improve the use of the library for independent research (see paragraphs 72, 93)
- extend the use of the outdoor play facilities to the children in the reception classes. (see paragraphs 72, 83)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	79
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	14	43	41	0	1	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	46	348
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	149

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y R– Y6
	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	75

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	139

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	8.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	20	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	16
	Girls	15	16	17
	Total	28	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (79)	75(77)	83 (84)
	National	84(82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	16	18
	Girls	17	16	17
	Total	30	32	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75(81)	80 (84)	88 (88)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	17	22	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	11
	Girls	15	11	15
	Total	23	20	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (58)	51 (64)	67 (71)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	10	9
	Girls	12	15	11
	Total	18	25	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46 (56)	64 (64)	51 (66)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	111
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	186
Any other minority ethnic group	6

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani	1	
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	1
Other minority ethnic groups		

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.8
Average class size	29

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	122

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	153

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	99/2000
	£
Total income	719841
Total expenditure	705029
Expenditure per pupil	1808
Balance brought forward from previous year	-12520
Balance carried forward to next year	2292

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	394
Number of questionnaires returned	109

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	29	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	50	36	10	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	35	13	8	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	36	19	7	6
The teaching is good.	50	34	8	3	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	30	17	6	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	31	9	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	26	6	0	9
The school works closely with parents.	39	39	13	6	3
The school is well led and managed.	46	35	11	6	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	36	14	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	34	14	3	18

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

74. The previous inspection reported that children settled smoothly into school but that their early progress was not sufficiently built upon, which indicated some underachievement. Current evidence shows that the school has raised its expectations and improved the pace of learning in both the nursery and the reception classes.

75. Children start nursery after their third birthday and attend a small class part-time for the first term. They settle quickly and are well prepared for their entry into the main nursery, where children are taught by a nursery nurse, with some support from bilingual assistants. Children transfer to one of the two reception classes at the start of the year in which they are four. They are then taught by a teacher and a nursery nurse, again supported by bilingual assistants.

76. Most children start nursery with very low levels of literacy and numeracy, and many have poor personal and social skills, being unable to share with others or behave appropriately. Lots of opportunities to work and play in small groups and a well planned introduction to the nursery ensures the children settle quickly and happily. This is supported by an intensive approach to personal, social and emotional development and a good focus on language and literacy and children make good progress and get off to a flying start.

77. When they enter the reception class assessment shows that whilst children have made good progress attainment is still well below what might be expected for their age. In response to good teaching and improved resources children make good progress in their learning during their time in the reception class. The vast majority achieve well enough although they do not attain the early learning goals<sup>3</sup> in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. In response to the focus on personal, social and emotional development most achieve the level expected in this area of development.

78. The overall quality of teaching is good and it was good and better in 66 per cent of lessons seen. Teachers and support staff have a good knowledge of the needs of this age range and there is a good balance of free choice and tasks that have support from a teacher. Teachers organise and manage their classes well and children have good support during their activities, which helps them to understand what they are doing and maintains the pace of the range of activities planned. Planning to cover all areas of learning for the age group is good and the school has incorporated appropriate elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies into the reception classes. The curriculum is based on topics and good use of resources stimulates children. They enjoy the good range of practical activities and develop good attitudes to learning. There is an effective assessment system that records children's learning in all areas of the curriculum so that work builds on previous learning. An initial assessment of children whose first language is not English is very effective in identifying children needing extra help. Certain commonly used words are then included in planning and staff focus on these in all activities. Bilingual staff take part in role play activities and this very successfully raises confidence as well as extends vocabulary and enables the children to make good progress. Teaching for the children with special educational needs is good. Staff are aware of their needs and plan tasks to build on prior learning and this enables them to make good progress in their understanding, skills and knowledge.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

79. Children make good progress because of the good quality of teaching and the emphasis the school gives to this aspect of development. The youngest children soon settle into school and quickly try to manage their own personal needs. They take themselves to the toilet unaided and older ones in the nursery dress and undress themselves competently without fuss. The school places high priority on practical and independent

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<sup>3</sup> Early learning goals—the nationally recommended levels for children at the end of the reception class.

learning and children enjoy their opportunities to make decisions about their work and accept responsibility for their actions. By the time children enter Year 1, most have achieved well and gained confidence in working as part of a group. Discipline is positive and staff consistently apply the school's policies for developing responsible attitudes. Children learn what is good or unacceptable and resultant behaviour is good. Most concentrate for reasonable periods on their work, persevering to complete given tasks or taking responsibility for their own learning in choice activities. They enjoy their tasks and are eager to learn. When working in groups, children are considerate towards others and share their equipment well, taking turns appropriately. The way in which staff display children's work attractively creates a stimulating environment and contributes considerably to their self esteem and personal development. Overall, standards are in line with those recommended nationally for children of this age.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

80. Teaching is good and promotes good levels of achievement for all pupils. Many children enter school, with low levels of attainment and several do not speak English. There is a high priority given to teaching the language skills of speaking and listening and this enables children of all ethnic groups to make good progress in spoken English. Bilingual support is used effectively in both the nursery and reception classes and makes a good contribution to the quality of teaching and children's achievements. The basic skills of reading and writing are taught effectively and children make good progress in early literacy skills. The same system of teaching letters and sounds is used throughout the nursery and reception classes and higher attaining children are beginning to use them satisfactorily in their reading and writing. Reading is a regular part of daily activities and a good range of attractive books encourages children to browse throughout the day. They handle books carefully and most understand how they work. Average and higher attaining pupils know a selection of words from the school's reading scheme. Lower attainers recognise the names of some characters in the books. Although average and higher attainers know a number of letter sounds, few use these successfully when attempting new words. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for children to attempt their own writing in other activities, such as in the class office. Most children write letter shapes, although these are not always the correct ones for the words they wish to write. Higher attainers make good attempts at writing simple words and most write their name unaided. Despite the good progress many children do not reach the level expected nationally by the end of the reception class.

### **Mathematical development**

81. Children enter the nursery with attainment well below the expected level. Good teaching and a strong emphasis placed on numeracy, promotes good achievement and children make good progress. Nevertheless, the number of children achieving the nationally agreed early learning goals at the end of the reception class is below average. Many opportunities are taken to count in the nursery and most children count up to 5 and are familiar with a good range of nursery rhymes. They recognise simple shapes and stick squares together to make a cube. They make sets, such as of snowmen with the same colour buttons. Numeracy skills are suitably extended in the reception classes and most pupils count to 20. Higher attaining children count in tens to 100. Lower attainers count to 20 with some help but have difficulty in explaining which number comes before 10. Children have good opportunities to compare measurements. They put the three bears in the correct order of height and say which is the smallest, whilst higher attaining children use cubes to measure the height of the bears accurately. They make shape pictures and patterns and sort shapes into those which are symmetrical and those which are not. Teaching of mathematics is good overall and teachers in the reception classes have introduced appropriate elements of the National Numeracy Strategy. The introductory sessions of these lessons are used well to extend pupils' arithmetic skills. Activities are suitably practically based and there are good opportunities for problem solving. Good use is made of assessment information when planning future activities so that children's learning builds successfully on their previous learning. Effective support is given to children who are learning through English as an additional language, particularly emphasising the language of mathematics, matching and naming colours correctly and their rate of learning is good.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

82. Attainment on entry is well below average and the school uses a wide range of activities to enhance children's awareness of the world around them. They achieve well and the standard of work is close to the level expected by the end of the reception class. Teaching is good and planning shows a range of first-hand experiences to make learning relevant. Children learn about the local environment and about people who work there and help them. This is reinforced by a programme of visitors, such as people from the Fire Service and hospital. Children learn a great deal and children enjoy their opportunities to sit in fire-engine or undertake role-play in the hospital corner. They learn about changes with time and about the seasons of the year, knowing that different clothes are suitable for different types of weather. Children are introduced to investigation and enjoy observing what happens in different circumstances. For example, they know that when ice is warmed that it melts and that it melts at different rates, depending on whether it is put in a warm place or a cold one. Children are confident in using the computers to play simple literacy or numeracy games, although there is only one computer shared between the four nursery groups, which limits children's progress at that point. The good attention to customs and beliefs of the various ethnic groups in school enriches children's experience and their understanding of other faiths and cultures.

### **Physical development**

83. Children achieve well through a planned programme of activities, but overall do not attain the nationally agreed early learning goals by the end of the reception class. There is a secure outdoor play area with direct access from the nursery. Children in the nursery use this daily using small equipment such as balls and bean-bags and wheeled toys are used twice each week, but many of these are old and in need of replacement. The sessions are well supervised for safety but there are missed opportunities for planned activities to develop physical and social skills. Children in the reception year do not use this area at present but have playtime with Year 1 and Year 2. In their physical education lessons in the hall the children show a good understanding of space as they move about the hall without bumping into each other. They pretend they are hunting a bear and act out the movements as they walk through mud, tiptoe or move quickly. Children undertake a good range of activities to develop their manipulative skills. For example, they use jigsaws and threading beads in the nursery and a range of writing implements and tools such as scissors in reception. Although they make good progress their pencil, brush and scissors control is a little below average overall and this is apparent in the immature handwriting and painting of many. The quality of teaching is sound with a suitable range of activities provided to develop physical skills.

### **Creative development**

84. Overall the quality of teaching is good. The provision for role-play is a strength of this area of learning and staff promote children's language development as well as their creativity. For example, in role-play in 'The Three Bears House' in the reception classes a bilingual assistant helped children to develop the language they needed to take full part in their own drama. Imaginative and good quality resources enhance role-play. This supports language development well and contributes to children's knowledge and understanding of their world. For example, in the nursery the addition of Asian clothing in the home corner stimulated two boys to enact an Eid party whilst in reception, a picnic basket provided children with an opportunity to hold a teddy bears' picnic. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to draw and paint creatively but their pictures are immature and brush technique is weak. They make collages, using a satisfactory range of resources and use a range of items to print. Children enjoy singing and know a range of simple songs and rhymes. Most listen carefully and copy a simple rhythm and they learn to apply a simple percussion rhythm at a satisfactory level. Overall, children make good progress and achieve well so that attainment is close to that expected by the end of the reception class.

## **ENGLISH**

85. The national test results for 2000 in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were well below average. When compared with similar schools results were below average in reading and well below in writing. Although an increasing number of pupils are reaching the level expected few exceed it and this is holding down the overall results. Test results for 2000 at the end of Year 6 were well below the national average and

below those for similar schools. Over the last four years the proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected level has been gradually improving with an increase in the number of pupils exceeding the national average in reading. In 2000, the overall results were adversely affected by the significant number of pupils transferring from other schools who took time to settle into a new school and the above average number of pupils with special educational needs.

86. Evidence from the inspection shows that by the time pupils are seven, standards are below average, but, by eleven, pupils attain average standards. This shows an improvement on national test results and the standards reported in the previous inspection. The number of pupils exceeding the national average has not improved significantly at the end of Year 2 but is more apparent at the end of Year 6. This big improvement is due to the effective implementation of the literacy hour, analytical assessment of pupils' work with all pupils having individual targets, good teaching, improved resources and effective management of the subject. Another factor is the effective support the pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language receive, to help them learn basic skills in reading and in writing. Starting from a very low level of language and literacy on entry to school, the pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2. In response to very good teaching and closer attention to pupils' individual targets pupils achieve very well in Years 5 and 6. The targets set for English are based on an analysis of test results and are appropriately challenging. The school now has more pupils working at levels that exceed the national average and is well placed to achieve its target.

87. Many pupils who are learning through English as an additional language make good progress as they become more competent in their communication skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective help in class and in withdrawal groups. Targets are linked to their needs and they make good progress in all aspects of English. There has been a fluctuating pattern of achievement of boys and girls but no significant difference was seen during the inspection. Recent data has identified Pakistani boys are not achieving as well as other pupils and the school has plans to buy more 'boy friendly' books to raise their standards.

88. Speaking and listening skills are below average at the end of Year 2. Teachers provide many speaking and listening opportunities in English and in other subjects and as a result pupils join in discussions about stories and gain in confidence to share their ideas. However, many pupils still respond in short phrases and have a limited vocabulary. Occasionally, some pupils do not listen with sufficient care, mainly in Year 2, when the introduction is too long and pupils lose interest. The conclusion of lessons allows pupils to read their work to the rest of the class and this leads to pupils growing in confidence when speaking in front of an audience. At the end of Year 6 standards are in line with the national average and this represents good achievement. For pupils who started school with limited spoken English this is a significant achievement and reflects a good response to the focus on communication skills. Teachers provide opportunities for formal debate and drama. Very good examples were observed during the inspection. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 were involved in lively debates, discussing pros and cons of going to war. Pupils offered some thought provoking ideas as the debates developed. Pupils listen with great care and on the basis of this discussion, some pupils amended their views, while others defended it, both groups giving well-argued points of view. Clarity of speech improves as teachers encourage pupils to be precise in their answers.

89. Many pupils enter school with very limited reading skills. They take a long time to acquire word building skills and fluency in reading. The vast majority of pupils make at least satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and although their standards in reading are below average at the end of Year 2 they achieve well given the low levels of reading when they start in Year 1. Many still rely heavily on pictures to help them and have insufficient skills to obtain information from non-fiction books. Teachers use a good range of strategies to teach their pupils to read. However, while the teaching of letter sounds is undertaken systematically and regularly in Year 1, this is not always given sufficient attention in Year 2 as the emphasis changes from reading to writing. This leads to some lessons, which do not introduce or consolidate pupils' knowledge of sounds and letter blends. Consequently, pupils' progress is slower in this element of the subject. Regular reading at home extends reading skills and older pupils support the younger ones through daily sessions, during lunchtimes. Good progress is made between Years 3 and 6 and many pupils achieve the nationally expected level by the end of Year 6. Many pupils make very good progress in Years 5 and 6 and much is achieved. In guided reading, teachers give due attention to research skills and pupils are beginning to scan the text to gain

an overall impression and to extract information required. A particular strength in the teaching is the infectious enthusiasm that teachers have for literature. As a result, pupils are inspired to read and talk knowledgeably about the characters, the story line or events in the books they have read. They eagerly discuss authors such as Charles Dickens and their preferences for 'Oliver Twist' or for 'The Christmas Carol'. Against the national trends, boys are keen and enthusiastic readers of books.

90. The pupils make at least satisfactory progress in their writing skills in Years 1 and 2. It takes some time before they know enough words to express their ideas in writing and by the end of Year 2 many have not yet reached the national average. The pupils learn to write simple sentences and are starting to use capital letters and full stops correctly. The stronger focus on writing during the literacy hour is beginning to pay dividends. In Year 2, pupils are starting to write for different purposes, including simple stories and poems. Their handwriting is developing through frequent and regular practice and some pupils are beginning to use joined script. Presentation of work, which was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection, has improved and is now good. While spelling homework is given on a weekly basis pupils in Year 2 do not consistently spell correctly many of the regularly spelt words. The lack of regular practice to revise and extend their knowledge spelling patterns hampers the pupils' fluency in writing. Good progress is made between Years 3 and 6 and by the time they are eleven the standards of many pupils are broadly average and this shows significant achievement in the last years in school. As yet, writing is the weaker element, because the pupils have limited skills when they start school and therefore have a large deficit to make up. Teachers provide opportunities to practise these skills in other subjects. As a result, pupils make good learning gains. The higher attaining pupils write extended pieces of work arranged into paragraphs, using complex sentences and a good range of punctuation marks. Standards are rising through the good opportunities that teachers provide for drafting activities. As a result, pupils learn to plan, revise and to make improvements in content, style and in structure. Analysis of pupils' work indicates that many pupils are using increasingly imaginative and expressive vocabulary. They write for numerous purposes, with a specific audience in mind. Pupils' handwriting is neat, legible and mostly, in joined script. However, very few of them use ink-pens for their writing in English and in other subjects. Good progress is made in spelling as teachers and support staff teach pupils an effective method to learn new words.

91. Literacy skills are no longer depressing learning in other subjects. Teachers seize opportunities to develop good writing skills as evidenced in Years 3 and 4 in science, where the pupils record what constitutes a balanced diet. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils make notes about the Tunstall bypass and put forward reasoned and balanced arguments for and against it.

92. The overall quality of teaching is good, with the biggest proportion of very good lessons observed in Years 5 and 6. The rate of learning is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors. Teaching is considerably better than at the time of the previous inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory. This improvement has been one of the major factors for the improved standards. Teachers' insecure knowledge of the subject was not evident and currently teachers throughout the school are confident teaching English and give good advice to pupils as they are working. Teachers ensure that the pupils understand the learning targets for each lesson and during the final session, they summarise the key learning points to see if these have been successfully achieved. They organise lessons well especially the management of group activities and lessons include a range of activities to maintain pupils' interest. This is more successful in Years 3 to 6 and particularly in Years 5 and 6 where teachers use various strategies, such as role-play, skilful questioning and very active approaches to inspire their pupils. More challenging and interesting activities are provided for the pupils in Years 5 and 6 and more pupils are now working at higher levels. Assessment information is used more effectively in Years 3 to 6 with tasks building successfully on previous learning. On occasions in Year 2 this was not the case and work was set that was too difficult or on the other hand did not challenge pupils and they could have learnt at a faster rate in lessons. Pupils' work is generally marked carefully although not all teachers provide guidance on how to improve it. In Years 5 and 6, the teachers give recognition for their work and why it is good. They provide further guidance as to what the pupils need to do to achieve higher levels and this resolves a concern from the previous inspection. As yet, teachers do not use ICT regularly enough to develop pupils' reading and writing skills. Insufficient ICT resources do not help matters. Reading and spellings are often given to be learned at home but insufficient work is set to prepare older pupils for their next stage of education. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with English as an

additional language is good. All teachers and support staff, ensure that pupils of all abilities are fully involved in lessons. Classroom assistants record pupils' responses, which they then use in small group support to clarify any difficulties in vocabulary or understanding. As a result pupils achieve much in these sessions as they focus on what the pupils need to learn next. Consequently, they make good progress in the acquisition of reading and writing skills. In addition, teachers use stories from other cultures, such as a Chinese fairy tale used in Year 2. Pupils' own rich heritage is celebrated through literature. These factors are all contributory to pupils' overall good progress.

93. The management of English is good and has contributed greatly to the overall improvements in standards. Teaching and learning are now monitored systematically and identified weaknesses are discussed and action put in place to resolve them. The success of this can be seen in the wonderful range of books bought to raise standards in reading. Currently, the library is underused to develop pupils' independent research skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

94. In the 2000 national test, the results of pupils aged seven were well below the national average and below that of similar schools. However, inspection evidence indicates that there has been an improvement in standards in the current year in response to the National Numeracy Strategy, to increased opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and to setting targets for individual pupils. From a low level of attainment as pupils start school the majority is achieving well although standards are still below the national target for their age and fewer pupils than would be expected reach above this level.

95. In the national tests in 2000, the results of pupils aged eleven were well below the national average and below when compared with similar schools. Though there is generally a rising trend since 1998, the 2000 results show a fall from the previous year with no overall increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level. However, inspection evidence shows that there has been a good improvement in standards for those pupils currently in Year 6. Careful scrutiny of pupils' books and observation of their skills in lessons indicate that the number of pupils likely to attain the expected level for this year will be close to the national average, with a significant increase in the number of pupils likely to exceed this level. This shows good progress in Years 3 to 6 and is due to the improvement in teaching of the older pupils with a greater level of challenge for all these pupils, including higher attainers. Assessment procedures have been improved with pupils having individual targets and teachers taking greater account of pupils' previous knowledge and understanding when planning lessons. Individual targets are set for each half term and this is helping to concentrate pupils' attention on those areas they need to improve. This is working more effectively in Years 3 to 6 and has led to teachers providing suitable challenge for higher attaining pupils, and this has helped to raise the achievement of pupils in Years 5 and 6. This improvement reflects a significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards in mathematics were particularly weak. The school has set realistic and challenging targets and is very well placed to achieve and possibly exceed them.

96. By the age of seven, pupils are developing sound number skills through regular mental practice at the start of each lesson. Most pupils fill in missing numbers on a 100-square and can add 10 or 20 to a number. Higher attaining pupils can complete the multiplication tables for x2, x3, x4, x5 and x10. Lower attaining pupils count forwards and backwards on a number-line in order to work out simple addition and subtraction to 10. All pupils develop a sound understanding of number through the regular opportunities to explain how they have worked things out and through simple problem solving activities. For example, pupils work out how many ways 5 or 7 spots can be placed on the ladybird's wings and record their answers by drawing, whilst higher attaining pupils investigate how many ways they can give the monkey a total of 25 peanuts from three bags. They look at a variety of containers to predict how many cubes they will hold and check their guesses by counting the cubes. Little work was seen on shape such as identifying right angles or turning corners on a grid. Pupils use a range of graphs to display information. From a low starting point, at the age of five, the majority of pupils are doing as well as could be expected of them, though insufficient challenge is given to higher attaining pupils to enable them to reach their full potential.

97. By the age of eleven, pupils are developing good arithmetic skills through regular mental practice and through trying to solve the daily mathematics challenge. Most pupils multiply hundreds, tens and units by numbers in their tables and understand the effect of multiplying or dividing by 10 and 100. They know that some fractions have an equivalent value and use this knowledge to place fractions in order. Most pupils change mixed numbers into improper fractions and lower attaining pupils develop understanding through comparing fractions using a fraction board. Pupils extend their problem solving skills through word problems and through investigating patterns in number, such as square numbers and triangular numbers. Pupils increase their understanding of mathematical vocabulary and use the correct terms to discuss how they have worked things out. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to write about patterns they have discovered or to generalise about their findings. Most pupils understand the range of units used for measuring and use a scale to measure distances on a map. Higher attaining pupils interpret timetables using the 24-hour clock. Most pupils can draw and measure angles using a protractor with varying degrees of accuracy and through practical activities they discover that the sum of the angles of a triangle is 180 degrees. Pupils draw and interpret a good range of graphs, following extra work on this area of mathematics, for example they use a line graph to convert miles to kilometres. Higher attaining pupils draw graphs in all four quadrants. Pupils are developing some understanding of probability by deciding which events are certain and which are impossible. They are beginning to analyse information to identify the mode and the mean, but their understanding is not secure. From below average attainment at the age of seven, the majority of pupils are achieving very well and are on target to achieve the expected level, with an increasing number working at the higher level.

98. Numeracy skills no longer hamper learning in other lessons and are now at a level to support learning in other subjects. Teachers plan activities so that numeracy skills contribute to learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 place famous Victorians, such as Florence Nightingale, in the correct order on a timeline. A traffic survey is carried out in Year 4 and pupils analyse the data and predict that if 7 lorries pass in 15 minutes, 28 will pass by in an hour.

99. Good support is given to pupils learning through English is an additional language. Bilingual assistants and the use of other pupils to act as concept buddies help these pupils to develop an understanding of the language of maths and they make good progress. Good progress is also made by pupils with special educational needs. Work is generally well planned to suit their individual needs in the classroom, and where it is available, classroom support is used effectively to enable pupils to participate in the oral sessions and in group activities. Teachers are well aware of the levels of understanding of their pupils and try to ensure that there is a range of questions in mental maths to suit the range of abilities.

100. The quality of teaching is good overall and has significantly improved since the previous inspection when it was unsatisfactory. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all the lessons seen with some examples of very good teaching in Year 1 and in Years 5 and 6. The rate of learning reflects the teaching and is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors. There has been a good improvement in teachers' questioning skills to encourage pupils to use and apply their skills. Pupils now explain how they work things out and this helps understanding. All teachers have responded well to the National Numeracy Strategy and the good implementation of the introductory mental maths session has considerably improved pupils' arithmetic skills. Lessons are generally carefully planned and teachers evaluate their work carefully and make adjustments to take account of any difficulties or lack of pupils' understanding. In the best lessons seen the brisk pace keeps pupils interested and work is well matched to pupils' needs. This was particularly evident in Years 1, 5 and 6. In Year 2 this was less successful as teachers do not always make effective use of assessment and so tasks are not always provided that sufficiently challenge the most able pupils who could progress more quickly. Overall management of pupils is positive and firm but in Year 2 teachers find it difficult to moderate the challenging behaviour of a minority of pupils. This affects progress as the interruptions slow the pace of lessons. Teachers provide suitable, practical activities to consolidate pupils' arithmetic skills and understanding well. Good support is given to less able children in group activities to enable them to make good progress. For example the teacher in Year 4 used a number line well to demonstrate adding and subtracting 10. However, activities provided for independent group work in the other classes are not always as successful in promoting hard work. This is due to some pupils' inability to concentrate for lengthy periods and their learning improves when additional support is available. Whole class sessions are successful in promoting arithmetic skills and good use is made of the final sessions to consolidate

what pupils have learned. In Years 5 and 6 the high expectations of the teacher has been a significant factor in helping to raise standards of all pupils, but particularly those who show an aptitude for mathematics. In the very good lesson seen they demonstrate considerable mathematical aptitude, using squares and cubes of numbers in an effort to achieve the target challenge. Judicious use of praise helps to motivate pupils to do their best and to aim high. Whilst there is a computer in each class, insufficient use is made of information technology to promote learning in mathematics. Overall, insufficient use is made of homework to extend learning.

101. Co-ordination of the subject is good. Informed guidance and support given to staff has led to improvements in the quality of teaching. All teachers have been observed teaching mathematics and areas for improvement have been discussed. The school has identified mathematics as a priority and most teachers have attended training and more is planned. Resources have improved since the previous inspection and this has helped to improve pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts as well as making learning more enjoyable.

## SCIENCE

102. Standards of work at ages 7 and 11 are below average, although they are improving considerably at age 11, where the proportion of pupils working at the expected levels for their age, or exceeding those levels, is now close to that in most schools. At the time of the last inspection, in March 1999, standards were reported to be unsatisfactory. Pupils were reported as having fundamental gaps in their knowledge and there was too much variation between classes, dependent on the expertise of the teachers. The school has worked successfully to rectify this by introducing a new scheme of work. This supports teachers in planning for full coverage of the National Curriculum and provides good opportunities for pupils to experiment and investigate independently. However, the way in which the curriculum is organised, on a two year rolling programme of topics, is currently not planned in sufficient detail to support the progressive development of skills and knowledge for each age group. The attainment of pupils with English as an additional language was unsatisfactory at the last inspection, with too few attaining expected levels. The school has improved its support for these pupils and they now make at least satisfactory progress.

103. In the national tests and teacher assessments in 2000, results were well below the national average and that for similar schools at 7 and 11. At age 7, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was similar to the national average but no pupils exceeded that level, indicating underachievement by higher attaining pupils. In the tests at age 11 the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was well below average and no pupils attained at a higher level, which was very low. There had been a significant change in the year group since the teacher assessments at age seven and statistics show that pupils who had been at the school at that time had made satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. There has been only minimal improvement in the results of national assessments over the last four years. The school has not set any targets for the subject and although they have predicted a considerable rise in standards at age 11, in the tests of 2001, there is no supporting assessment evidence to substantiate the predictions.

104. At age 7, standards are below average and largely reflect a similar picture to the assessments recorded by teachers in 2000. Although the vast majority of pupils achieve well and make satisfactory progress current work indicates only a slight increase in the proportion of pupils exceeding the level expected. Pupils gain appropriate knowledge about materials and can identify similarities and differences between them, using language such as hard or soft. Higher attaining pupils know that some are more suited to certain uses than others. For example, they know that glass is better for windows than wood because it is transparent. Pupils learn about sources of light and know that some are brighter than others. For example, they test a torch and a table lamp and observe that the table lamp provides more light. Knowledge of some physical processes is below average. For example, pupils do not understand how bulbs work in a simple electrical circuit. When testing, higher attaining pupils know that they have to apply the same conditions to each item they test for it to be fair. When studying living things pupils know that humans need food to live and consider what is good for them to eat to keep healthy. They know that animals have baby animals and identify parent

and offspring but overall their knowledge and understanding of living things is not of sufficient depth for their age.

105. At age 11, standards are still below average but have improved considerably since the national tests in 2000. Current work indicates from a low starting point at the end of Year 2 most pupils are achieving well and at age eleven standards are now rising. The present Year 6 recorded higher levels of attainment at age seven and the school has built on this satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6. Current standards still represent a measure of underachievement for pupils of average and above ability. However, teachers now provide more challenging tasks for these pupils who are responding enthusiastically. They are eager to investigate independently and are now making better progress than previously. Much time is spent in practical investigation and experimentation and pupils learn to predict, test and record their results scientifically in a variety of ways, making good use of their numeracy skills. For example, they measure the rate at which solutions evaporate over a period of days and record their results in graphs. Higher attainers predict what is likely to be the end result by interpreting these graphs. Pupils learn the importance of observing closely, collecting information and data and recording scientifically. They learn an appropriate range of scientific vocabulary and apply it appropriately. Pupils know about fair tests and understand that you can only change one of the conditions at a time to ensure fairness. However, the way in which the curriculum and year groups are organised means that work is not always planned at the right level for all pupils. For example, in one lesson in a mixed age class, pupils worked in groups on an experiment to decide how they could separate different types of mixtures. They had to predict, test and evaluate their results, recording these on a given chart. Some younger and lower attaining pupils were content to leave the work to older or higher attaining pupils and made only minimal progress, whilst some higher attaining pupils made good progress. Similarly evidence of work on electricity carried out earlier in the year was at too simple a level, which did not sufficiently challenge older pupils, particularly the higher attainers.

106. The attainment of some pupils whose first language is not English is limited by their communication skills at age seven but because of the good levels of support they make satisfactory progress. In Years 3 to 6 the continued support and consequent improvements in spoken English and understanding contributes well to their learning. Many make good progress and achieve the standard expected at age 11 and a few now make very good progress and exceed the level expected and this shows a significant achievement for these pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported throughout the school and make similar progress to most other pupils. For both these groups of pupils this is an improvement on their position at the time of the previous inspection.

107. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school and has improved since the previous inspection. In some lessons, where teachers have particular expertise and enthusiasm, it is good and occasionally very good. Whilst pupils' learning is satisfactory overall, when teaching is good they are motivated by the teachers' enthusiasm, work with good concentration and the rate of learning improves and is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject, which is an improvement on previous inspection and this is thanks to the guidance of the new scheme of work. However, a system of assessing pupils has only just been introduced and this records attainment within a topic, rather than a record of progress matched to the National Curriculum. There are no records of progress for teachers to use to plan work to meet the needs of individuals and no supporting guidance to help them assess the quality of pupils' work on a day-to-day basis. This results in a mismatch of work for pupils at all levels of attainment and slows progress. Teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment for themselves in pairs or groups and provide appropriate resources for them to do so. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on light sources the teacher had a good range of light sources and dark boxes and allowed pupils to work in pairs to investigate the comparative qualities of the light. She created a dark room where lower attainers and pupils who learn through English as an additional language worked with nursery nurse support and by the end of the lesson had learnt a great deal. In a Year 5/6 lesson on separating mixtures careful thought was given to groupings so that pupils of all abilities could take a full part in investigating and recording, with older and higher attaining pupils supporting others so that all made good progress. This was less effective in another class where in similar groupings some dominated the group and made better progress than other pupils. Most teachers manage their classes well and resultant behaviour is good. On occasion introductions are overlong and result in some restlessness, which is soon resolved when pupils begin their practical work. Marking of pupils' work is up-to-date but few

comments are included to tell pupils what they have to do to improve. Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities to use computers to record their results.

108. Co-ordination of science is satisfactory and the new policy and scheme of work which have provided full coverage of the National Curriculum which resolves a weakness from the previous inspection. Currently, the co-ordinator has no opportunity to check the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms and there is no systematic monitoring of work in pupils' books. This means that although the co-ordinator knows what teachers are planning to teach there is no overview of how well this work meets the needs of pupils. The lack of a systematic approach to assessing and recording pupils' progress aggravates this situation further. The deficiencies in resources previously noted have been resolved and there is now an adequate range of good quality resources to support pupils' investigations. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social skills through the opportunities for group collaboration.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

109. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average. This reflects an improvement since the last inspection that judged pupils did not reach an acceptable standard. The main reasons for this improvement are that the school has introduced a good quality scheme of work and the teachers are beginning to teach basic art skills.

110. Pupils in Year 2 achieve satisfactorily and reach the standard expected for their age. Pupils use a variety of skills, materials and media to create pictures and design models. For example, in one class pupils had carefully coloured a large piece of paper with a paint wash the previous week and now that it had dried they were making a collage of butterflies out of various pieces of material. They showed great care in cutting cloth and planning the position of their butterflies. Pupils are acquiring skills of evaluating their work and with the help of the teacher suggest improvements. Pupils have experience of three-dimensional art although they do not have enough opportunity to use clay to further extend their creative skills. Some pupils were using the computer to generate block designs in the style of William Morris but overall they do not have adequate experience of art programs to enhance their ICT skills.

111. By the end of Year 6 pupils achieve well enough as they extend their knowledge of different media and artistic skills. For example, pupils design posters based on the work they were doing in history about the Second World War. They carefully plan their work and draw up designs after discussions and looking at posters used at that time. Pupils use pencil and colours so that in the next lesson they are ready to produce their final poster using paint and collage. They very sensibly evaluate their designs and praise the good qualities as well as suggesting improvements. Pupils experience a wide range of art. For example, pupils use black block printing effectively on a coloured background to create a picture of the silhouette of buildings at dusk. Observational drawings in pencil of views from the playground by the older pupils are most impressive and show a close attention to detail. Pupils are familiar with the work of famous artists and learn about their lives. One group of pupils made pictures in the style of Van Gogh showing a good understanding of the artist's style. The work of other cultures is also studied and some pupils made some African masks. To celebrate the festival of Eid the pupils made suitable cards, practised hand painting and drew designs associated with Islam. The pupils have little experience of using clay in school.

112. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn through English as an additional language are fully included in all activities and make satisfactory progress and achieve appropriate standards.

113. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have an enthusiastic knowledge of art and teach specific art skills and this has a beneficial effect on the pupils' good rate of learning seen in many lessons. For example, the pupils have learnt to apply paint wash lightly to make an even background on which collage or drawings can be placed. They are also taught how to apply crayons in one direction in order to get a smooth even finish. Older pupils are taught to make a draft of a piece of artwork before attempting the final product. However, direct teaching of skills need further development, for example, the use of different grades of pencil for observational drawings to enhance shading and shadow. This was also a comment made in the previous report. Little use is made of art programs to be used on the computer and this is another area for

development. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and behaviour is good. Lessons are organised effectively, with resources readily accessible, and ensures that lessons run smoothly and pupils enjoy their work. All this has helped to raise the standard in the subject. Teachers have high expectations and encourage pupils to evaluate and suggest improvements for their work. This has successfully extended pupils' skills of critical analysis.

114. The management of the subject is satisfactory. An effective scheme of work has been introduced and teachers have clear guidelines to teach the subject. On the other hand there is no assessment or recording of the progress the pupils are making to ensure that standards are high enough. As yet there is no system for monitoring the work done by the pupils by, for example, regularly looking at the sketch books or evaluating other art work which the pupils may have done.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

115. Standards at 11 are similar to those found nationally and given pupils' low starting point reflects satisfactory achievement. As only one lesson could be observed during the inspection, judgements are based on supporting evidence from samples of work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils. Standards have improved on those reported in the previous inspection and teachers now have detailed guidelines to help in their planning. Because of the way in which the curriculum is arranged there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement at age 7, as pupils are only just commencing their first topic of the school year. This was also the case in the previous inspection.

116. At age seven, planning indicates that pupils study an appropriate range of work, linked to topics. As with other areas of the curriculum these are on a rolling programme over two years. They plan a design and make simple decisions on the resources they will use, make the product and use it to find out how successful they have been. For example, Year 2 have studied a range of puppets and in preparation for designing their own glove puppet. Pupils select a character and decide how they will have to alter the basic shape to fit their choice, such as by allowing for ears or hats. When they have made their puppet, using simple tools such as scissors and needles, they will use their puppet in literacy lessons, where they are studying characters in stories and plays.

117. At age 11 pupils have made satisfactory progress in designing, making and evaluating their product and they achieve appropriately. Work is closely linked to science and mathematics and pupils use the skills of accurate measurement and investigation. For example, pupils in Year 6 make wheeled vehicles with axles, they use their designs in measuring and cutting wood accurately for the frame. They add a motor to propel the vehicle, constructing a simple electrical circuit and then test it to assess the size of motor needed for maximum efficiency. Year 5 and 6 pupils plan the annual school performance and design and make costumes and props for their show. This makes a valuable contribution to the subject, whilst also establishing strong links to other subjects, such as literacy, numeracy, art and music. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils.

118. Teaching is satisfactory overall and evidence indicates that it is sometimes good. It was good in the lesson observed, in a Year 3/4 class, when pupils were encouraged to consider the qualities needed for chairs used for different fictional characters, such as The Queen of Hearts or Humpty Dumpty. The teacher made good use of her own example to capture pupils' interest and explain the task clearly. Pupils were well motivated, understood what they had to do and worked productively on their own designs. Teachers plan effectively to link work to other subjects and promote cultural and spiritual development well, by using pupils' own faiths and cultures as a basis for work. For example, in a geography based topic on Pakistan pupils design and make prayer slippers and at Eid make traditional sweets, following and amending recipes to try to improve them. A weakness in the planning at all levels is the lack of a clear focus on the needs of individual year groups when working on the topics in the two-year programme. This means that different year groups work on the same topics at the same level, such as when making the Eid sweets. Pupils have developed good attitudes to the subject and enjoy making their products.

119. Currently management of the subject is being carried out by a temporary co-ordinator. Overall, management is satisfactory and has led to an improvement in resources which were poor at the time of the previous inspection.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

120. As at the time of the last inspection, the standards reached by eleven-year-olds in geography and history were below those found in most schools. Currently at the end of Year 2 standards are below average in geography but average in history. Due to the way the curriculum is organised in Years 3 to 6 standards in geography and history remain below those of other schools.

121. Overall standards are beginning to rise, albeit from a low base. The new schemes of work provide a sound basis for teaching geography and history through a two-year cycle of topics. This is working well in Years 1 and 2 and is already having a beneficial effect on attainment in history. In Years 3 to 6, however, topic work is not planned in sufficient detail to meet the needs of the full range of age and ability in each class. This sometimes results in a lack of challenge and slows the rate of learning for some pupils. This is particularly apparent in the large mixed-age classes where the lower attainers in the younger age group carry out the same tasks as the higher attainers in the older age group. The lack of secure assessment procedures also means that teachers do not have enough information about individual or group attainment in order to plan work specifically to meet their needs.

122. Most infants achieve very well in history. In Year 1, they are developing a sound sense of chronology. They are aware of differences between past and present in their own and other people's lives. For instance, they appreciate the ways domestic laundry was handled in the past and compare with the use of modern appliances. They use artefacts like washboards and possums to learn about change. In Year 2, pupils are knowledgeable about famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille. They know there are different ways of finding out about the past, for example, from books, videos and artefacts. From looking closely at nurses' uniforms, they answer questions about the past and make comparisons with the present. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils consolidate their knowledge of invaders and settlers by identifying differences between the lives of Romans and Celts. In Years 5 and 6, pupils generate their own questions about life in Britain in World War II. They collect information from books, pictures and artefacts to extend their knowledge of evacuees, rationing, bombing, etc. in the local area. Their understanding of chronology, however, is limited and very few pupils create organised work on this or other topics with appropriate use of terms and dates. They are mainly unaware of the differences in the way aspects of the past are represented. Some pupils have difficulty understanding texts due to lack of appropriate vocabulary, such as 'shrapnel' and 'barrage balloon'. Their ability to take relevant notes is limited.

123. There is little recorded work in geography throughout the school. In Year 2, pupils show sound knowledge of some aspects of life on the Isle of Struay. They identify four physical features when copying a simple map, although many pupils are not exact in their positioning. The higher attainers make simple comparisons with life in Tunstall and express their own preference. No evidence was seen of in-depth fieldwork in the school's locality or of the use of a range of maps and plans. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have carried out a study of the effect on the local environment of the building of the Tunstall by-pass. Pupils locate specific features on a local plan by very basic co-ordinates, and investigate the effect on the area through carrying out a traffic census. In discussion, pupils showed limited knowledge of the geography curriculum.

124. Teaching of history is satisfactory overall. In the infant department, teaching is good with two-thirds of lessons being good and one third very good and is a key factor in pupils' good quality of learning. In Years 3 to 6, teaching was satisfactory in three-quarters of lessons observed and very good in one quarter and overall learning is satisfactory. Teachers in all classes have secure understanding of the subject and pay particular attention to the development of skills as well as knowledge. In all classes, resources are effectively organised to support learning. Good quality support for pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language is well deployed and is successful in making sure all pupils have full access to the curriculum, and achieve appropriately. The organisation of mixed ability groups where higher attainers are expected to help lower attainers is successful in promoting the achievement of lower attainers but does not

always provide enough challenge for the higher attainers to make good progress. Where teaching is less than good, teachers do not match work closely to the pupils' needs and there is some under-expectation of the standards some pupils could reach. Occasionally, pupils are left to work too long in groups. Whilst they collaborate well and respect each other's ideas, they often need more frequent adult support to move their discussion forward. In the very good teaching in Year 1, pupils were encouraged to develop skills through direct first-hand experience of observing and handling an excellent range of artefacts and engaging in relevant role-play. The teacher used questions particularly well to extend pupils' ideas. Marking assessed pupils work accurately and was annotated carefully, to show what pupils had learnt. This provided information, for use in planning the next steps in learning.

125. There is insufficient evidence to judge teaching in geography as only one lesson was seen. This was judged to be poor due to ineffective management strategies, which resulted in a poor learning environment where pupils made little progress. This was not typical of lessons across the curriculum and throughout the school.

126. Good use is made of literacy and numeracy skills in geography in Years 5 and 6. For instance, in devising a questionnaire, brainstorming ideas and in using tally charts and graphs to analyse traffic flow. Insufficient use is made of information technology to extend pupils' learning throughout the school in geography and history. Visits and visitors frequently bring the subjects to life and engender considerable enthusiasm in the pupils. Whilst studying the Ancient Greeks, for instance, Years 3 and 4 pupils learnt to handle information and became 'archaeologists' at the local museum.

127. Satisfactory leadership has overseen considerable improvements to the curriculum since the last inspection, and has been instrumental in raising standards in the infants. Whilst teachers' half-termly plans are checked to see that all the National Curriculum is taught there has been no opportunity to check how this is taught in lessons. Further review and development of the curriculum is planned as the subjects receive prominence in the school's long-term plan in the coming summer.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

128. It was not possible to see any lessons being taught during the inspection. Judgements are based on discussions with pupils and teachers, scrutiny of work, surveys of the use of the computers in the classrooms and observations of whether computer programs are used to support learning in other subjects.

129. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below that expected of pupils of this age because they do not have sufficient experience to achieve the required level in all the necessary aspects of the National Curriculum. Also computers are not used often enough to support learning in other subjects. There has been no improvement in standards since the previous inspection.

130. Although pupils have limited knowledge of computers when they start school progress is unsatisfactory and pupils fail to achieve the standard expected for seven-year-olds. This is mainly caused by limited opportunity to experience all the activities in the National Curriculum. For example, they have no experience of programs that use simulations to explore and solve problems. Neither can the pupils use data handling programs to produce, say, a bar graph for science. Pupils can create a simple program to direct a programmable toy but do not enhance their work by using them in mathematics or geography. In one class pupils were using a program to produce block patterns in the style of William Morris but they do not use an art package to draw pictures on the screen and then print them out. Pupils have a knowledge of the basic skills of word processing but these are not used regularly to support other subjects.

131. Progress is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6 and by the age of 11 pupils do not achieve the standard expected for their age. Pupils do experience a range of activities but overall the underachievement is caused by the school's failure to teach all elements of the National Curriculum. In Year 6, pupils make good use of a mathematics program, which enhances their work in this subject and provides appropriate worksheets for pupils to extend their learning at home. However, the vast majority of pupils do not use data handling

programs to produce pie graphs or bar charts to present information in mathematics or geography. In science they do not use temperature sensors or light gates to collect information accurately. There are no control boxes in school to use with models made in design technology. The pupils are not familiar with simulation programs in order to explore problems and make decisions. Because the school is not connected to the Internet the pupils are not able to send or receive e-mails or search for information on the World Wide Web. Better progress has been made in word processing skills especially those who have a computer at home. For example, some pupils were able to demonstrate how to write sentences using a word processor and they could edit their work and save it. There are some fine examples of poems neatly presented by the older pupils using a word processor. Some pupils also use a program for spelling and reading. In one class younger pupils were using a word processing program to reinforce their knowledge of suffixes but had difficulty in highlighting and deleting words on the screen. However, there is little evidence that pupils frequently use word processing to support their work in other subjects. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 pupils use a program to work on spreadsheets and have used a CD-ROM to extract information about the solar system.

132. Overall the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because the pupils are not taught all the knowledge and skills required by the National Curriculum. Teachers have the knowledge to teach some of the necessary skills, like word processing but lack the expertise to teach many of the elements included in the recently introduced scheme of work. Teachers do not use the ICT frequently enough to support pupils learning in other subjects. Computers were underused during the inspection. There is little evidence of the direct teaching of ICT skills. No assessment of pupils' progress is made so teachers do not have a secure knowledge of the levels achieved and what pupils need to do next to improve.

133. The school is well aware of the weaknesses in the subject and ICT is a priority on the school's development plan. A detailed action plan has been drawn up by the deputy headteacher and a computer suite is planned as soon as funding becomes available to improve resources. Currently, resources in school are inadequate because there are no control boxes, no monitoring equipment and no simulation programs. At the present time, due to staff absence, the school has no ICT co-ordinator. This has aggravated progress in the subject because little monitoring of the work produced has taken place. However, plans are in place to improve standards. Appropriate training has been arranged and an overall plan linked to the scheme of work has been completed so that all aspects of ICT should be adequately covered.

## **MUSIC**

134. The standard of work at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is similar to that found in most schools. Since the previous inspection, standards of seven-year-olds have been maintained. Standards reached by eleven-year-olds, however, have improved considerably. This is due mainly to the implementation of a well considered scheme of work, which enables pupils to gradually build up skills of composing, performing and appreciating music as they move through the school. Particularly knowledgeable and dynamic teaching in Years 5 and 6 is successful in increasing the pupils' enthusiasm, enjoyment and skill in the older classes.

135. Due to the organisation of the curriculum, no music lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2. In assembly, however, pupils sing tunefully from memory and perform actions in time to the music. They listen attentively to recorded music and higher attainers pick out the sound of different instruments including the saxophone. In discussion with the inspector, seven-year-olds demonstrated an awareness of tempo and dynamics in their singing and in playing percussion. They clap simple rhythms with accuracy. Their ability to use symbols to record their work and their knowledge of a range of composers is less well developed.

136. The teachers' secure subject knowledge enables most pupils in Years 3 to 6 to achieve very well in appreciating music from a range of cultures and ages. The good selection of multicultural instruments supports the acquisition of composing and performance skills well. In Years 3 and 4, pupils use their knowledge of Indian music and appropriate instruments to compose rain music. They are aware of the nature of a lullaby and compose a short sequence using the pentatonic scale to produce a quiet relaxing effect. When recording their work, they are beginning to use letter symbols to show notes and to emphasise dynamics. Whilst pupils achieve satisfactorily overall in Years 3 and 4 sometimes the pace of lessons is slow

and too much time is given to group work without sufficient intervention by the teacher. Although plenary sessions at the end of lessons are used effectively to demonstrate good work, opportunities are missed during the lesson to pass on good ideas and improve performance more efficiently.

137. The rate of learning is good in Years 5 and 6 where some good and excellent teaching was observed. Relevant learning objectives are carefully explained at the beginning of the lesson so that pupils are clear about what is to be learnt and what they must do to succeed. Effective management enables pupils to collaborate successfully in groups to compose, practise and improve their own music, each contributing their own part. They use symbols appropriately to record their work, with attention to pitch, tempo and dynamics. Most pupils listen carefully to each other, and are becoming skilled at analysing their own work and that of others, and at offering constructive criticism. The teachers' very positive attitude and good relationships established, ensures that pupils appreciate and show respect for the efforts of others. Pupils are familiar with the work of a good range of composers. Weekly singing sessions for the whole of Years 5 and 6 engender tremendous enthusiasm and enjoyment of music. Pupils' singing is tuneful and they confidently sing in parts. They are becoming aware of how different parts fit together and work hard to achieve an overall effect. They are familiar with terms such as 'legato' and 'staccato' and use these effects to influence their performances.

138. The school is very conscious of the needs of all its pupils and makes sure that all are fully included in all aspects of the music curriculum. Particular attention is given to valuing and promoting a wide range of multicultural music in order to raise the self-esteem of all ethnic groups. Pupils with special educational needs are supported by the careful organisation of mixed-ability groups where higher attainers share ideas and support others. Choir practices are held at lunchtime so that all pupils have the opportunity to attend.

139. In Year 3 to 6 teaching varies from satisfactory to excellent and is good overall. Significant factors in raising standards in older classes are the high expectations and subject expertise of the teacher. In the excellent lesson the teacher inspired the pupils with a very dynamic approach that captured pupils' enthusiasm and a very spiritual moment was achieved with the high quality of singing.

140. The curriculum is enriched through topic weeks. For instance, the Creative Arts Week provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their musical appreciation and skills. Visitors, in particular a range of musicians make a significant contribution to learning. Opportunities for the pupils to perform for parents and friends at Christmas and in the summer term are well organised and effective in raising standards. The curriculum co-ordinator has a sound overview of the school's musical development through monitoring teachers' half-termly plans. With help from the local education authority she has organised and ensured implementation of the comprehensive scheme of work. There is, however, no formal system of assessing pupils' attainment to judge the school's performance or to inform planning. No evidence of the use of information technology was seen during the inspection. Links with literacy and numeracy are not well developed.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

141. Standards of work by pupils aged 7 and 11 are similar to those found nationally. Many pupils reach a good standard in gymnastics. Approximately three-quarters of pupils can swim by the time they leave school and this is below average. Overall, this maintains the standards identified in the previous inspection.

142. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. In Year 1 they dance well in time to the music and develop a sense of space as they move about the room without bumping into each other. By the time they are seven, pupils know that exercise speeds up their heart rate and also makes them feel warm. They move along a bench with increasing control using pushing and pulling movements and can link several movements together to form a sequence. They are able to comment on each others' movements and suggest improvements, such as tucking in the chin when doing a forward roll.

143. Pupils continue to make sound progress in Year 3 to Year 6 and they achieve appropriately. Regular practice of the basic skills is enhanced by the opportunity to attend clubs before and after school. Stoke City Football Club provides specialist coaching, and teachers give generously of their time to run gymnastics, dance and sports clubs and these are well attended. Pupils in Year 3 understand the importance of warming up before vigorous exercise and demonstrate good control when performing various rolls. Pupils in Year 6 develop increasing control and can balance on various parts of their body. Higher attaining pupils show skill and flair as they link high, low and medium level balances.

144. Pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve appropriately and they benefit from the good demonstrations to show the meaning of different words connected with movements such as float and stretch. Clubs take place before school to enable Asian heritage pupils to participate. Pupils who have an aptitude for physical education can develop their skills in lessons and by attending clubs; a group of pupils was chosen to join other pupils in the area to dance at the Millennium Dome. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development through dances to celebrate Christmas and Eid and through the opportunity to participate in team games.

145. Teaching is satisfactory overall although some examples of very good teaching were observed. In the best lessons, teachers make effective use of their good knowledge of the subject to develop pupils' skills. Clear instructions are given so that pupils know exactly what to do and there is a good emphasis on safety. All the lessons have a good structure with appropriate warm up and cool down activities and good use is made of pupils to demonstrate good practice. Staff are suitably dressed and expect similar standards from their pupils. When teachers manage their pupils well, lessons move at a brisk pace and are enjoyed by the pupils. Where discipline is less firm, much time is wasted by the inappropriate behaviour of a small minority of pupils and learning for all pupils is less successful.

146. The subject is co-ordinated well with good support from the headteacher who works alongside teachers in class to develop their expertise and confidence. There is no systematic assessment to monitor the development of skills. Pupils in Year 3 attend swimming lessons and it is intended to track the progress of older non-swimmers and to provide additional instruction if possible.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

147. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 meet the requirement of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. There has been a marked improvement in standards since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be low. The main reason for this is the introduction of a comprehensive scheme of work and teachers know what to teach and when and consequently the quality of teaching has improved and is now good.

148. From a low starting point achievement of many is good in Years 1 and 2 and the overall standard for seven-year-olds is satisfactory. Pupils know about the major Christian festivals and other religions and relate this knowledge to their own experiences. For example, in one class the pupils were talking about people who are special in their extended family. They considered how much they loved their families and how much they were loved by them in return. In another lesson pupils reviewed the response to a survey they had carried out to find out how families took part in activities together. The pupils were amazed that all families were like theirs and did things together like going for walks, playing games and going on holiday. This developed an understanding of the differences and similarities from children from different cultural backgrounds.

149. Standards achieved by Year 6 are in line with the requirement of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and this reflects good achievement. Pupils know about important people connected to religion; they investigate and compare different religions. For example, when talking to the pupils it is clear that they know that Jesus was the son of Mary, that he died on the cross and that Muhammad, the prophet, was a special messenger of God. Pupils have a secure knowledge of Christian festivals and celebrations although they are less familiar with many stories from the Bible. They know how the Jewish people celebrate festivals like the Passover and Hannukka and the important festival of Eid in Islam. Pupils show a good level of understanding of moral and

religious issues. Pupils discuss why rules are necessary for living in society and that the major religions set rules for life. For example, they can talk about the Ten Commandments given to Moses by God and compare them with the Five Pillars of Islam. In line with this moral aspect of religion the school has introduced the five golden rules for behaviour in the school. Discussions in class effectively challenge pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and they have an obvious respect for the beliefs of others. They understand that differences exist but these are linked to the customs of other religions. In talking to pupils it is clear that they know about items associated with other religions, such as the Advent Wreath and prayer mats, The Bible and the Koran. They know that prayer is talking to God and that hymns are prayers that you sing. Pupils do not use ICT frequently enough to support their work in religious education.

150. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress as they receive appropriate help in lessons. For example, in one class some Muslim pupils including pupils with special needs gave an interesting demonstration of how they pray at the mosque and the other pupils were most impressed and showed due respect and reverence.

151. Overall teaching is good and in this has a positive effect on the good rate of learning seen in most lessons. This is an improvement on the last report when teaching was unsatisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. For example, in one lesson where the Muslim pupils were showing the other pupils artefacts used in the mosque. The teacher was able to clearly explain to the class why the Muslim pupils washed their hands before touching the Koran and why the Koran had to be placed on a shelf higher than any other book. Teachers ask effective questions with the result that pupils listen carefully and enjoy joining in with discussions. Teachers make good use of artefacts and visits to help pupils learn successfully. For example, some Muslim pupils brought artefacts from the mosque to explain to the other pupils how they were used. Arrangements have been made for the older pupils to visit a Christian church and also a Muslim mosque so that they can observe at first hand what they are like. Teachers have very good relationship with the pupils and pupils behave well and try hard in lessons. Pupils co-operate and concentrate because teachers provide interesting tasks that motivate pupils to learn and improve their knowledge. However, teachers do not assess and record pupils' progress so it is not always clear to pupils what they have to do to improve. Teachers promote literacy skills in their lessons. This was very effective in one lesson when higher attaining pupils jotted down short notes when they were being taught about artefacts that are used in the mosque and then wrote up a concise report about what they had learnt. Little use is made of information and communication technology to enhance learning in the subject.

152. The management of the subject is satisfactory. Planning of work is checked but the pupils' books are not examined nor is the work being done in the classrooms monitored in order to find out the quality of the work being produced. Religious education makes a valuable contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.