

INSPECTION REPORT

CHRISTCHURCH CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Coseley, Bilston

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103838

Headteacher: Mrs. P. Hazlehurst

Reporting inspector: Mr. T. Neat
2007

Dates of inspection: 14th to 17th February 2000

Inspection number: 193191

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Coseley Bilston West Midlands
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. S. Ridney
Date of previous inspection:	7th May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Trevor Neat	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
		History	How high are standards?
		Physical education	How well are pupils taught?
David Ashby	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Rod Bristow	Team inspector	Information and communications technology	
		Geography	
Sharon Brown	Team inspector	Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
		Under fives	
		Design and technology	
Trudy Cotton	Team inspector	English	
		Music	
		Special educational needs	
		English as an additional language	
Terry Dolan		Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Art	

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Christchurch CE (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School is much bigger than most schools of its type. It has 425 pupils on roll compared with the average size of 226. It draws most of its pupils from the area near to the school. Housing is a mixture of council and privately owned properties. The attainment of pupils on entry is below that found nationally. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is broadly similar to the national figure. The percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language is slightly higher than in most other schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many strengths and few weaknesses. The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Standards have risen in many subjects since the last inspection, the quality of teaching is good and the school is very well led and managed. It gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well. They attain above average results in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in information and communications technology are above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. In religious education, pupils at both key stages attain at levels above those required by the locally agreed syllabus.
- The school is led and managed very well by the headteacher and key staff. There is excellent delegation of responsibility by the headteacher. The shared sense of purpose and commitment of all those associated with the school is a major strength.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan very well.
- Overall, the provision made for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.
- The personal development of pupils is very good, and so is the quality of their relationships with each other and with adults.
- The school has a very good partnership with parents.
- There are very effective strategies for teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy.
- The provision made for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English could be improved further.
- The existing procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning could be extended to make them more systematic.
- Provision in the Nursery.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1996. Since that time it has improved very well. The standards achieved by pupils have improved in some aspects of English, in mathematics, science, information and communications technology, religious education, music and history. The quality of teaching is much better, the management of the school has improved greatly and the use that is made of resources, including money, is a good deal more effective than it was.

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	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	E	E	D	C	well above average A above average B Average C Below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	D	B	A	
Science	E	D	B	A	

Inspection evidence largely confirms the results of the 1999 national tests, which showed that the pupils' performance in mathematics was good in relation to other subjects. By the age of seven, attainment in this subject was close to the national average for all schools, and by the age of eleven, it was above average. At the end of both key stages it was well above the average for similar schools. Attainment in science at Key Stage 2 is good; in the 1999 national tests it was above the national average for all schools and well above the average for similar schools. At both key stages, standards in English are not high enough. The results for reading and writing at Key Stage 1 compare unfavourably with the average for both all schools and similar schools. However, the attainment of many children when they start school is below the level normally found. By the time they leave school, pupils perform well in information and communications technology and religious education. In all other subjects, standards are satisfactory. Taken together, the results of the national tests from 1996 to 1999 show a trend of improvement at least equivalent to that found nationally. The school's rate of improvement is noticeably better than the national trend in mathematics at both key stages and in science at Key Stage 2. The school sets appropriate targets for improvement in standards. These were exceeded last year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils show good attitudes to school. They demonstrate good levels of interest and involvement in their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Together with their positive attitudes, the pupils' commendable conduct contributes well to the progress they make.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils establish very good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them. They are very good at accepting opportunities that extend their personal development.
Attendance	Average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

A high proportion of teaching that was good or better was seen during the inspection. Four per cent of teaching is excellent, 17 per cent is very good, 49 per cent is good and 30 per cent is satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. In both subjects, examples of teaching of the highest quality were seen. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught successfully. The school meets the needs of all pupils well; this includes those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. In the teaching of children under five, the use of day to day assessments and the management of pupils are good. At Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers show particular skill in the effectiveness of their planning. In a small minority of lessons, at both key stages and in the teaching of under fives, the pace is too slow.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum at Key Stage 1 and 2 is broadly-based and balanced. There are very good programmes for teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy, and for the provision of pupils' personal, social and health education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The work is matched well to individuals' needs. Pupils make good progress and enjoy full access to the curriculum. Very good links with the local community enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. These pupils progress at a similar rate to others.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, this is very good. The provision for moral and social development is very good. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good, all-round care through monitoring its support, safety and security arrangements well.

The quality and range of the curriculum are good at both key stages. This helps pupils to gain skills, knowledge and understanding effectively. There are good opportunities for pupils to involve themselves in activities outside lessons. All the school's procedures for ensuring the proper care of its pupils are good. The pupils receive very effective educational support and guidance. This is promoted well by a very good assessment policy, which helps teachers to monitor the progress that children make. The school has a very productive partnership with parents. The contribution that parents make to their children's education is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and manage-	The school is led and managed very well by the headteacher. There is a

ment by the headteacher and other key staff	clear vision and shared commitment to raising standards. Excellent delegation by the headteacher ensures the full involvement of key staff. The headteacher receives very good support from the deputy head.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. Governors are well – informed, interested and work closely with the staff to the benefit of the pupils.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. It makes good use of data from a variety of sources to identify strengths and weaknesses of performance and take appropriate action.
The strategic use of resources	Educational priorities are supported very well through the careful use of resources. The school uses new technologies well, including information and communications technology.

There is good provision of teaching and support staffs to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. Overall, the accommodation is good. However, some aspects of the older accommodation for the nursery and reception class children are in need of attention. Learning resources are good, overall. More equipment is needed for design and technology lessons. The school applies the principles of best value well in order to make effective use of its resources. The existing arrangements for checking the quality of teaching and learning need to be more systematic.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in the standards of numeracy and literacy. • Improvement in the ethos of the school. • Children love going to school. • Better provision of books. • Individuals are encouraged and valued. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with suggestions or complaints. • The school expects pupils to work hard. • The quality of the leadership and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework • Privacy at some of the meetings with their child's teacher. • The provision of extra-curricular activities.

Inspection evidence does not support the views of some parents who have concerns about the provision of homework and extra-curricular activities. Homework is carried out in accordance with the school's policy and the provision for extra-curricular activities has improved following the appointment of a teacher to co-ordinate these opportunities. The school has plans to review the arrangements for meetings with teachers, in order to take account of the concerns expressed by some parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of the national tests in 1999 show that at Key Stage 1, when compared with both the national average for all schools, and the average for schools in similar circumstances, pupils' performance in reading was well below average. Reading performance in the tests over the period 1996 to 1999 was well below the national average for all schools. There is no clear trend of improvement although initiatives such as the provision of extra time and classroom support for reading, are beginning to make an impact on attainment. The results for 1999 were higher than in 1996. Writing performance was below the national average for all schools and for similar schools in the 1999 national tests. Taking the period 1996 to 1999 together, writing results were well below the average for all schools. However, there is a clear trend of improvement in these results, thanks largely to the introduction of a system for teaching groups of pupils of similar attainment and the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The rate of improvement is slightly better than that found nationally. In 1999, mathematics results were close to the national average for all schools and well above the average for similar schools. In the period from 1996 to 1999 results were well below the national average. Overall, the trend is upward, and the rate of improvement between the outcomes of tests in 1998 and those in 1999 was greatly in excess of that found nationally. Statutory teacher assessments conducted in 1999 indicate that attainment in science was well below the national average.
2. The results of the national tests in 1999 show that at Key Stage 2, when compared with the national average for all schools, pupils' performance in English was below the national average. However, performance was broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Taking the period 1996 to 1999 together, English results were well below the average for all schools. There is an upward trend in the results. The rate of improvement is broadly in line with the national trend. In mathematics, results in 1999 were above the national average for all schools and well above compared with similar schools. Taken together, the results from 1996 to 1999 were below the national average. There is a clear trend of improvement and the rate of this is significantly greater than the national rate. Science performance was above the national average for all schools in 1999, and well above the average for similar schools. Over the period 1996 to 1999 results were below average, but overall, results are improving. The rate of improvement is significantly greater than the national trend. Taken together, the trend of improvement from 1996 to 1999, in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science, was broadly in line with that found nationally.
3. Taking the results for the period 1996 to 1999 together, boys performed better than girls, which is contrary to the national picture, overall. There is no evidence of differences in the performance of different racial groups or those from different backgrounds.
4. The school sets appropriately challenging targets for improvement in its results. In 1999 it exceeded the targets set.
5. Overall, the school achieves satisfactory standards. Inspection evidence largely confirms the results of the 1999 national tests. The rapid improvement in performance in mathematics at both key stages and science at Key Stage 2 is also confirmed. Inspectors noted improvements in religious education and history at both key stages, and in information and communications technology, design and technology and music at Key Stage 2. Standards are now above national expectations in information and communications technology at the end of Key Stage 2 and above the level required by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of both key stages. In all other subjects, pupils attain at levels found nationally among pupils of their age. Pupils' literacy skills are below the levels normally found at both key stages. For example, at age seven, pupils use letter sounds to help them tackle new words, but a significant number are still developing fluency in their reading. Pupils at Key Stage 2 know about using the contents page and index when looking for information, but many find the language of non-fiction books hard to understand. Pupils at Key Stage 1 write for a variety of purposes, but as yet, spelling and punctuation are not correctly used sufficiently often. Throughout Key Stage 2, the drafting and editing of writing are developing well. However, spelling is unsatisfactory; words such as soldier and ugly are spelled incorrectly by pupils in Year 6. Pupils' numeracy skills develop well at Key

Stage 1 through sharply focussed practise in using and manipulating number bonds. Pupils at Key Stage 2 achieve good standards of numeracy. For example, they succeed in adding and subtracting decimals to two places and they understand the idea of negative numbers. In science, pupils' ability to explore many aspects of the subject through experiments and tests is a strong feature of their work, especially at Key Stage 2. In information and communications technology, pupils use the Internet well at Key Stage 2 to search for facts to support their work in other subjects. Standards in gymnastics in Years 3 and 4 are above those normally found; good control, balance and poise are evident in pupils' work. A lack of resources means that the pupils' knowledge and understanding of food technology is underdeveloped.

6. Overall, pupils achieve well. They enter school with levels of attainment that are below those normally found, and in the core subjects of mathematics, science, information and communications technology and religious education they make good, and sometimes very good progress. Pupils' achievements in English are at least satisfactory. Many begin school with poorly developed language skills and this has a negative effect on the progress they make. The school's very effective strategy for improving literacy skills is beginning to extend pupils' achievements. The system used by the school for teaching sets of pupils of similar attainment in English, mathematics and science has a positive impact on pupils' achievements in those subjects. The work undertaken to improve the attainment of higher attaining pupils has been successful in mathematics and science; the percentage reaching the higher Level 5 in the 1999 national tests was well above the national average in both subjects at Key Stage 2. In the majority of the lessons seen during the inspection, teachers promoted good levels of attainment by pitching the difficulty of the activity so that, with effort, pupils could succeed. This has a positive effect on the level of pupils' achievement. Attainment in mathematics, science, information and communications technology and religious education is above the expected level. Pupils make satisfactory achievements in all other subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. This contributes well to the standards that are achieved and the positive atmosphere that permeates the whole school. The high standards noted by the previous inspection team have been maintained.
8. Pupils' are eager to participate, and enjoy their lessons. They respond well and have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are well motivated and work with enthusiasm. Occasionally, they show too much enthusiasm and become less responsive and noisy. They are good at co-operating with each other and with staff. They are also good at valuing each other's work and contributions to lessons. A really good example of this was seen in a science lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils were dissecting plants to understand the structure and purpose of each part and they listened enthusiastically to each other's responses when they were describing their findings to the whole class. This good attitude is reflected in many activities. Pupils take pride in their own work and the work of other pupils.
9. The high standard of behaviour in lessons, and around the school, has a positive impact on pupils' work and concentration. Although in a small number of lessons, and sometimes around the school, pupils display a noisy exuberance. This does not detract significantly from the overall good standard of behaviour that exists throughout the school. The staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour that are clearly understood by children and parents. The result is a positive climate for learning with no evidence of aggressive or racist behaviour. Misbehaviour is infrequent, and when it occurs it is dealt with promptly and effectively. It has little negative impact on learning. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
10. Pupils have very good opportunities for personal development and they engage in these with enthusiasm and confidence. They relate very well to classroom staff, to other adults and to each other. They are active in taking responsibility. For example, they answer the telephone in the office at lunchtime and monitors help staff at break times. Pupils also organise the snacks for break times and set up the seating and equipment for assemblies. The older pupils look after younger ones. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are included as part of a well-cared-for community that copes confidently with work and play. Many are involved in a good range of extra curricular activities. These include sports link activities, which

provide professional coaching for a number of sports, and a dancing club, which performed recently in a local community event. Older pupils benefit from the opportunity to go on a residential visit to France and to an outdoor activity centre in this country. This provision has a positive effect on their personal and social development. Pupils show a significant sense of pride in their achievements and in their school. The school helps to celebrate these with the publication of the newsletters and regular celebration of achievement. For example, a weekly 'Awards' assembly was attended by inspectors. Many pupils received certificates for their achievements and the whole school, as well as many parents, acknowledged every award by clapping.

11. Attendance is similar to national levels. Pupils clearly like coming to school and this has a very positive impact on their opportunities for achieving success. They arrive punctually at school and lessons start on time. Many pupils are ready to start lessons early. For example some pupils in Year 1 are in school and have started their activities ten minutes early. However, some parents take their children away from school during term time and this has a significant, negative impact on levels of attendance. Pupils receive a certificate to celebrate a whole term with no absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. There has been a very significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. At that time, 23 per cent of the teaching observed was unsatisfactory. Now, the quality of teaching is good and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed during this inspection. Currently, four per cent of teaching is excellent, 17 per cent is very good, 49 per cent is good and 30 per cent is satisfactory.
13. The good quality of teaching has a direct, positive effect on the standards that pupils achieve and the effectiveness of their learning. Numerous examples of the impact of skilful teaching on the progress made by pupils were observed during the inspection. A particularly pertinent example is an excellent English lesson for lower attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2, in which the teacher used a wide range of exciting experiences to assist pupils in their learning. These included the help of "Spiky" the hedgehog puppet.
14. The teaching of children under five is of sound quality. The skilful management of the children is a strong feature and contributes well to the progress made. Members of staff make good use of careful assessments of children's abilities and needs to inform the next steps in learning.
15. At both key stages, the quality of teaching is good and often better. The very good quality of teachers' planning is a particular strength, which impacts directly on the quality of pupils' learning. This was evident in a geography lesson about routes, for pupils in Years 1 and 2, in which clear learning objectives were identified and the content of the lesson defined in detail. This allowed the teacher to proceed confidently and make good use of the time available. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good at both key stages. Teaching methods are effective and ensure that the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are met. Overall, teachers have well-developed skills for controlling and managing their classes. Many examples were seen by inspectors, of the positive effect of these skills on the extent to which pupils gained knowledge and understanding, concentrated and worked productively. Time is used effectively, overall. However, in some lessons, the main area of weakness is slow pace. Teachers use information and communications technology well to support the teaching of literacy skills and music. However, teachers at Key Stage 1 do not always use computers as an integral part of the teaching of a sufficiently wide range of activities. Homework is used effectively to support the work done in lessons.
16. The school's system of teaching English, mathematics and science to groups of pupils of similar attainment is helpful in meeting the learning needs of all pupils.
17. The quality of teaching of English is good; it is slightly better at Key Stage 2 than in other classes. Teaching is good in mathematics, science, information and communications technology and religious education.

18. Pupils learn well. The quality of learning for children under five is satisfactory, both in the Nursery and the reception classes. At Key Stages 1 and 2, it is good. Pupils develop skills and gain new knowledge and understanding effectively. They show good levels of interest and most concentrate satisfactorily, although a minority finds it difficult to pay attention for more than short periods. Most understand the work in hand and how well they are learning. Overall, pupils work productively and at a satisfactory pace. However, in a very small number of lessons, particularly when the pace is slow, a few pupils lose concentration. Too much noise is generated during group activities in the same proportion of lessons. This detracts from the progress made. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language learn well, thanks to the good support they receive and the grouping arrangements for teaching the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

19. The curricular opportunities provided for pupils are satisfactory in the Nursery and Reception and are good at both key stages. The interests, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils with special educational needs, are amply met. Since the last inspection, the school has greatly improved the quality and balance of the curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2, and has successfully introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. A good range of extra-curricular activities has been introduced and the length of the school day for Key Stage 2 is now appropriate.
20. Overall, the curriculum offered to children under five is broad and balanced. Planning for the curriculum for children under five is based effectively on the areas of learning recommended for children of this age. Since the last inspection outdoor play provision has been developed and a secure area provided.
21. At both key stages there are very effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. Skills are reinforced and consolidated across lessons for all pupils, especially for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The school gives the highest priority to teaching literacy since weaknesses in pupils' basic language are considered to be holding back the raising of standards in many areas of the curriculum. The school's association with the Dudley Grid for Learning Project has significantly developed the curricular provision for information and communication technology, including the use of CD-ROM technology and the Internet.
22. A very detailed development plan and two-year curriculum plan provide a good basis for establishing firm links between subjects, and promoting continuity in learning and skill development as pupils move through the school. The school provides effective sex education and drug abuse is discussed in personal, social and health education lessons.
23. Curricular provision is enriched by visits of educational interest to near and more distant locations. The school makes good use of the local community to help focus and give point to pupils' learning. For example, many classes have made detailed street maps of the school's locality, and a visiting artist has helped pupils contribute to the decoration of the local railway station. The school makes good use of the proximity of Christ Church and offers carol and harvest festival services. A teacher with responsibility for developing extra-curricular activities has been appointed and an increasing number of activities are available to pupils. At present, these include recorder, choir and dance clubs, an information and communications technology club, and football and netball clubs.
24. Links with the local secondary school are very good indeed, with frequent meetings of senior management teams and liaison about curriculum continuity. Good procedures ensure the successful transfer of pupils with special educational needs between schools.
25. The school's provision for moral and social development is very good; provision for spiritual and cultural development is good. There has been an improvement in the provision for spiritual and cultural development since the last inspection, when both were judged to be less well developed.

26. The provision for spiritual development is good. The school values pupils as individuals and they in turn value others and respect the world in which they live. Assembly time and acts of collective worship are spiritually uplifting and provide time for prayer and reflection. Pupils are asked to think about their own feelings and those of others. For instance, when reflecting on the different layers of meaning in the poem 'Betty at the Party', pupils show empathy towards the lonely. Religious education lessons and acts of collective worship also provide opportunities for pupils to explore the Christian faith and learn about other beliefs. For example, pupils study Judaism and Islam and listen to stories about the prophet Mohammed. The school plans effectively to promote spiritual development in other lessons. Writing about special events in their lives and studying the life cycle of animals enables pupils to ask fundamental questions of what and why? .
27. Provision for moral development is very good. It is based upon clear and consistent practice which promotes good behaviour throughout the school. The school teaches very well the principles that distinguish right from wrong. A system of positive praise and rewards encourages pupils to respond in a fair and reasoned manner. Celebration assemblies provide opportunities for those adopting shared values, such as honesty, truthfulness and hard work to be rewarded. Adults set good examples and promote a sense of fair play. School rules are shared and written by pupils, who show a growing responsibility for their own actions.
28. The provision for social development is also very good. The school has built up a tradition of serving local families and so has fostered very good links with the community, which support its work in this area. Shared aims and the value of teamwork are reflected in the school motto: 'Together we are building a successful school'. Within school, pupils have the opportunity to work together in different groups and listen to other points of view; for instance, in guided group work or in whole school assemblies. Older pupils take care of younger pupils and show initiative as monitors in class and at assembly time. The school promotes the development of citizenship effectively by participating in local festivals and events and donating to charitable organisations. Good use is made of opportunities to discuss personal relationships and wider social issues in personal, social and health education lessons.
29. Provision for cultural development is good. A range of experiences helps pupils to develop a wider knowledge and understanding of their own cultural heritage, through, for instance, the study of the local environment. A 'Creative and Performing Arts Week' has been planned, with visiting artists offering aspects of drama, dance and music as a focus for workshops. The musical talents of pupils are appropriately used to enhance cultural development. The school also makes effective provision for pupils to study the richness of other cultures. For example, links with local schools provide shared experiences with the production of 'Rama and Sita', whilst a half- termly study of Africa includes stories and music of that culture. The library offers a range of books reflecting other cultures and their literature.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school provides good all around care for its pupils through the promotion, implementation and monitoring of its support, safety and security arrangements. The school also has good procedures for assessing and monitoring academic performance and personal development. Clear and manageable documentation ensures the success of these arrangements, which are a strength of the school. The care the school takes of its pupils is evident in all aspects of its life. There are clear improvements since the last inspection, in the monitoring of pupils' attainment and in the extent to which information about earlier learning is used to plan work for groups and individuals.
31. The school has established a good system of pastoral care that is clearly understood by pupils and acknowledged and supported by parents. It embraces the needs of staff, pupils, parents and governors. Appropriate external agencies are effectively involved when there are needs. Health and safety is managed well and reviewed regularly. The arrangements for child protection are good. They are understood by all staff and managed well.
32. Promotion and monitoring of attendance are good because there are effective school systems. Thanks to the clear information supplied by the school pupils and parents are equally clear about what the school expects with regard to attendance and punctuality. The effective

monitoring arrangements ensure the school can react to any issue very quickly. The school is aware of trends in unauthorised absence and parents are involved at the earliest opportunity should there be a problem.

33. A very good assessment policy helps teachers to monitor pupils' academic progress and highlights the importance of using the information gained to plan for the next stage of teaching and learning. This process begins with the assessment of the attainment of children of four, when progress is recorded against the recommended goals and then used to plan for improvement. Assessment arrangements conform to requirements at the ages of seven and 11. The school carries out additional testing to identify strengths and weaknesses at regular intervals. Optional testing is carried out at the ages of eight, nine and ten years, with additional testing in English and mathematics. Literacy and numeracy targets are shared with the governing body, parents and pupils. Targets for classes, groups of pupils, and individuals are reviewed at termly meetings. In addition pupils are required to consider what they have learned, what they are going to learn, and the improvements they have made by undertaking curriculum assessment tasks. All of this is helping to push up standards.
34. Teachers meet in teams to consider the standards of pupils' work and compare them with the achievements expected nationally. This helps to ensure that teachers' assessments are accurate and consistent. Pupils' social and personal skills are greatly valued, reported to parents and shared during success assemblies.
35. There are good procedures for recording the progress made by pupils for whom English is an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs. Assessment information gained soon after children start school is often used to place pupils on the special needs register and the national Code of Practice is followed well. The progress of these pupils is monitored well by both class teachers and the coordinator for special educational needs. The targets set in pupils' individual education plans are reviewed every term, helping them to progress in their learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. The school has improved this aspect of its work since the last inspection. It is now judged to be very effective in working with parents. The survey of the opinions of the parents and carers of the school, and the meeting with the registered inspector before the inspection, showed that they judged nearly all aspects of the school's performance to be good or very good. For example, 97 per cent of respondents to the questionnaire, agreed or strongly agreed, that that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with suggestions or complaints. 28 per cent of respondents and some of those at the meeting had concerns about the quantity of homework. 20 per cent of those replying to the survey thought that the range of activities that pupils had opportunities to join in with outside lessons was not sufficiently interesting. Inspection evidence does not support these concerns since homework is set in accordance with the school policy and the range of extra-curricular activities has already increased as a result of the appointment of a teacher to develop such opportunities.
37. The school has very good links with parents. This is due to the very good quality of the information provided for them by the school, and the very professional relationships, which are established by staff. Parents make a very good contribution to their children's learning and they are very supportive of the school.
38. Parents have a strong commitment to the school through the support they provide as governors, through high levels of attendance at school meetings and the support of school activities. There is a good deal of social interaction between parents and staff, including activities associated with home-school association fund-raising.
39. The effectiveness of links with parents is very good. The well-established links between staff and parents ensure that the school is open and welcoming. The very good relationships enable staff to know and understand their pupils and their families. This close consultative process has a positive effect on pupils' learning at school and at home.
40. The impact of parent's involvement is very good. They respond positively to commitments to work with the school to maintain high standards of behaviour and to support the home school

agreement. They encourage pupils to complete their homework and their reading record book. They show, through their involvement in attending school to review their children's work, or informative curriculum meetings, that they have a very high level of interest in the work of the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are effectively involved in reviewing their children's progress.

41. The quality of information provided by the school is very good. There is a regular flow of high quality information that informs parents and pupils about all aspects of the school's work and the achievements of the pupils. The school brochure, newsletters and notices are good examples of this. Pupils' annual school reports are informative and tell parents very effectively about the achievements that their children make. These reports are reviewed and at the beginning of each term. Teachers, parents and pupils have the opportunity to discuss how individuals can improve and to agree targets for improvement.
42. The contribution of parents to their children's learning is very good. There is a loyal core of helpers in school who provide significant help. Parents are enthusiastic to know about the curriculum, to make suggestions and respond positively when approached by the school to follow up schoolwork or homework. They are proud of their school and this encourages their children to have a sense of value, achievement and success. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are very good. They are much more effective than at the time of the previous inspection. The headteacher, who has been in post for less than three years, has developed very good leadership and management strategies, which have resulted in significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. In the relatively short time since the headteacher's appointment, the quality of teaching has improved greatly. At the time of the last inspection, nearly one in four lessons were unsatisfactory. Currently, seven in ten lessons are good or better, and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen by inspectors. There is now a very clear direction for the school, which is helping to promote higher standards. The school's recent focus on raising standards in mathematics has produced impressive results. The rate of improvement in the outcomes of the National Curriculum tests has been far greater than the national trend. Improvement in the achievements of higher attaining pupils has also been a priority, and the percentage of the pupils gaining the higher levels in tests has increased significantly. A major strength is the shared sense of purpose and strong commitment of the headteacher, staff and governors to the school's agreed aims and values. There has been a large turnover of staff, but the headteacher has been successful in promoting very effective teamwork. The sharing and understanding of the vision statement, and its effective implementation in the daily life of the school, are clear factors in its success. The excellent delegation by the headteacher is a reflection of the confidence she has in her staff. The contribution made by the deputy headteacher, the senior management team and subject co-ordinators justifies the headteacher's belief in them. Her development of their effectiveness has also contributed well to the improvement in the school's performance.
44. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are well organised, and manage their work efficiently and effectively through appropriate committees. The right questions are asked, and governors endeavour to ensure that everyone connected with the school is regularly consulted and informed of improvements. Governors have responded very well to the previous inspection, addressing nearly all of the issues raised and making good progress. They are conscientious. For example, they undertake a significant amount of training, particularly to ensure they have good financial knowledge and understanding. The relationship between the governors and senior staff is very good.
45. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior management team and subject co-ordinators, are involved in monitoring standards and the quality of planning. Thorough checking of the quality of teaching and learning has contributed well to the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Similar classroom observations have been introduced for mathematics and science. However, these procedures are not yet as comprehensive and systematic as they could be. For example, the school is aware of the need to ensure that science lessons at Key Stage 1 are subject to the same amount of checking as those at Key Stage 2. There is detailed analysis

of attainment of individuals, classes and year groups, and results are used to set targets for teachers and pupils, leading to improvements in standards.

46. An effective development plan, which is based on very appropriate targets, contributes well to improvements in the school's performance and ensures the successful implementation of national initiatives. The targets set are carefully linked to funding and resources. Reviews are undertaken regularly to assess progress towards to achievement of targets, and modify plans accordingly.
47. The school has very good systems for financial planning. Decisions are based on previous costs and thorough consultation takes place with governors and senior staff. The prudent management of funds enables the school to plan for long-term projects, such as improvements to staffing and refurbishment of the nursery. This is why the school is carrying forward a substantial amount of money. Daily financial and administrative procedures are effective and are undertaken efficiently. The chair of finance committee has a good understanding of the school's financial position and monitors spending regularly.
48. The pursuit of 'best value principles' successfully underpins the school's very good capacity to sustain continuous improvement. The school makes very effective use of all available resources in its endeavour to provide a high standard of education for all its pupils. Modern technologies are used to good effect in school management systems and to support pupils' learning. Good use is made of specific grants such as those to support pupils with special educational needs. When taking into account the fact that the school receives an income per pupil below that of many primary schools, it is judged to provide good value for money. This is a clear improvement from the previous report.
49. This is a successful school, which has made very good progress since the last inspection. The governors and staff share the headteacher's vision of where they want to be, and the school is on course to achieve this through sustained whole school effort. The strength of its commitment to improving pupils' achievements means that the school is well placed to continue to improve.
50. The school is staffed by sufficient, suitably qualified teachers to meet the demands of the primary curriculum, with a good balance of experience and expertise among the staff. Appointments in recent years have eliminated all of the skill shortages identified in the last inspection, for example, in music. Teachers are effectively deployed into phase teams, with lines of management set out clearly. Nursery nurses currently staff the Nursery, but plans are in hand to put both the Nursery and the reception classes under the supervision of a teacher co-ordinator. All teaching and support staff are appropriately trained and take part in continuing professional development. Opportunities for staff development are planned and targeted well, and contribute effectively to raising standards of teaching and learning.
51. The main school is a modern building with a multipurpose hall; the reception classes and the Nursery are housed in a much older building. The general level of maintenance is satisfactory but a suspended ceiling in one part of the Nursery is in a dangerous condition and sections of the surface of the playground represent a health and safety hazard to pupils. These deficiencies have been noted and approval is awaited to initiate repairs. The difficulty of wheelchair access highlighted in the last inspection, remains a problem because of the different levels on which the school is built.
52. The quality and quantity of resources are generally good but there are some relatively minor gaps in the tools and equipment for design technology. Resources are effectively organised, well managed and used to good effect to support teaching and pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is particularly well resourced throughout the school, with banks of computers in some classrooms supported by a good range of software and peripherals. The school benefits from being networked with the Dudley Grid for Learning, giving teachers and pupils easy and ready access to the Internet. The overall provision of books, equipment and other learning resources is more than adequate for the delivery of the National Curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. In order to improve the school further, the headteacher, governors and staff should now:

[1] raise standards in English throughout the school by :-

- (a) developing the pupils ability to write at length through increasing the amount they are expected to produce in their personal writing activities,
- (b) raising standards in spelling through more regular practise of look, cover, write, check activities,
- (c) identifying clearer learning objectives in activities involving,
 - [i] skills of speaking and listening,
 - [ii] reading for information.

[See paragraphs 71, 73, 74 and 75]

[2] Extend the existing procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning by making them more systematic,

[See paragraph 45]

[3] Raise standards in the Nursery by speeding up the planned improvements in provision.

[See paragraphs 50 and 56]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	70
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	17	49	30	None	None	None

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)	63	313
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	66

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	18	109

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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
	1999	22	24	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	17
	Girls	16	18	18
	Total	30	34	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (74)	74 (66)	76 (58)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	18	16
	Girls	15	18	17
	Total	29	36	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (66)	78 (61)	72 (61)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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
	1999	22	17	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	21
	Girls	9	9	11
	Total	24	25	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (49)	64 (56)	82 (61)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	17
	Girls	9	9	10
	Total	21	22	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (47)	56 (57)	69 (71)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	4
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	266
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

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	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	131

Number of pupils per FTE adult	15
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	98/99
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	£
Total income	544360
Total expenditure	534573
Expenditure per pupil	1477
Balance brought forward from previous year	22046
Balance carried forward to next year	18 000

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	375
Number of questionnaires returned	108

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	35	6	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	44	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	57	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	41	23	5	13
The teaching is good.	48	46	1	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	47	6	2	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	38	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	32	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	40	51	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	47	47	4	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	46	2	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	43	15	5	19

Other issues raised by parents

None about which the school could take appropriate action.

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

54. At the time of the previous inspection, attainment in all areas of learning was found to be in line with that expected for five year olds, and children made a good start to school. Whilst standards have been maintained there have been few developments in the provision for the youngest children since the last inspection, with some deterioration in the provision for children in the nursery. Education for children in the foundation stage is provided in the designated nursery and the reception classes. At the time of the present inspection 30 of the 45 children in the reception year were under the age of five. An appropriate induction programme ensures that they are gradually introduced to a full day at school.
55. The children's attainment on entry to the school is below average, particularly in language and literacy. By the age of five, most children attain the expected standards for their age in their personal and social development, physical and creative development, but attainment in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world remain below that expected for children of a similar age. Progress in these areas is satisfactory. It is good in their personal and social development and satisfactory in physical and creative development.
56. Whilst the provision in the nursery is appropriate for the needs of children under five, its cluttered appearance, the tired condition of much of the equipment and the way in which the available space is organised do not contribute to high standards. Planning for the curriculum is based appropriately on the areas of learning recommended for children of this age. The curriculum offered is broad and balanced. Since the last inspection outdoor play provision has been developed and a secure area provided. The school is aware of the need to provide a clear written policy for children under five to give increased guidance when planning activities. In the reception class teachers focus well on literacy and numeracy strategies and the carefully structured sessions contribute effectively to children's learning. The school has recognised the need to improve the quality of provision for the youngest children. This has been included as a priority within the school development plan. Nursery nurses currently staff the Nursery, but there are well-advanced plans to put both the Nursery and the reception classes under the supervision of a teacher co-ordinator.

Personal and social development

57. The children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in personal and social development, attaining standards similar to other children of this age. This aspect is well taught, both in the Nursery and in the reception classes, and underpins the whole curriculum. The children know the importance of classroom routines such as lining up, are learning to listen quietly to the teacher, and to take turns to speak. They sustain interest for some time, work and play well together and co-operate appropriately, for instance, when using the climbing apparatus. They share resources, such as paint and crayons, tidy-up well and show independence when putting on aprons, fastening coats and choosing activities. They relate well to the adults who work with them. Their behaviour is good and they show awareness of the difference between right and wrong. Reception children move between the two school sites without fuss.

Language and literacy

58. Attainment is below that expected of children of a similar age, but given their attainment on entry to the nursery, the children make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs often make good progress towards their targets when the activities are carefully matched to their needs. The quality of teaching of language and literacy is satisfactory in both the Nursery and the reception classes.
59. Most children listen attentively to instructions and stories. The teaching staff have an imaginative way of telling of stories, which promotes the children's interest effectively. Many enjoy talking with teachers and other adults about their work, but a significant number have a limited vocabulary and have more difficulty in expressing themselves clearly. There is a wide range of ability with a few children reading very fluently, but a significant majority has more limited literacy skills. The

higher attaining children are well on their way to attaining Level 2 of the National Curriculum in reading. Many children know the term 'author' and 'title' and can identify a good number of letter sounds. The implementation of a literacy time in the reception class is having a positive effect, through introducing the children to a range of texts, developing their story recall skills and sound and word recognition. In the nursery, basic phonic skills are taught carefully, but sometimes, slow pace means that children do not always cover sufficient work in the time allowed. All children are encouraged to take books home to share with adults and are familiar with the characters in the reading scheme. By the age of five, many children can recognise and write their name and are aware that writing carries meaning. The most able copy captions to their pictures, shape letters well and write simple words unaided.

Mathematics

60. Attainment is below average at the age of five. The children develop mathematical skills and understanding satisfactorily through activities such as sorting, matching and sequencing. Most reception children know the names of simple two-dimensional shapes such as circle, square, triangle and rectangle. They recognise numbers up to ten. Many can order them and identify 'more than' and 'less than'. In one of the lessons seen in the reception class, good opportunities were provided to develop language to do with position and to reinforce counting and ordering to ten. Children in the nursery are less secure with numbers. They are learning to develop patterns but few can sequence a pattern of alternate coloured beads. Most can talk about their 'pattern'. Children in the reception class have a greater understanding of sequencing and pattern. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in developing mathematical skills. The quality of teaching is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. Teachers show good levels of subject knowledge. However, they do not always provide enough opportunities for focussed practical work in free choice activities to extend mathematical learning appropriately.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. Children make sound progress in acquiring and developing knowledge and understanding of the world, although attainment is not as well developed as might be expected. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the Nursery and in the reception classes. The children observe pattern and identify changes in pattern, looking at shapes of buildings and painting shapes of the things they see. They explore the local area, and make models of some of the buildings. Many are able to talk with interest about features of the local environment. They think about local people such as the police and 'lollipop lady' and their importance in the community. Their discussions are reflected in paintings of 'People who help us' and in role-play such as that done in 'The clinic'. They care for plants and goldfish and celebrate families and friends in their artwork. Children in the nursery also learn about the Chinese New Year by making fans, sampling food and exploring the festival celebrations.
62. They develop an understanding of the seasons, creating 'Winter days' pictures, and completing calendars. They begin to develop an understanding of the passage of time by using language such as 'yesterday', 'tomorrow', 'last week' and learning the days of the week and months of the year. They have a sound awareness of daily routines such as the literacy hour. The teachers plan visits well, for instance to a farm or zoo, to enable the children to have first hand experience of handling lambs and ducks and other small animals. They provide other opportunities, such as a visit to the seaside, to widen children's knowledge and understanding of the world beyond their local area.
63. The children use construction equipment confidently to make models. They extend their understanding of direction, but opportunities are not always sufficiently well structured to develop technological skills through the use of construction toys in play activities. In scientific activities, the children learn about the danger of electricity and discover which appliances use electricity. They develop basic information and communications technology skills using the mouse and computer keyboard. Sometimes, the tasks set fail to challenge children's thinking sufficiently, or to provide activities, to develop children's early geographical and scientific understanding, for example, through well structured sand and water tasks,

Physical development

64. Children's attainment in physical education is average. In both the Nursery and the reception classes the quality of teaching is satisfactory and most children make satisfactory progress in their physical development. This includes those children with special educational needs. The majority can run, skip, jump and land confidently with increasing co-ordination and awareness of the space around them. The provision of a secure outdoor play area enables greater opportunity for physical development. In a lesson in the nursery, children were observed using an obstacle course well to climb over, crawl through, jump on and off balances and slide along and under with confidence. They follow directions and instructions and acquire appropriate knowledge, developing their literacy skills well. Such activities are appropriately structured and adults intervene to help children develop their skills. They use sound manipulative skills to construct toys, paint, write, draw and colour, although for many these finer skills are less well developed.

Creative development

65. Attainment in creative development is average by the age of five. The teachers provide opportunities for the children to explore and experiment with a satisfactory range of media, using various techniques such as painting, printing, collage and drawing. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both the Nursery and the reception classes. The children develop sound skills in cutting, sticking and modelling, although three-dimensional work using clay is less evident than other modelling media. The children create models from boxes following their walk around Coseley to observe buildings and shops. They are soundly supported by the adults in creative activities, such as being introduced to the work of Lowry and painting 'matchstick' figures whilst listening to the record 'Matchstick Men'. However, more attention could have been drawn to the technique being explored through greater discussion about colour mixing, shades, shape and form. Opportunities are provided for the children to explore a range of untuned percussion instruments, and to learn a wide range of rhymes and songs, many involving actions. The experiences offered make a satisfactory contribution to children's creative development.

SUBJECTS

ENGLISH

66. At Key Stage 1, in the national tests in 1999, pupils' attainment was below average in writing and well below average in reading. Attainment in English at Key Stage 2 was below the national average. At both key stages, more pupils achieved at the lower levels than was the case nationally. However, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 and above by the end of Key Stage 2 was close to the national average. Although the results of the national tests from 1996 to 1999 show that attainment is rising towards national levels at Key Stage 2, progress towards this goal is very uneven at Key Stage 1.
67. Inspection findings indicate that pupils, at the end of both key stages, attain below the national average in English. The pattern of attainment identified in the 1999 national tests is reflected in present inspection findings. The number of pupils reaching higher levels is close to the national average, but a higher percentage of pupils than is usual achieved at lower levels. The vast majority of these have difficulties with their reading and writing.
68. In the previous inspection handwriting was judged to be unsatisfactory. At present, the school is improving the quality of handwriting effectively, by teaching cursive writing earlier in Key Stage 1 and by linking regular handwriting practice to the pupils' personal writing and their checking of spellings.
69. A strength of the work in English is the shared commitment to raise standards and the high quality of planning in literacy. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy successfully. They are confident when teaching the whole class, focus effectively on specific targets for learning in guided groups and use feed back time (plenary sessions) well. For example, work in Year 3 and 4 on instructional writing enables the whole class to study recipes, organise instructions in group work activities, and identify the differences between story writing and factual writing clearly.

70. The school's initiatives are helping to raise standards too. The provision of extra time and support for reading in 'reading activities', and for writing in 'workshops' ensures that work is clearly matched to individual need. For instance, younger pupils with special needs make good progress in small withdrawal groups. They learn about letters and sounds and write their own 'sweet alphabet'. A system for teaching groups of pupils of similar attainment for lessons in the literacy hour is working well. It enables teachers to plan work for pupils of similar abilities in class and guided group work.
71. Attainment in speaking and listening is below average. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills are not identified consistently well in planning for English. Guidance for teachers also lacks sufficient clarity and structure. Most pupils are keen to answer questions and add to discussions, but are less confident and competent as independent speakers. Few older pupils can expand the ideas and opinions of others with clarity, or express their feelings and imaginative ideas by using more complex sentences and richer and wider choices of vocabulary. Many younger pupils are still developing their use of Standard English and find explaining their learning difficult at times. Those instances when good speaking and listening were evident during the inspection were due to the clear identification of suitable learning objectives in lesson planning. For instance, in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, pupils discussed traditional stories, took the 'hot seat' as characters, and explained their reaction to events in a story. The quality of the planned provision and the teacher's skilful questioning had a positive effect on the standards that the pupils achieved.
72. Reading is below average at the end of both key stages. However, most pupils, including those with special needs and for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. This is because of the good teaching in literacy lessons and the focus of extra support in daily 'reading activities'. Younger pupils enjoy exploring stories in 'big book' time and use pictures and sentences they have memorised to recall the main story line. By seven years of age, pupils read with growing accuracy, and use skills such as recalling words by sight and using their knowledge of letter sounds to make sense of unknown words. However, few make good guesses by using the sentence structure for help. A significant number of pupils are still developing fluency with their reading.
73. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read with greater understanding and expression. They use a limited range of reading strategies and depend mainly on phonic and word recognition skills. Higher attaining readers show a growing interest in different types of books. They begin to make choices and express their preferences. For example, one Year 6 pupil, reading the *Eagle of the Ninth*, told an inspector: "I like the way Rosemary Sutcliff uses words and characters to bring the story to life". Although pupils identify the importance of the contents and index pages when retrieving information, a significant number find reading non-fiction books difficult. For instance, when working on 'reading activities', pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4, struggle with technical terms and find the language of information books hard to understand. Greater clarity in identifying learning objectives for such activities would help pupils to make better progress.
74. At the end of both key stages, writing performance is below the national average. Nevertheless, attainment in some aspects is good. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. The extra time spent on writing in 'workshops' and the good teaching in guided writing groups are helping pupils to improve their work. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils begin to shape their ideas and thoughts in writing. They write for a range of different purposes such as producing advertisements, poems and retelling favourite stories. As yet, spelling and punctuation are not consistently and correctly used in independent work. Handwriting skills show improvement.
75. Throughout Key Stage 2, the drafting and editing of writing are developing well. For instance, in organising and sequencing factual writing when writing rules for a game. Work related to comprehension and grammar also shows steady progress. However, spelling is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Year 6 still spell words such as soldier, ugly and villager incorrectly. The amount of personal writing the pupils produce is also less than expected.
76. Pupils' attitudes to their work are good. During class and group activities they concentrate well, and work on tasks in guided group work without the specific input of the teacher.

77. Teaching is good, and is a strength within the school. Planning for literacy is of high quality and has a direct influence on the good achievement and progress made. Relationships between teachers and pupils have a positive effect on the working atmosphere in class. Teachers value pupils' contributions in lessons and this builds confidence and self-esteem. Targets for improvement in literacy are assessed regularly and pupils' progress monitored well. This ensures higher attainers are challenged and that the high number of pupils with special educational needs are working at levels appropriate for their needs.
78. The co-ordinators manage the subject well and have the expertise and commitment which are improving levels of attainment. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in literacy contributes to the standards attained, and guidance from outside agencies ensures that issues identified are promptly acted upon.
79. The range and quality of books provided have improved since the last inspection and the library and class book corners are well resourced. Computers are well used in English lessons to support the development of reading and writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

80. Standards in mathematics have improved very markedly since the last inspection. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have risen from being well below the national average four years ago, to being close to the national average today. The results of the national tests of 1999 show that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is now above the national average. Furthermore, standards at the end of both key stages are now well above the average achieved by pupils in schools with similar background characteristics. In addition, the number of pupils achieving higher level grades in national tests is well above the average reached nationally by pupils aged seven and 11. Inspection evidence reflects the outcomes of the latest national tests. The rate of improvement in the results of recent years is well above that found nationally, and has been brought about by a number of factors. These include the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and very systematic planning, which involves pupils in the targeting of high National Curriculum attainment levels. The use of teaching methods that match the needs of all pupils, and the skilful use of assessment information to plan the next stage of teaching, have also contributed well. A very determined, corporate effort by all teachers to drive up standards, and a very positive response to these initiatives by the pupils have also been very important parts of this process.
81. Standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory, overall, and the number of pupils attaining at high levels of mathematical reasoning is well above the national average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, benefit from the teachers' provision of sharply focussed practice in using and manipulating number bonds. Pupils understand the place value of digits, can sequence numbers and count on in twos, threes and fours. They are familiar with terms such as clockwise and anti-clockwise, angles and graphs and with the correct mathematical names for a range of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils in Year 1 struggle noticeably when asked to work with written numbers and unfamiliar mathematical language, but consistent and well targeted practise is helping them overcome this weakness.
82. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are good, and the number of pupils attaining at high levels of mathematical reasoning is well above the national average. Standards were found to be good at the end of Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Confident in their grasp of number bonds and tables, pupils in lower Key Stage 2 assuredly tackle problems involving space, shapes and measures and elementary data handling. During the week, pupils in upper Key Stage 2 also showed good progress in this regard. They can explain the effects of reflection with lines of symmetry at right angles. By the end of the key stage most pupils understand the place value of digits to 1000, and they can use this knowledge to approximate. They succeed in using decimals to two places in addition and subtraction and are familiar with fractions and simple percentages. The oldest pupils are able to transfer their mathematical skills to science, when collating, recording and interpreting data collected from observations and practical activities.
83. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress and are given work that suits and extends their ability.

84. Overall, attitudes to learning mathematics are good in all classes in the school. Pupils are eager to contribute to class discussions, listen attentively and apply themselves well.
85. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. This has strong impact on the standards that pupils achieve. Examples of teaching of the highest quality were seen at both key stages. No ineffective teaching was observed during the inspection. Teaching has improved markedly since the last inspection. The quality of pupils' learning is good at both key stages. The teachers' enthusiasm promotes good levels of concentration. The teachers have a good knowledge of the content of their lessons. As a result, pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding well. The very detailed planning, in which clear learning objectives are frequently targeted to National Curriculum levels of achievement, has a positive effect on the progress that pupils make. Pupils are informed of these levels and apply themselves effectively to achieve the targets set. Time is used well and the good pace observed in most lessons motivates pupils and stimulates their interest levels. Teachers' questioning is very good with constant checking for gains in what pupils know, understand and can do. As a result, pupils' knowledge of their own learning is good. Teachers use this information effectively when they are planning the next lessons. Teachers know their pupils well and appropriate termly targets are set to move pupils on.
86. Procedures for assessing attainment and progress are good and the information gathered is used well to drive up standards. Analysis of pupils' results in national tests, and in the optional standardised test given by the school, helps teachers identify areas that are not well learnt, and those areas in need of improvement. Pupils' progress is carefully recorded and this information is shared with parents at the end of each year. Pupils' work is marked regularly, with helpful feedback and encouraging comments. Teachers' marking is used to monitor attainment, identify weaknesses and suggest to pupils how improvements can be made. All of this improves standards, however, information and communications technology is underused to support work in this subject.

SCIENCE

87. Since the last inspection, the quality of leadership and management in science has improved considerably. Also, the provision of learning resources is much better, allowing all aspects of science to be taught more effectively.
88. The results of statutory teacher assessments made in 1999 indicate that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was well below the national average, for both the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3. These results also showed that pupils' investigative skills were less well developed than other aspects of science work. Inspection evidence demonstrates that standards have risen significantly and that the work of most pupils is now broadly in line with national expectations, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The attainment of pupils is adversely affected by their under developed language skills. The scrutiny of pupils' past work shows that their investigative skills meet national expectations. For example, they are able to respond to the teacher's suggestions about carrying out experiments with static electricity. Most make simple predictions before conducting tests, such as comparing the speeds of model cars released down a ramp. Pupils also know about the sources of light and experiment with electrical circuits. Most can recognise and draw circuits that will work and those that will not.
89. Standards have risen at Key Stage 2, since the last inspection.
90. The outcomes of the national tests of 1999 indicate that at the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' performance was above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was close to the national average, and the percentage achieving the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. When compared with schools of a similar character, performance is well above the average. Taking the results over the period 1996 to 1999 together, there is a clear trend of improvement. The overall rate of improvement is greater than that found nationally and the improvement from 1998 to 1999 is much greater. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 learn how to carry out and record experiments appropriately. For example, they make predictions and draw simple conclusions about what they have discovered. Pupils at the end of the key stage recognise the need for fair testing. This was evident in their experiment

about dissolving different substances. They present their findings in the form of tables, charts and graphs. Pupils also understand life processes. For example, they know about “food chains” – the feeding relationship between creatures such as slugs, thrushes and hawks. They understand that matter can exist in solid, liquid and gaseous forms. In their study of physical processes they learn that light can be reflected, and in some circumstances, images can be inverted.

91. Only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 1, but reference to teachers’ planning and pupils’ past work confirms that the quality of teaching is at least sound. At Key Stage 2, where only lessons for pupils in Years 5 and 6 were seen, the quality of teaching is good. At both key stages lessons are planned well and teachers have high expectations. This has a positive effect on the effort that pupils make and they apply themselves well to their tasks.
92. The quality of pupils’ learning is good at both key stages. Teachers co-operate well to ensure that pupils in different classes within the same phase have similar opportunities to learn. At Key Stage 2 teachers make good use of learning resources, such as the overhead projector and they teach scientific vocabulary well. Their enthusiasm and commitment is a key factor in raising standards. This was clear in a lesson for lower attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6, in which the teacher took the part of a “mad scientist” and captivated the class. As a result, the level of pupils’ concentration was deepened considerably and their grasp of the main teaching points was increased significantly. However, the scrutiny of pupils’ past work shows that there is some needless repetition of work at Key Stage 1, and opportunities to develop pupils’ numeracy skills are sometimes overlooked. For example, measurements were not recorded as part of an experiment to compare the distances travelled by model cars rolling down a ramp. At Key Stage 2, the marking of pupils’ work does not contribute as well as it might to raising standards and there is inconsistency in the extent to which information and communications technology is used to further work in science.
93. Pupils’ good attitudes to work in science lessons enhance the quality of learning and contribute well to the standards they achieve. The subject is very well led and managed by the subject co-ordinator. Her checking of the standards that pupils attain, the improvements made to the scheme of work and the analysis she makes of the results of national tests have contributed strongly to the raising of standards.

ART

94. Due to the arrangement whereby art and design and technology are timetabled in blocks, no art lessons were seen in Key Stage 2 during the period of the inspection. In the only lesson was seen at Key Stage 1, the teaching was very good. The skilful way in which the basic skill of observing was taught had a strong and positive effect on the quality of pupils’ learning. Evidence gained from reviewing examples of children’s art in the school suggests that the pupils’ attainment is in line with age-related expectations. The sound quality of the art that pupils complete is evident in wall displays, sketchbooks, the co-ordinators’ subject portfolios and work retained in individual classrooms.
95. Teachers’ planning shows that young pupils are given opportunities to encounter a range of approaches to art and to work individually and in groups. Displayed work provides evidence that pupils are taught ways in which ideas and feelings may be visually communicated. The media explored include line drawing, painting, working with various textures and a range of materials for making three-dimensional models and artefacts.
96. Schemes of work focus on the development of skills and this is apparent in some of the art seen in Key Stage 1. Pupils explore ways to blend colours and demonstrate light and dark shading and tones. They are also encouraged to observe closely and express what they have imagined and experienced. For example, they have produced portraits of one another and have investigated the use of lines in drawing, cut out their products and assembled them into three-dimensional patterns. However, art experiences appear as discrete exercises rather than as a series of linked learning experiences concerned with systematically advancing pupils’ skills.
97. Some of the artwork seen in lower Key Stage 2 classes emphasises the promotion of creative, imaginative and practical skills. This is apparent in the ways pupils have contributed to class displays; for example in hanging mobiles of fish and in pupils’ illustrations of themes taught in

class, or in displays in geography about settlements. Some of the artwork seen in Upper Key Stage 2 also includes exercises offering opportunities to explore patterns, textures and colour imagery and develop recording skills. The techniques learnt can be seen in pupils' illustrations for history and geography and in posters composed using computer-generated colours and graphics. Displays in the school also contribute to pupils' learning; for example, a display in the foyer illustrating the making of masks. Pupils in upper Key Stage 2 have been encouraged to make careful first-hand observations and assemble collages using photographs and line drawings of imagery in the nearby Christ Church churchyard. The pieces of art produced are at levels that are average for the age of the pupils involved. The impression gained in the case of Key Stage 1, of the need for a more rigorously enforced and continuous sequence of learning experiences also applies in Key Stage 2. For example, pupils in some classes have knowledge of famous painters, such as Van Gogh and Salvador Dali, but the rationale for selecting and linking the artists in question is not clear.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. The previous inspection indicated that standards were satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. The latest inspection indicates that attainment is now satisfactory at both key stages. The progress made by pupils in each key stage, including pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory. The school is following national guidelines for teaching the subject and has started to build up its scheme of work over a two-year programme. Pupils are now engaging in a well-planned range of activities that ensures that the necessary skills are systematically developed. There is now a clear structure for planning, making and evaluation. This is clearly understood and used by pupils as they develop and refine their ideas towards a finished product. At Key Stage 1, pupils investigate levers, slides and a variety of artefacts. They explain their planning orally, draw and paint diagrams to show how vehicles and objects such as scissors move. Having explored the function of axles and chassis, older Key Stage 1 pupils build model cars. This activity is closely linked with work in science and history through a topic based on 'Transport'. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils investigate the construction of purses by taking them apart, before designing and making a felt purse of their own. Practical skills of cutting and stitching are developed effectively. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 design and make Greek masks using modelling material.
99. The newly appointed co-ordinators are working hard to raise the profile of the subject and to ensure that pupils acquire skills appropriate for their age group. The weakest aspect of the subject is food technology, which is hampered by the lack of appropriate resources. Evidence drawn from planning, the scrutiny of past and current work, and from discussion with the children and teachers, shows that pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. The timetable did not allow the observation of any design and technology lessons, but the same evidence suggests that the quality of teaching is satisfactory. However, there is not always sufficient emphasis on the evaluation process or evidence of modifications as a result of such evaluation. Pupils are confident when discussing their work and are able to explain the skills and process clearly. They have positive attitudes to learning.
100. Recent initiatives in design and technology have resulted in the appointment of two co-ordinators, the redrafting of the policy and the implementation of national planning guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. School guidelines are not yet in place. The subject is highlighted for development in the school development plan for this term and an action plan has been drawn up with this in mind. At present, there are not enough learning resources and the limited provision does not always contribute effectively to high standards.

GEOGRAPHY

101. Standards, which have been maintained since the previous inspection, are in line with what is expected nationally for pupils at the age of seven and 11. Pupils in the reception classes observe and investigate the school grounds. Those in Years 1 and 2 investigate the immediate locality, observing buildings and local amenities, and using correct terminology such as 'church, footpath and swimming bath'. They locate and label these features on sketch maps and describe their position. When discussing routes to school they consider direction such as left and right, under and over. Higher attaining pupils develop their speaking and listening skills, by giving clear instructions and recording the routes of others. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have developed

their vocabulary to compare and contrast the features of Coseley with those of Weston-super-Mare. They observe the differences in landscape, such as the sea, beach and mountains.

102. In Key Stage 2, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in mapping skills, using symbols and keys instead of labels. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have a clear understanding of settlement and the reasons why towns and villages, including Coseley are located as they are. By the age of 11, pupils use persuasive writing well to discuss environmental issues such as traffic problems and the need for increased litter bins. Themes such as climatic regions, weather, water and rivers, and natural disasters are studied in two-year cycles to give adequate coverage of the national requirements.
103. Behaviour is good, with pupils enjoying their activities. They work well in pairs and groups and are willing to share their knowledge and understanding. This was evident in lessons when pupils in Years 1 and 2 discussed routes to school, and others in Years 3 and 4 talked about settlement. Pupils' positive attitudes and good relationships contribute well to the progress made in lessons. The quality of teaching is good and involves stimulating learning activities. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which deepens pupils' understanding of the topics covered. Their detailed lesson planning provides clear learning objectives for pupils of differing abilities and has a very strong impact on how well pupils gain knowledge and skills. There is a positive strategy to concentrate on the application of skills, and this speeds up pupils' learning. Since the last inspection, good pace has been established in lessons, which increases pupils' productivity. There is also a good balance between talking to pupils and providing time for them to investigate. A variety of teaching strategies motivates pupils and they are managed well. This results in good levels of concentration. Opportunities are planned to assess what pupils know, understand and can do and teachers encourage pupils to become involved in their own learning by recording what they have learned. This information is useful when teachers plan for the next stage of learning, and contributes effectively to the good progress made.
104. Visits enable pupils to compare and contrast their own environment with others such as the seaside in Key Stage 1, and Llandudno and Derbyshire in Key Stage 2. In pupils' books there is evidence that writing, spelling and presentation skills are below that expected for pupils of these ages, with few examples of extended writing.
105. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject and uses national planning guidelines to promote good progress across the school. She monitors termly planning and maintains a photographic record of progression. These factors have a positive effect on pupils' learning.

HISTORY

106. Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection. The standards attained by pupils have risen and the provision made by teachers is much better. For example, they now use time lines appropriately and provide suitable opportunities for historical enquiry.
107. Pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with those found nationally.
108. Younger pupils distinguish easily between the lives of people in times past and their own. For example, they write accounts of coach journeys as they would have been experienced in olden times, and contrast that with descriptions of modern excursions. They develop their sense of chronology by drawing time lines to illustrate the development of different means of transport. They know about the toys used by children of different periods, including the Victorian era. The oldest pupils start to select and link information from a variety of sources, such as books and television programmes. They make appropriate use of information and communications technology to access facts from compact discs and the Internet. The pupils show appropriate factual knowledge of many aspects of the life of the Ancient Greeks. They learn about their beliefs, government and architecture. Most recall the important people of this period, such as Archimedes and Pythagoras. They appreciate that many words of our own language come from the Greek language of that time.

109. The scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' past work appears to indicate that the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers work well together to provide children in different classes within each phase with the same opportunities to learn. In the lesson observed at Key Stage 2, the brisk pace maintained by the teacher, had a positive effect on the interest shown by pupils. The good attention paid to matching different tasks to the needs of pupils helped them to gain skills, knowledge and understanding effectively. Skilful management of the class increased the amount of work pupils were able to achieve. The teachers' marking of pupils' work is helpful and they make good use of assessment to check the effectiveness with which children learn. Teachers also apply the school's strategy for teaching literacy skills successfully to the work in history, by, for example, asking pupils to write in different styles. These factors have a positive effect on standards and the quality of learning.
110. The school makes good use of visitors, including senior members of the local community. The subject is led well by the co-ordinator, whose work in monitoring teachers' planning and reviewing the scheme of work, contributes significantly to the standards achieved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

111. Attainment in information and communication technology is at least in line with what is expected nationally for pupils by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is a second language, also attain satisfactory standards. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are above national expectations. This significant improvement since the last inspection is due to the shared commitment of the headteacher, school staff, the governing body, and the Local Education Authority to raising standards.
112. By the age of seven, pupils are developing satisfactory communication skills. They can save, retrieve and print work, sometimes without the help of adults. Higher attaining pupils know how to access menus and close and open programs. They have developed satisfactory keyboard and mouse skills and understand how to use capitals and leave spaces. They use these skills to support learning in literacy and geography when, for example, they use computers to create an imaginary town to support their work on routes.
113. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is above what is expected nationally for pupils of this age in communicating and handling information. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the Internet and use e-mail to contact each other. Most pupils demonstrate a good range of skills, reinforced in some cases, by experiences gained at home. They confidently change the size and colour of fonts, highlight and amend text. They import pictures when practising research skills from CD-ROM or the Internet. A good example of this was seen in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, in which research was carried out as part of a history topic on Greece. The clear instructions and good direct teaching of skills had a very good effect on the speed at which pupils learned. In an English lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, the teacher's high expectations lead to the pupils achieving good levels of independent learning. Enjoyment in using computers and the good relationships evident in classrooms also contribute well to the quality of learning. Keyboard and mouse skills have been refined since the staged introduction of the networked system over the last two terms. All pupils know how to log on and use passwords. They access programs, retrieve, amend, save and print information, and can explain how to use taskbars. Information and communication technology is used very well to support literacy skills. The use of this technology enhances work in music, and groups of older pupils are developing skills in the use of digital cameras and desk publishing packages.
114. Pupils apply themselves well and are eager to learn. They work well as part of a group. This was evident when a group of pupils in Year 3 shared an activity on settlement. All pupils in Key Stage 2 use their skills well, demonstrating a high level of independence which enables them to apply their skills across the curriculum. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 used their initiative during the inspection, to prepare for a science lesson by drawing information from the Internet about pollination. At lunchtime pupils display a high level of care for resources when accessing the Internet unaided.
115. Since the last inspection, information and communications technology has become a core subject and guidelines based on national recommendations for the progressive gains in skills, knowledge and understanding have been adapted to assist teachers in preparing detailed

planning. Teachers' knowledge and understanding have been improved by providing regular in-service training opportunities. This has had a positive effect on the quality of learning. Laptop computers have been provided so that the skills learned may be consolidated and extended. Realistic targets, which are ahead of schedule, have been set for improvement. Although little direct teaching was observed during the inspection, it is evident that the gains in skills and attitudes which are demonstrated independently in Years 5 and 6, could only be achieved as a result of good teaching. Resources have been greatly improved and networked across the whole school. Hardware in the Nursery and reception classes is yet to be upgraded, although existing machines are used satisfactorily. Good questioning is used to ascertain knowledge and understanding and encourage independence. The introduction of a strategy for recording gains in skills, knowledge and understanding is highlighted as a priority in the co-ordinator's action plan.

116. The co-ordinators provide clear direction and share very good subject knowledge. Teachers are given positive support, including discussions about termly planning and regular training opportunities. The action plan acknowledges the need to revise the present policy to include the numerous changes that have occurred over such a short, concentrated period and the need to provide systematic opportunities for the monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching across the school. Provision for information and communications technology has been given a high priority by the school, and this has contributed well to the quality of learning.

MUSIC

117. Music has improved since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be in need of development. There is now clear guidance to help teachers to plan lessons. The range and quality of instruments and musical experiences have been developed successfully, and pupils' learning is currently enhanced by work with keyboards, recorders and brass. Too few lessons were seen to make an overall judgement of the quality of teaching. However, satisfactory teaching was observed at Key Stage 2, in which the good focus on the imaginative and creative aspects of performing significantly enhanced the quality of pupils' learning and their rendition of "The Hairy Castle" song.
118. By the end of both key stages, pupils' achievement is appropriate for their age. Younger pupils sing tunefully in assemblies and singing time. They make steady progress as they work with others as performers; for instance, when singing two part rounds, pupils start on cue and follow a steady beat. Pupils experiment with untuned percussion and learn how to handle instruments correctly as they accompany action songs in collective singing and their learning is productive. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 develop their skills of performing and composing effectively. They respond imaginatively to the story of a haunted house by reflecting sounds and actions in their music. The creaking door and rattling skeleton are reflected in rhythms and in their choice of instruments. Opportunities for pupils to reflect on their work and appraise it critically are planned appropriately.
119. Listening to and enjoying music is a regular part of assembly time and this enhances pupils' learning. They listen to music from European cultures, accompaniment by teachers and the performance of other pupils. Members of the recorder group gain confidence as they perform for this larger audience. They can read simple notation and hold notes for a set length of time.
120. Pupils have good attitudes toward their learning and join in enthusiastically with their favourite hymns and songs. They are interested in the performance of others and listen carefully. They wait their turn when experimenting with instruments.
121. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has drawn up an appropriate action plan to develop the subject. Advice and guidance from outside experts is valued and used well to enhance performance.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was broadly in line with national expectations at both key stages. The standards of work seen during the current inspection are in line with those found nationally at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' games skills are appropriately developed. They throw

and catch effectively and move safely with good levels of control. Most are able to co-operate well in group situations and use the space available in the hall appropriately.

123. Overall, the oldest pupils achieve average standards, but the attainment of those observed in a gymnastics lesson for Years 3 and 4 is above the level normally found. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have swimming lessons at a local pool and attain satisfactory standards in swimming. More than three-quarters are able to meet the swimming requirements of the National Curriculum by the time they finish instruction. In gymnastics, particularly strong features of performance are the control, balance and poise shown by pupils. Higher attaining pupils synchronise well, sequences devised with their partners. Inspectors observed how effectively this was done using mirrored movements, which included the execution of full turns. Pupils also exploit effectively, opportunities to work at different levels on apparatus. Weaknesses in speaking skills make it difficult for some pupils to explain aspects of their own performance and that of others.
124. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory. Firm, but sensitive, discipline was a strong feature of both the lessons and this contributed well to the progress made and to the quality of work achieved. The teachers' clear, detailed planning also has a positive effect on pupils' achievements. The quality of pupils' learning is helped by the extent to which the teachers encourage them to focus hard on the skills being practised.
125. The very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils, shown, for example, by the way in which they handled apparatus responsibly, was a key factor in the success of the lessons observed. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for a short time, but his monitoring of teachers' planning and the work he has done to improve the scheme of work are already helping to raise standards. Since the last inspection, the quality and quantity of learning resources have improved. This, too, has a positive effect on pupils' achievements. The continuing lack of a suitable field for games activities places an extra burden on teachers, but the school makes appropriate use of a nearby leisure centre to ensure that pupils have appropriate experience of games and athletics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

126. The previous inspection report indicated that attainment, progress and teaching were sound, overall, but some higher attaining pupils failed to make sufficient progress because planning was inappropriate and tasks undemanding. Since then, the overall provision has improved and pupils now make good progress and achieve standards better than those set out in the locally agreed syllabus.
127. Provision meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils learn about Christianity and the other world religions - Islam and Judaism. A two-year curriculum plan provides a coherent structure for themes and key learning objectives. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
128. Standards of attainment in religious education are good by the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are familiar with different aspects of Christianity including celebrations and ceremonies such as baptism and marriage. They understand the importance of symbols such as the cross and the candle. The daily act of worship reminds all pupils, as the candle is lit, that 'Jesus is the light of the world'. Pupils understand the significance of the cross as a symbol of Christianity. They are increasingly aware of other world religions, for example the symbolism associated with the Jewish faith and ceremonies, such as Bar Mitzvah. They know that there are special people in the community linked to Christianity and Judaism.
129. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand the main beliefs of Christianity and how some Christians, such as Mother Theresa and Martin Luther King, have had their lives shaped by their beliefs. They have a good knowledge of the Bible and know that there are different holy books and different founders of faiths. They know that special ceremonies mark different stages of life, and explore initiation ceremonies in different faiths, as well as in Christianity. Pupils learn much from stories, such as 'The Good Samaritan' and are able to relate them to their everyday life.
130. Pupils respond well in lessons. They have positive attitudes to learning, are eager to explore ideas and share their thoughts with others, valuing the contributions and beliefs of others. Their responses show sensitivity and maturity in their thinking.

131. The quality of teaching is good because teachers are enthusiastic and have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They use questions effectively to enable pupils to share their ideas confidently. These factors have a positive effect on the quality of pupils' learning. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on ideas and to respond through prayer. The teaching observed in religious education lessons underpins the ethos of the school and promotes pupils' moral development well. For instance, the focus on 'commitment' in a lesson for pupils in Year 5 and 6, when discussing initiation, had been extended to help pupils understand how this affected their own lives and their commitment to work. There is a clear focus on acquiring the special language associated with religion, which pupils understand and use with confidence, boosting their learning. Planning is based securely on the locally agreed syllabus. The interesting topics, lively and sensitive teaching and effective use of resources, including those brought in by pupils, contribute well to pupils' achievements in religious education.
132. The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of experiences, knowledge and understanding of religions and their impact upon the daily lives of those who believe. It helps to enhance the quality of pupils' learning, by contributing effectively to their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. Literacy skills are developed well, because pupils' religious vocabulary is extended, speaking and listening skills are enhanced and the children are encouraged to record their ideas and feelings. Standards of written work are hampered by weaknesses in writing skills for a significant number of pupils. Personal and social education, circle time, assemblies and daily acts of collective worship make very positive contributions to standards in religious education. The headteacher manages the subject well in the absence of a co-ordinator. Resources, which were poor at the time of the last inspection, are now adequate. The Christian ethos and values, which underpin the aims of the school, are reflected well in the curriculum as a whole, and permeate the life of the school.