

INSPECTION REPORT

WESTLANDS FIRST SCHOOL

Droitwich Spa

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116671

Headteacher: Mrs. P. Tildesley

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Christine Field
9479

Dates of inspection: 9th – 11th January 2001

Inspection number: 194529

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Farmers Way Droitwich Spa Worcestershire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Keith Rogers
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

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9479	Mrs C A Field	Registered inspector		Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils' taught? How well does the school care for its pupils?
9770	Mr J Baker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15414	Mr D Carrington	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
14991	Mr A Hardwicke	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How good are curricular and other opportunities
30144	Mr J E Hastings	Team inspector	English Physical education Equality of opportunity Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	
2818	Mr G Warner	Team inspector	Science Music Religious education Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Provision for pupils with special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated on the Westlands estate, west of Droitwich Spa. There are 220 pupils on roll: 107 boys and 113 girls aged between four and nine years. A nursery provides for fifty-six children who attend part-time. Children have very low level skills when they first start school. Pupils' attainment on entry into reception is well below average. Forty-nine per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. No pupils currently in school have English as an additional language. Three pupils in school are from travelling backgrounds. Some six per cent of pupils are likely to spend only part of their education at school whilst their mothers take up temporary residence in a local refuge. An above average proportion of pupils has special educational needs. Eight of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs and this is well above average. The local education authority partly funds a Learning Support Base to assist the school in meeting pupils' needs. There is high level of transience in the local community caused largely by housing issues. Levels of attendance are well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides an effective education for all pupils within a caring, happy and supportive environment. The headteacher and her staff show grit and determination to give all pupils a fair deal. The school has come a long way since its previous inspection and through its reflective practice strives hard to improve on previous best. Raising academic standards is no easy matter as a significant number of pupils who make good progress in lessons do not sustain their achievement over time because of the many barriers that hinder successful learning. For example, a significant proportion of pupils move on and off roll, and this results in them missing out on important aspects of their learning. A high number of pupils have special educational needs and, though good provision is made for them to develop their basic skills, many have great difficulty in retaining new learning without repeated reinforcement. The standards achieved are the right ones for most pupils, given their starting point, but the school wants standards to be better and is on track to bring about improvement. The school spends well above average on the education of pupils and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed by a headteacher who motivates the hardworking team of committed staff to take on the challenges that teaching at Westlands brings with enthusiasm and good humour.
- Good teaching enables most pupils to make steady, and sometimes good progress in all the subjects they learn. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education and all foundation subjects.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs: about a quarter of pupils in school receive very good quality additional help from staff in the Learning Support Base.
- The systems in place to keep track of how well pupils are doing are very comprehensive and provide reliable information on which the school can set its priorities and build for improvement.
- The school is fully inclusive, welcomes all pupils and tries hard to nurture and develop individual talents.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are unsatisfactory.
- Attendance and punctuality are poor.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected four years ago it was subject to special measures. Just over two years ago Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) found it had made sufficient progress in correcting the main problems and took it out of special measures. The school has given good attention to the key issues concerning assessment procedures and the provision for spiritual and cultural development identified by the previous inspection report and both have improved. The quality of education being provided, the impact that teaching has on learning, and the standards being achieved are all much better than they were in the past. The raising of academic standards continues to be top of the agenda for action and the school is in a good position to improve these in the future.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	E	E*	E*	E
writing	E	E	E	E
mathematics	D	D	E*	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Similar schools are those with between 35% and 50% of pupils eligible for free school meals

Most pupils start school with low levels of literacy and numeracy. There is much to catch up in school, but pupils make steady and often good progress. They achieve standards in English, mathematics and science at the age of seven which, whilst they are well below average, demonstrate improvement. The above table shows that results in national tests are well below average in writing and low in reading and mathematics. The school's results were well below those achieved by pupils in similar schools. Results in reading and mathematics in 2000 were amongst the lowest five per cent in the country when compared to all schools. Although it is not apparent from the above table, results have been rising since 1997 until the dip last year. The school's rate of improvement is keeping pace with the national trend. Pupils who receive all of their education at Westlands tend to achieve well. The majority of the current Year 2 started school with low literacy and numeracy skills, but by and large have made steady progress over three years. Inspectors judge that standards are below average overall in English, mathematics and science. Standards in Year 4 are also below average in these subjects, but at an appropriate level given these pupils' starting point. Standards in ICT, religious education and all other subjects are at the level expected for pupils of seven and nine years. This demonstrates good achievement. The school has set realistic targets for raising academic standards in English, mathematics and science for each year group, but they are insufficiently challenging to reflect the school's ambition for increased improvement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Pupils are happy to come to school and try hard for their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Behaviour is satisfactory in lessons, it is usually good at breaks and lunchtime.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory personal development but too few opportunities are made available for pupils to use their initiative and take responsibility. This limits pupils' development. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Very poor attendance is a key issue for the school. This year there has been five per cent improvement but the level is still unsatisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 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.

Teaching is satisfactory or better in 95 per cent of lessons; this is a major improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching is consistently good or better in the nursery and the learning support base. Here teachers focus very much on promoting purposeful talk; a good feature of teaching that promotes pupil's literacy skills, especially their vocabulary that is not consistently in use elsewhere in school. The teaching of ICT and its use to support pupils' learning is good throughout the school. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and enables children to establish a secure start to their education, though many start in Year 1 below the expected level. Teaching is good overall in the rest of the school and leads to most pupils making secure gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects of the National Curriculum. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the teaching of basic skills, though there is inconsistent attention given by teachers to promoting independence in learning. Teachers generally make insufficient use of target setting in core subjects to support pupils' learning and raise their levels of attainment. The additional support given to pupils with special educational needs is very good and enables these pupils to achieve well against their personal, literacy and behavioural targets. The five per cent of unsatisfactory teaching was in two physical education lessons and an English lesson. Shortcomings included the organisation, behaviour management and pace of lessons. Teachers and support staff are very dedicated and give of their best to pupils, some of whom have enormous odds stacked against their successful learning. It is because of the staff's perseverance and hard work that pupils are enabled to do as well as they do.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and meets statutory requirements. There is a good extra-curricular programme.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision enables pupils with special educational needs to make steady progress because the support is of high quality and work is matched to their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Good attention is paid to pupils' social and moral development. Satisfactory attention is given to their spiritual growth and cultural awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good attention is paid to pupils' health, welfare and safety. Teachers have recently started to compile a book on every child that will eventually provide a very comprehensive record of their achievement. Westlands is successful in keeping some very challenging pupils in mainstream education.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Satisfactory. Parents are kept well informed by the headteacher who works hard to involve as many parents as she can as partners in education. Some parents make much valued contributions to the work of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher has motivated staff to good effort that is successful in improving standards, teaching and learning. School priorities are the right ones to ensure that improvement in raising standards is continuous and sustained.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are fully supportive of the school, but do not ask enough questions to check whether the school is effective.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher and key managers have very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in school and use this information very effectively to check that the principles of best value are applied efficiently.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are all good. The school is successful in tapping into additional resources - for example, family literacy grant aid - to assist pupils' achievements. Efficient use is made of a very tight budget that is shrinking owing to the falling roll. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils like school.• Teaching is good.• The school is approachable.• The school is well led and managed.• Pupils are enabled to become mature and responsible young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nothing identified at the meeting or via the questionnaire responses.

Thirty-five per cent of parents responded to the inspection team's questionnaire, and twenty attended a meeting with the Registered Inspector. Parents hold positive views about the school. The team agrees with the positive views of parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Westlands First School provides for a very disadvantaged community. The level of mobility (up to forty-six per cent of the number on roll) is a factor that very much influences the pattern of attainment and progress in school. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals has risen significantly each year and currently stands at 49 per cent. The school provides for a well above average number of pupils who have special educational needs, some have emotional and behavioural needs that impinge on the rate at which they learn. The school liaises very successfully with a local pupil referral unit to ensure that a very good level of provision is made for two pupils who attend part-time at each. The majority of children start school with very low levels of literacy and numeracy. Their personal and social development is very much behind that of similar age children in the rest of the county.

2. The school's results have been steadily rising until the dip last year. Results are at a very similar level to those at the time of the previous inspection despite advancements in the key areas of teaching, behaviour management and assessment. There is good attention paid to ensuring that pupils learn progressively in both the short and longer term. Assessment data shows that most pupils make steady progress as they move through the school, even though their attainment is well below that of pupils of the same age in other schools. Last year's results indicated that boys did not do as well as girls. School managers have analysed carefully why this might have been the case and have tried to tackle their concerns by purchasing more boy-friendly texts to support work in literacy. They reward boys regularly for their effort and achievements. Most of the lower sets in classes, and the groups receiving additional support from the Learning Support Base have more boys than girls. However, there is no significant variation between the rates of progress made by boys and girls.

3. The results pupils attain in the National Curriculum tests when they are seven have been steadily improving since 1996 in reading and writing, and quite rapidly in mathematics. In 2000, results dipped back to 1996 levels; this was not unexpected. School data shows that most of the pupils taking the tests achieved appropriately in relation to their prior attainment. Some 25 per cent of pupils joined the year group just before the tests and they did not do as well as those pupils who had been educated at the school since Nursery. Over half the year group taking the tests had special educational needs, some had spent time excluded from school because of extreme anti-social behaviour. A few had interruptions to their learning caused by long periods of absence. Data shows that those pupils who were expected to achieve at the higher level 3 did so.

4. Standards of work in Year 2 are currently below average. The school predicts that a higher percentage of the year group than in 2000 will attain the expected level 2 in the national Curriculum tests in May 2001. The standards currently being attained are at an appropriate level given the history of the children's learning to date. The school has agreed realistic targets with the local education authority aimed at improving school performance by between three and five per cent annually. The current Year 1 has a broadly average profile and forecasts suggest that most of this group of pupils should attain the level expected for their age in 2002 tests though most are likely to achieve at 2C rather than at higher levels. Senior managers are now in a position to assess the potential for making targets more challenging so that attainment in the future compare more favourably with those of similar schools.

5. The proportion of pupils with special needs alone contributes to the effects on results but is exacerbated by the well above average numbers of pupils who have statements of

need. Pupils' progress is good when they work in the Learning Support Base and satisfactory overall when they work in classrooms. Pupils generally achieve appropriately because of the effectively identified needs established in individual education plans. These contain precise and achievable targets that are known by all staff as they have been written jointly by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and class teachers. The high quality of teaching in the Learning Support Base, supports pupils achieving well considering their multiplicity of needs.

6. Inspection findings show standards to be below average in English, mathematics and science in Year 2. Standards are below average in Year 4. This is an increase in 2000 and reflects the improvement the school is making in raising standards and throws good light on its capacity to continue to do so in the future.

7. Most children enter the nursery with well below average levels of literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills. There is early identification of special needs made in the nursery. Currently a third of the total nursery roll, and nearly a half in the reception classes have specific needs. The nursery and reception classes are well-organised places of learning. A range of suitable activities is provided to develop the children's skills slowly but surely. Good teaching in the nursery supports the children making good progress, though the standards they achieve, are well below the level expected when they move into reception. Satisfactory teaching in the reception classes helps the children who have transferred from nursery to sustain these standards. This gives these children appropriate opportunities to be well on the way to achieving the required level by the time that they leave the reception classes.

8. The school's strategy for literacy has been implemented successfully and has had a positive impact on raising teachers' confidence to teach. Good teaching in English is helping improve standards in English quickly. Good emphasis is given to reading and all pupils are heard to read regularly. Pupils develop near to average skills in reading and most are technically very competent readers by nine years of age. Pupils make out unfamiliar words by using clues from the context and use phonic skills very confidently. Many pupils enjoy reading and most have favourite authors who they talk about with evident pleasure. The best readers in Year 4 do not have the necessary skills to look beyond the surface of the text to explore meaning beyond the literal. Many are limited in what they learn from reading because of a narrow vocabulary. The school has yet to give sufficient emphasis to promoting vocabulary as well as it might in lessons and in display about the building.

9. Writing skills are below average as pupils have limited vocabulary on which to draw to make their writing interesting and lively. Few pupils write creatively or at length to the level expected for their age. Pupils plan and structure their work accurately. Handwriting is generally neat though spellings are weak. They write for different purposes, for example, reviewing books they have read and writing letters; but few write expressively or at length. The school has rightly identified writing as a key area for improvement and is using the "First Steps" resources to support developments as well as giving additional time each week.

10. Pupils have below average speaking and listening skills. Many pupils require constant reminders to pay attention and not speak when others are speaking. Speaking skills are inhibited by low self-confidence and limited vocabulary. Pupils do not have the necessary skills to put forward their ideas and opinions in discussion unless given a great deal of support by the teachers. Older boys in particular find it difficult to express themselves in discussion and some are embarrassed to put forward their views in front of their peers. The use of Standard English is unsatisfactory.

11. Teachers have introduced the National Numeracy Strategy confidently and this is enabling pupils to work with good levels of motivation that is increasing the speed and accuracy with which they work. Pupils are keen to work when given tasks that challenge and inspire their concentration. For example, in a Year 2 lesson looking at two digit numbers up to 100, the teacher's innovative approach in organising a game that pupils could play set them off quickly to find out about "more than and less than" with good application and good results. In some lessons, pupils are presented with too much information by the teacher instead of being enabled to work out appropriate aspects for themselves. This approach restricts pupils' problem-solving skills and has a dampening impact on the progress made in lessons. Too little attention is currently paid to promoting mathematical vocabulary in some lessons and there are missed opportunities in classroom displays to emphasise its importance. The sample of pupils' work shows reasonable coverage of all aspects of mathematics but there is greater emphasis given to number than space, shape and measure. Managers need to be alert to this.

12. A similar picture is seen in science where the ability to carry out investigations and talk and write about the work is limited by pupils' low-level literacy skills. Good teaching in science is leading to improving standards, however there is currently too little emphasis placed on pupils using key vocabulary to support saying whether what happened was what was expected. However, the youngest pupils gain essential knowledge and skills in comparing living things and events, and the oldest pupils can explain why they have undertaken a task in a particular way. They understand fair test and record in a variety of ways, though sometimes teachers take too strong a lead in this.

13. The school has made good improvement to provision and standards in ICT since the previous inspection. Standards are at the expected level by the age of seven and nine and all pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and skills. There are signs that standards and achievement are rising well, and in some cases the work seen by inspectors was of a good standard.

14. The school gives good attention to basic skills but also ensures that pupils' receive worthwhile experiences across the curriculum. Pupils make satisfactory progress in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education. Extra-curricular experiences provided in technology, sport and music add considerably to the opportunities being provided for pupils to develop particular skills and talents.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Since the previous inspections in 1996 and 1998, relationships have improved significantly and are now very good. Also attitudes to learning and standards of behaviour have improved and are now satisfactory overall. Although there have been significant improvements in attendance in the years immediately following the previous inspection, attendance for last year was lower than at the time of the last inspection. This year there has been five per cent improvement but the level of attendance is still unsatisfactory. Despite the various strategies the school has tried, some parents are still not giving the school the

support needed to make sure their children attend regularly and are on time.

16. Children in the Foundation Stage start school with very limited personal and social skills. They are encouraged to build these skills by the sensitive team of adults who work patiently in nurturing and developing children's self-confidence and self-esteem. By the time they transfer to reception most are settled at school, are confident to work alongside others and go about their work without anxiety. Children show good attitudes to school, adults and one another. They behave well, show respect for the feelings of others and a pride in their own achievements.

17. Nearly all pupils, including those with special educational needs, like school, are keen to attend and take part enthusiastically in the extra-curricular activities provided. Their attitudes to learning are satisfactory overall and contribute positively to standards achieved. The majority of pupils are attentive, concentrate well, undertake tasks enthusiastically and enjoy lessons. For example, in a Year 3/4 music lesson pupils thoroughly enjoyed playing a range of percussion instruments. However, a significant majority of pupils lose interest and concentration quickly unless they are being highly motivated continuously by good teaching.

18. Behaviour is satisfactory overall and good in assembly, the dining room, the playground and when moving around the school. In the classroom, behaviour is satisfactory overall with most pupils being aware of the high standards expected and the majority responding well to discipline. These, in the main, create an orderly environment conducive to learning. However there is a significant number of pupils with very challenging behaviour and it is only the skilful management of these pupils by teachers that prevents disruption to lessons. Since the time of the previous inspection the school has made more consistent approaches to behaviour management and this has had a positive impact on the quality of learning and standards of behaviour achieved.

19. In the two playgrounds behaviour is good with all playing harmoniously together. Games range from football, which is assigned to one playground, and various less active games on the other. There was some boisterous play amongst boys observed but no sign of aggressive behaviour or any form of oppressive behaviour. However there have been nine temporary exclusions in the past year, including one permanent exclusion. Some of these exclusions have been the result of violent behaviour towards staff and other pupils. During the week of inspection one reception-age pupil was excluded for attacking the headteacher and causing damage to her office. The number of exclusions is higher than it was at the time of the previous inspection. There are good strategies in place aimed at keeping as many pupils in mainstream schooling as possible, for example, there is close liaison with a local pupil referral unit.

20. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall and they grow in confidence as they progress through the school. Pupils care for others and are aware of their feelings. For example, pupils have empathy with others who are going through difficulties at home and try to help them. However, opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility are limited and as a consequence these aspects of their personal development are weak. A school committee with representations from each class was set up to lead the work on formulating an anti-bullying policy. This was a positive feature in promoting pupils' initiative and decision-making skills but is no longer running. Teachers often decide the way that pupils should organise their work and are not giving sufficient attention to enabling pupils to manage their own learning on occasions.

21. Relationships between pupils are very good. They work well together in the classroom when in pairs or groups and play together harmoniously. They celebrate each others success. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils applauded spontaneously when others gave the right answer. Members of staff give praise and encouragement at every opportunity.

22. Rates of attendance are very low in comparison with other schools, unauthorised absence is above the national average and many pupils are persistently late. These factors have an adverse effect on the standards and achievement of the pupils concerned and the school is trying very hard to improve the situation. There is a tendency for some parents to condone absence for social reasons, and many do not notify the school. A group of about a dozen pupils, most of whom also have special educational needs, have been identified as having serious attendance problems. For these children especially, the impact of long or frequent periods of absence is having a detrimental effect on their progress. However, for the majority of pupils a regular pattern of attendance is the norm. Most pupils arrive at school on time but punctuality is also a problem for some families and late arrivers were a feature of most mornings. The very high mobility of pupils throughout the year also has a negative impact on the overall level of attendance. Attendance and punctuality are two key areas for improvement.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. In 1996, 65 per cent of teaching was reported to be satisfactory or better. In 1998 when HMI re-visited the school the proportion of satisfactory or better teaching stood at 80 per cent. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 95 per cent of the lessons observed in the inspection. This represents a major improvement since the previous inspections and is largely attributable to the very effective programme of training and development in subject expertise and behaviour management. Coupled with these is the united determination by all staff at Westlands to strive for improvement. For example, all staff use ICT very effectively to support both teaching and learning. This good practice is supporting positively the development of pupils' intellectual, physical and creative development.

24. Teachers and support staff are very dedicated and give of their best to pupils, some of whom have enormous odds stacked against their successful learning. It is because of the staff's perseverance and hard work that pupils are enabled to do as well as they do and become effective learners. Teachers are not complacent and know fully that more focus must be given to raising academic standards. They are united in their determination to strive for improvement and have full confidence in the lead that senior management is giving in this respect. Parents hold positive views about the quality of teaching and many believe that their children are doing well at school. Despite repeated appeals by the school, a high percentage of parents are not giving the school the support with homework that would further benefit their children's education.

25. Of the 60 lessons observed during this inspection, 57 per cent were of good or better quality, 38 per cent were satisfactory and 5 per cent (3 lessons) unsatisfactory. Teaching was also evaluated by reference to a comprehensive sample of pupils' work and by studying planning. All of these indicators support the judgement that the overall quality of teaching is good and is leading to pupils getting equality of opportunity to succeed. Few weaknesses were seen in teaching anywhere in the school. Of significance in the good teaching is the very good management of pupils that is supporting positively the sound work ethic being promoted in all classrooms. All teachers plan their lessons with care and attention to meeting the needs of the wide range of pupils they have to teach.

26. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and is enabling children to establish a secure start to their education, though many start in Year 1 below the level expected for their age in all respects. Early years staff are very aware of the difficulties that the youngest children face and are sensitive and persistent in their approaches to ensure that skills and concepts are grasped firmly by all children. They place great emphasis on the children's social development and communication and miss no opportunity to promote purposeful talk. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage the children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

27. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 to 4, and leads to most pupils making steady gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects of the National Curriculum. Most attain to their potential, though a significant minority of pupils misses important aspects of work because of their pattern of attendance. These pupils do not achieve to their full potential despite the school's best efforts in providing work to help them catch up. Staffing problems last term in one Year 3/4 class have had some negative impact on the quality of education for these pupils, but the situation is being dealt with satisfactorily by management.

28. National literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced with confidence and a good level of researching. There is good teaching of basic skills and pupils enjoy plenty of well-planned opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Pupils generally have limited speaking and listening skills and this is an area that teachers focus on repeatedly. Teachers give constant reminders to pupils not to speak unless asked and especially when others are talking. In discussions pupils tend to use one word answers and require constant prompts to get them to express their own thoughts and ideas in any depth. This is one area that requires still more time to ensure that pupils develop the key vocabulary they need to discuss and explain their work at the depth of level required. Writing has been flagged up by the co-ordinator as an area for development, and all teachers are usefully planning additional time in the week for pupils to write creatively and at length. Good teaching in English is more consistent than in mathematics because teachers have had a year longer to build up confidence to adapt and modify their approaches that are well matched to the learning needs of the pupils. The school has established action plans for continuing to improve English and mathematics and these have useful priorities yet to be fully implemented. For example, through systematic monitoring it is envisaged that the best teaching and learning in school will be shared more.

29. Pupils with special educational needs comprise virtually half of the school and are taught well. Teachers plan thoughtfully and thoroughly as a result of being fully involved in jointly writing individual education plans with the special needs co-ordinator. Plans contain precise and achievable targets that are regularly reviewed so that the changing nature of needs can be accurately assessed and comprehensively catered for. Good resources, particularly the use of ICT, support positively the different levels of tasks targeted at meeting needs efficiently. The additional provision made for some pupils with special educational needs by staff in the Learning Support Base is of very good quality and enables these pupils to make good progress with their personal literacy targets. The school has identified a handful of higher attaining pupils whose needs are generally appropriately met by class teachers. The school has planned time for the special needs co-ordinator to lead training and staff discussion on enrichment work for these pupils so that extra-attention is given to ensuring they attain to the highest level.

30. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are challenged to do well. Teachers are using assessment data with good consistency to support their planning of suitable work for the wide range of pupils in their classes. Assessment practice is satisfactory overall. Most teachers are logging on the back of weekly planning sheets how well different groups of pupils learn. At this point absences are also noted. All teachers are usefully compiling

records of achievement for each child to show levels of work predominantly in English and mathematics. Marking here is evaluative and developmental and often results in targets being set for the next stage in a pupil's learning. Though this is not the case in workbooks in all subjects

31. The five per cent of unsatisfactory teaching was in two physical education lessons and an English lesson. Shortcomings in one physical education lesson included the organisation, behaviour management and the pace of the lessons, all of which impeded the progress that pupils should have made. The other physical education lesson did not work largely due to the fact that pupils stood around inactive for too long whilst they listened to instructions and this approach stopped pupils learning to full capacity.

32. In one or two lessons, teachers control the choice of methods, resources or ways to set out the work at the expense of enabling pupils to use their initiative and to make choices in their learning. In a few other lessons time is not used as effectively as possible. The opportunities for pupils to assess their own learning are not fully exploited in the majority of lessons and this is unsatisfactory. Nonetheless, the personal development of pupils is broadened effectively in lessons. This process is enhanced by the very good quality of relationships in lessons. Pupils work purposefully together, they support each other's learning well and they value what others do for them. There is pleasure and pride in learning; pupils want to share their successes, encourage others to do well and they are pleased when good work is achieved.

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

33. At the time of the school's most recent inspection in 1998 the curriculum was judged to be satisfactory overall, with improvements noted in Years 1 and 2 since the school's period under special measures. Standards were seen to be improving in year 3 and 4, but needed more time to have had an impression on results. HMI reported that a key issue was to improve the range and quality of provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. These aspects of provision are judged to be at a satisfactory level today.

34. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage provides a well-balanced programme for the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding. Planning appropriately takes account of the Early Learning Goals. Early assessment of children with learning difficulties ensures that these children are supported to have full access to the good range of experiences provided.

35. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. A broad curriculum has been maintained, while at the same time giving the required attention to national initiatives for the development of literacy and numeracy, and for new approaches in ICT. The provision for religious education meets fully the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The need to implement daily literacy and numeracy hours has meant that other subjects, such as science, have been given reduced curricular time, but appropriate consideration has been given to organising the curriculum, so as to preserve breadth and richness. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies have been successfully implemented, and teachers are now using these with increasing confidence, although their benefit in terms of improvements in standards are yet to be realised fully.

36. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Appropriate procedures are in place to identify special needs at an early stage, and to provide individual education plans which enable pupils to make the best progress. Teachers and support staff work well together, with a judicious combination of in-class and withdrawal teaching, according to individual need. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all of the activities of the school. They participate in extra-curricular activities such as choir and recorder clubs. None are disapplied from participating in national tests although the school recognises that this can depress school results overall when measured against national and local averages. There is particularly effective provision made for some 26 per cent of pupils on roll with multiple needs from staff in the Learning Support Base. Very good support is helping these pupils make the most of their time at school and to learn effectively given the huge barriers that some face.

37. The commitment made in documentation to the principles of inclusion and equality of opportunity is very well reflected in everyday school life. This is a strength. The ways in which pupils with special education needs are given full access to all aspects of the life of the school is an example of inclusion in action. In a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson on place-value in addition and subtraction problems, for example, pupils with special education needs were fully involved through well thought out and effective strategies. The class teacher and support assistants work together so that pupils with special educational needs are either supported as they work alongside other pupils in class, work on a one-to-one or small group basis with a support assistant, or are given individual tuition outside the classroom. Such work is done in a sensitive and caring way so that other pupils find it perfectly natural and look on the care and well being of these pupils as a normal part of class life.

38. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Drugs awareness, sex education, personal hygiene and health education are given good attention. A good range of extra-curricular activities is organised. Lunch-time music groups, library, sporting activities and visits to musical and other events outside school are all well supported and made available to all pupils. During the inspection recorder groups took place and pupils showed enthusiastic participation, learning to enjoy making music together. Overall, the range and quality of these activities enriches the school's curriculum considerably.

39. The school has good links with the local community which assist pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world and make a valuable contribution to their learning. Courses have been run in conjunction with Worcester College of Technology, and the local education authority project on basic computer skills, which have been popular and have made a useful contribution to community links. Westlands and other neighbouring schools joins together for a variety of activities, including in-service training for teachers, meetings, and joint performances of pupils. The schools also make joint arrangements for pre-transfer visits and discussions on pupils' progress prior to transfer.

40. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies emphasise the spiritual dimension, with opportunities taken for pupils to reflect on the spiritual issues raised. In worship led by either the headteacher, members of staff or visiting clergy, pupils' spiritual understanding is developed through quiet reflection and prayer, through the singing of hymns, and by the appropriate choice of music to which pupils enter and leave the hall. The school has recently won an award of £500 from a local charity for the development of religious education. Pupils' moral and social education is well catered for. They are taught the difference between right and wrong, and teachers work hard to create a caring environment where a strong moral code is promoted. The school's behaviour policy has successfully promoted clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour and caring attitudes. Teachers present strong role models, giving very good examples of the values they promote. Opportunities have been developed for pupils to discuss sensitive issues of feelings and

relationships, and as they move through the school, caring and thoughtful attitudes are progressively developed.

41. The school's provision for cultural education is satisfactory overall. During, for instance, history and geography lessons, and assemblies, understanding of different cultures is developed. Pupils learn about the festivals of different faiths, and about how the lives of people in other cultures differ from their own. They also learn about their own culture, as when they study the great fire of London, and the diaries of Samuel Pepys in their history lessons. The experiences provided by such work broaden pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding, and provide a valuable dimension to the curriculum. Whilst these areas show improvement since the previous inspection, there is a need to continue this process, for instance by the purchase of additional resources to reflect the diversity of the world's cultures and faiths.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school has improved the way in which it cares for pupils from a satisfactory level in 1996 to a good level today. The procedures for managing behaviour have been tackled and adults in school make sure that there are consistent approaches in all dealings with pupils. These improvements have resulted in a calm and settled working environment. On the occasions when some pupils' behaviour becomes very challenging the teachers manage the situation well and call upon a well-tested support strategy that involves such pupils having time out to cool down. Concerns about registration procedures reported by the previous inspection have been addressed well. Registration time is undertaken efficiently and effectively and sets a good climate for a day of productive work. Punctuality is a problem and the school has very comprehensive systems in place to ensure that pupils who are late are settled into lessons without fuss whilst appropriate follow-up work is undertaken with parents or carers. A rewards system has been introduced in an attempt to improve low attendance levels and unsatisfactory punctuality.

43. The ethos in school is warm and caring and places children at its centre. The good attention paid to health, welfare and safety aspects is evident at all stages of education. The team of adults in the Foundation Stage ensures that children are quickly settled into routines that help them feel safe and secure. Members of staff in the later stages of schooling know pupils well and maintain regular contact with parents and carers. Each morning a breakfast club is organised before school for 20 or so pupils whose parents have requested this support. All adults working in the school are vigilant and safety-conscious, making sure that written procedures are followed carefully. Pupils are taught safe practice in lessons and risks are assessed before conducting new activities. For example, close attention is paid to warming up before physical education lessons and no jewellery is allowed to be worn. Child protection procedures are well known to teachers and follow the locally-agreed guidelines. There is a high proportion of children in school currently on the "at risk register" and the school liaises very effectively with social services. Mid-day supervisors manage lunchtimes well and ensure that the level of supervision enables safe and harmonious play. A pupil committee was set up last term to lead on an anti-bullying campaign. Pupils talked to inspectors about their role in this and said how useful it had been to sorting out playground problems. All parents have been sent a copy of the school's anti-bullying statement prepared by the pupils and have been asked to sign a declaration in support. This is a positive feature.

44. At the time of the previous inspection HMI reported that teachers did not make effective use of assessment in lessons to provide activities that match the pupils' learning. The school has made very good progress in response to this. There has also been significant improvement in adapting the curriculum in response to areas of relative weakness as identified in the tests at the end of Year 2. Good examples of this include the current emphasis on extended writing and on promoting reading to boys through the extended range of more attractive texts. Teachers now have good procedures for assessing pupils' levels of understanding and attainment, and they identify the next targets for improvement for individuals in the areas of reading, writing and numeracy. However, the use of identified learning targets is not widespread in other subject areas. Pupils are given too few opportunities to become involved in reviewing their own progress so that they are clear about what they need to do to improve. One notable exception is that pupils with special educational needs are consistently involved in their own reviews.

45. Pupils with special educational needs have their needs reviewed regularly. Systematic reviews are made possible because of the very effective ongoing assessments made by teachers and support staff. The strong support of the educational psychologist, who gives a whole day of her time to the school bi-weekly adds an extra dimension to the positive assessment processes. About 26 per cent of pupils in school with emotional and behavioural needs are given specific time every week in the Learning Support Base, to focus on social skills development. Attendance of pupils with special needs is an area of ongoing concern for senior managers. However, the school is carrying out all of the possible procedures in order to overcome the difficulties arising from irregular attendance and the problems raised by the mobility of some of the families of pupils with special needs.

46. The headteacher and staff know the pupils and their families well. A programme of personal, social and health education is taught in all years and is supported by planned times when pupils are enabled to explore feelings, to listen to others views and in this way develop tolerant and respectful attitudes. There are consistently high expectations of personal conduct that is encouraged and rewarded by a variety of incentives. For example, the use of daily assembly to award gold coins for lining up sensibly and the weekly Rainbow assembly to award stickers and certificates for good effort and achievements are positive features. All of these aim to promote the development of improving standards both academically and in behaviour and are meeting with success.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Since the previous inspections the satisfactory partnership with parents has been maintained overall. Information about the curriculum has improved and is now good but the contribution that some parents are making to their children's learning is unsatisfactory. Many parents maintain good contact when their children are in the Foundation Stage but do not continue to give the same support as their children get older despite the numerous strategies the school has tried. The school is working very hard to strengthen its partnership with parents and should try even harder to encourage parent's greater involvement.

48. The partnership with parents is satisfactory overall and is having some impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Parents hold very positive views about the school. Most are particularly satisfied with the fact that their children like school, the progress their children are making, standards of teaching, the school's approachability, the expectation that their children should work hard to achieve their best, the fact that the school works closely with parents, is well led and managed and helps their children to become mature and responsible. The team agrees with the views of the parents.

49. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, the governors' annual report and frequent newsletters. They are also well informed about the curriculum through the prospectus and termly topics lists which detail the work to be covered together with advice on how parents can help their children with it. Useful booklets are given out to parents of children in the Foundation Stage to help them support the induction of their children into school routines.

50. Parents are also well informed about their children's progress through autumn and summer term consultation evenings and very detailed annual reports which are issued in February. These reports comment on both academic and social development and set targets for work at home which are reviewed at the summer term consultation evening. Very few parents take up the option of a consultation after the reports are issued but about half attend the autumn and summer consultation evenings. Parents can raise concerns at any time and are usually seen immediately. Parents who do take up these regular opportunities to find out how their children are getting on are well equipped to support their children with their learning. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the process of reviews of their needs. The school does all that it can usefully do in order to ensure that parents' support is valued and seen as a vital ingredient of the ongoing nature of the process of meeting needs.

51. There is some parental help in the school that is much appreciated by the staff and makes a positive contribution to children's learning. A small number of parents help in the classroom on a regular basis and there is good parental support on trips and visits including swimming. A small number of parents also attend "Library Time" where they have the opportunity to read with their own children and with others. These are happy occasions with both parents and children clearly enjoying themselves.

52. Parents have the opportunity to support their children's learning at home through the satisfactory homework provision offered by the school. Many parents do not support their children in this way and this support declines from about three-quarters of parents in Year 1 and less than a third in Year 3 and Year 4. However, those parents who do support their children's learning through homework are making a significant contribution to their attainment and progress.

53. Parents have a satisfactory impact on the work of the school. They provide valuable funds through the Friends of Westlands School Association. They are consulted regularly through a questionnaire which seeks their views of the school as well as asking for development suggestions. These are taken into account when preparing the school development plan. They were recently consulted about the anti-bullying policy and their views incorporated in the final document. The school tries hard to reach out to parents and to get them on board as co-educators and through such positive features as the breakfast club is responsive to parents' needs. Through such initiatives as the Family Literacy Project the school is aware that it needs to continue its work in trying to attract more parents into school to support pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and no longer has the significant problems that it had four years ago. Indeed, it is a better school than it was when revisited by Her Majesty's Inspectors two years ago. In the main, this situation is due to the hard work, determination and very good leadership of the head teacher. She has very successfully remedied the weaknesses flagged in 1996 and 1998 and has built staff morale and commitment well. All staff are team players and the collective approach to school improvement has paid great dividends in promoting a "Can Do" culture in school that is

leading to better quality and standards.

55. The headteacher works very capably to challenge perceptions of what the pupils can achieve, introduce new, and improve existing procedures in school. She also has great concern for the people who work with her. Staff value her leadership and this is reflected in the effort they give to improve standards, teaching and learning. All know there are tasks that remain for completion, but they take pride in what has been achieved already. The deputy headteacher is as committed, hard working and successful as the headteacher and there is a very effective partnership between them. The senior management team has recently grown in size to include the two phase managers, and is developing its role as the agent of change and improvement and can point to much success.

56. Subject co-ordinators provide effective leadership for their subjects. They are building good insights into the strengths and weaknesses of each subject, though this process is most advanced for ICT. Subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science are leading improvement well though much remains to do in the quest to make standards the best they can be for all pupils. Core subjects have well thought through action plans that the school is partway through implementing. There are good opportunities for co-ordinators to check that standards, teaching and learning are as they should be and the information gained in this way is communicated speedily and effectively throughout the school. The Foundation Stage is well managed by a member of the senior management team who has good leadership skills and a clear vision for the future development of early years' provision in school.

57. All staff are firm in their acceptance and promotion of educational inclusion. Pupils in school come from very different backgrounds. A high proportion of pupils has special educational needs and quite a number have emotional and behavioural needs too. There is a significant turnover of pupils, many of who join or leave the school at times other than expected and this impedes the rate at which some make secure gains in their learning. The school tracks the progress made by such pupils very carefully and is successful in meeting its targets for their attainment. Attendance levels are too low and some parents are not supporting the school in this aspect of its work, despite a number of strategies established to tackle improved attendance. Managers know that boosting this is a continuing priority in making the school totally inclusive.

58. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall and they make satisfactory progress when working in the classrooms. When pupils work in the Learning Support Base there is very good provision and they make good progress. This is because of the very effective teaching that pupils receive from both the special needs co-ordinator and support assistant. They work as an integrated team whose approach to pupils is extremely well co-ordinated so that pupils are consistently taught well. The leadership of the special needs co-ordinator in establishing individual education plans jointly with class teachers is a very strong feature of the school's response to giving high level support to pupils with special educational needs. Finances to support pupils with special educational needs are used very efficiently to provide good resources for meeting needs appropriately.

59. The governors give effective support to the school. They complete their statutory duties properly and publish all the necessary information. Many governors spend time in school during the day and this gives them useful understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors are beginning to ask the questions of school managers that are designed to check that the school is doing what it should and achieving its purpose, but they are not yet injecting the degree of critical input necessary in their questioning. They are not yet applying the principles of best value in the same depth as the senior management team.

60. The collection, interpretation and use of information about standards, teaching and learning are considerable strengths of the school. The Headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior managers know exactly what they have achieved and have adopted the right priorities for the overall improvement of Westlands First School. The school has established action plans for continuing to improve English and mathematics and these have useful priorities yet to be progressed. For example, through systematic monitoring it is envisaged that target setting will be reviewed and refined in the light of findings.

61. The school development plan incorporates these priorities in a clearly presented format and the plan is evidently used as the lynchpin of school improvement. This contributes much to the shared educational direction in school.

62. Educational direction is also well promoted by the good systems in place to appraise staff and for performance management. Staff development has been promoted very well in school and the result of this can be seen in the greatly improved quality of teaching. New staff are drawn into the workings of the school in a very effective manner and everyone is enabled to work to their strengths in order to give the pupils a good deal.

63. There are no significant shortages of staff, accommodation or learning resources. Staff turnover in both key stages and the annual changes to school organisation due to admission fluctuations have had a negative impact on continuity and progression in the past. School managers, aware of this, have kept good account of what pupils are achieving so that suitable work can be provided no matter who is teaching them. Due to staff illness one Year 3/4 class has had a number of supply teachers. Senior managers have now established a job-share situation that is working appropriately. The building is spacious, and there is a surplus of space, though staff work hard to make it attractive through displays of pupils' work and centres of interest. The school is adding to its stock of computers and staff use them well. New technology is put to good use in school and it contributes effectively to the efficiency with which administrative tasks are carried out.

64. Finance is well managed, and the school uses the additional funding made available to it for specific purposes well. For example, Family literacy monies have been secured to provide opportunities for adults to brush up their literacy skills. The school receives considerable extra money for its work with pupils with special educational needs and this is put to very good use in providing extra support for these pupils, enabling them to keep up well. The number on roll is falling and brings a reduced income which governors and managers have yet to take full account of in their plans for raising standards and in realising their ambition that the school becomes a centre of excellence. The school has lifted the quality of teaching and learning and raised standards to the effect that it now gives satisfactory and improving value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to raise standards the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) continue to raise standards in English by:
 - pursuing vigorously the school's action plan for English
 - seeking to set both realistic and challenging targets for each year group so as to focus attention on ensuring that all pupils make the best achievement possible
 - promoting more widely features of the best teaching and learning in English to be found in school
 - extending the opportunities for pupils to engage in purposeful talk and seeking to ensure that the required key vocabulary is given more emphasis in lessons
 - widening the opportunities for pupils to work independently and to develop their enquiry and research skills
 - forging ahead with the strategies to involve more parents in supporting their children's reading and writing in school and at home(Paragraphs: 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 28, 35, 44, 75, 77-79)

- (2) continue to raise standards in mathematics by:
 - pursuing vigorously the school's action plan for mathematics
 - further developing the teachers' implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, so as to focus on pupils' learning
 - ensuring that all aspects of the mathematics curriculum are given sufficient emphasis in the timetable
 - giving pupils more opportunities to carry out mathematical investigations, talk about their work and develop independence
 - extending the use of target-setting so that pupils, parents and teachers share in assessing and reviewing individual progress more frequently(Paragraphs: 2, 4, 6, 11, 28, 35, 44, 84-86, 88, 89, 92)

- (3) continue to raise standards in science by:
 - pursuing vigorously the school's action plan for science
 - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities for setting up their own investigations and recording their findings, particularly in Key Stage 2 classes
 - placing greater emphasis on the use of scientific vocabulary in class discussions and in recorded work
 - setting clear, measurable and achievable targets for science at the whole school level and at the pupil level(Paragraphs: 2, 4, 6, 12, 35, 44, 93, 95, 99)

- (4) improve pupils' attendance and punctuality by:
 - developing assessment practice to check what impact absence is having on some pupils' ability to achieve to potential and to share this information with parents
 - setting targets for pupils' individual attendance and rewarding sustained improvement
 - researching and drawing on good practice models in use nationally(Paragraphs: 15, 22, 42, 57)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	3	52	38	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	28	220
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	109

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15	103

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	60
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	39

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	22	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	15	14	16
	Total	25	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	60 (64)	62 (66)	64 (78)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	12	15
	Girls	15	16	17
	Total	24	28	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	57 (64)	64 (78)	76 (76)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	212
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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	9	1
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 – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	24.4

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	185

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	14
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	545 794
Total expenditure	513 894
Expenditure per pupil	2 254
Balance brought forward from previous year	13 160
Balance carried forward to next year	45 060

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	282
Number of questionnaires returned	86

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	19	1	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	41	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	41	7	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	37	8	1	12
The teaching is good.	60	36	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	42	9	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	28	3	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	35	0	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	47	47	5	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	63	31	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	42	3	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	40	9	3	17

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

66. Since the previous inspection the good quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage has been sustained. The majority of children start school with very low levels of literacy and numeracy. Their personal and social development is very much behind that of similar age children in the rest of the county. There are 56 children currently in the school nursery class who attend on a part time basis. There are 31 children in the two reception classes who have attended the nursery class. They have adjoining classrooms where they are taught in mixed groups by two teachers. Two support adults also work with teachers with one in the nursery class and one in both reception classes. The school's data shows that on entry into reception most children have well below average levels of literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills. There is early identification of special needs made in the nursery. Currently 27 per cent of the total nursery roll have specific needs. The majority of children with special educational needs usually transfer into the reception classes. Since about 50 per cent of children in nursery transfer to reception, this means that over half of the children transferring into the reception classes have special educational needs. This is part of a continuing trend. Children identified in the nursery as having special educational needs (40 per cent) are on stages 3 to 5 of the register. All of these percentages are above the national average.

67. The nursery and reception classes are well-organised places of learning. A range of suitable activities is provided to develop the children's skills from a low base when they enter nursery. Good teaching in the nursery supports the children making good progress, though the standards they achieve are well below the level expected when they move into reception. Satisfactory teaching in the reception classes helps the children who have transferred from nursery to sustain these standards. This gives these children appropriate opportunities to be well on the way to achieving the Early Learning Goals by the time that they leave the reception classes, though few have actually reached them.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. The children's personal, social and emotional skills are low on entry to the nursery. Many of them are at a vulnerable and immature stage of their development. Many are not used to sharing or being with other children. In consequence teachers and support staff rightly give a great deal of emphasis to promoting children's personal and social skills so that they develop a positive sense of themselves and know how to get along with others. They provide a well-balanced programme of appropriate activities where the children work in a variety of groups so that they begin to inter-relate with one another and soon get to know the rhythm of the nursery day. The children are happy to come to school and become settled learners in the nursery because they get pleasure from the carousel of activities where they work in pairs or small groups. They take time out from some activities in nursery in a café system of eating snacks and drinking milk or juices to show their growing social independence but also showing their growing maturity as they let others work on their tasks without interruption. Those children who transfer to reception classes make steady progress in their responses to new experiences. They begin to display good levels of involvement in activities, for example in listening to one another, sharing ideas and resources though their skills are well below the level expected of five-year-olds. They begin to make appropriate contributions to discussions when they are talking with teachers about the weather or initial sounds of letters. Their grasp of language is limited, and it is the sensitivity of adults that fosters the children's willingness to share their feelings. Children show a pride in their own achievement for example when rolling a ball at bottles in an experiment to find out whether

empty bottles are easier to knock over than full bottles. 'Circle time' is a regular feature in both the nursery and reception classes. For example, a favourite object such as a soft toy is passed around and when children hold it they make sympathetic contributions to the discussions that demonstrate they have a developing respect for the needs, views and feelings of others.

Communication, language and literacy

69. These skill areas are often appropriately inter-related to many other areas of learning. They are recognised by teachers and support staff as the vital areas of developmental needed for the children in this school. In consequence activities to support their development are planned by staff very thoroughly and thoughtfully. They are resourced methodically so that maximum benefit can be gained from them. The children enter nursery at a low base in these areas, but good teaching in the nursery ensures that they make satisfactory progress. This is sustained for those children who transfer into the reception classes. Most children are about half-way to achieving the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy skills by the time that they leave reception classes. All adults who work with these children give clear guidance through their sensitive interventions in extending language through a comprehensive range of suitable activities. They continually support the children in sequencing their verbal answers to questions and this helps them to extend one-word responses to phrases and, eventually sentences. The children are encouraged to do this in nursery when they work in different-sized groups as they discuss the weather, compare the similarities of cardboard figures of snowmen or consider different lengths of scarves and other things that they wear to protect themselves from the cold. This good approach is continued in reception classes when children are given opportunities to explain why they have matched cubes taken from a bag to a number up to ten for example. They enjoy looking at books in the book corner in both nursery and reception classes. In reception classes they show awareness of the sequence of reading as they turn the pages of a book and tell the story through using the pictures as clues. They have reading diaries to share between home and school, but teachers are not well enough supported by home in sharing the task of developing children's skills in reading. The majority of children are at the earliest stages of reading by the time that they leave the reception classes.

Mathematical development

70. The children enter nursery with very low levels of numeracy. Consequently teachers and support staff plan together in nursery and reception classes to ensure very focused activities that take the children forward at a steady pace to ensure that mathematical skills and concepts are learned securely. In the nursery staff use practical resources and materials in order to reinforce children's understanding of number. For example in encouraging them to order *longest and shortest* brightly coloured scarves that they have worn to keep out the cold the children undertake a task that is of real meaning to them. In many instances this learning is related to other topics that they are working on. Good teaching ensures satisfactory progress in learning. They find out about *wider and narrower* when they listen to the story of Postman Pat's foggy day and discuss the picture of the gateway through which the tractor needs to go. These practical experiences are building the children's self confidence in finding out about space as it is related to measurement. Learning about numbers is also reinforced at a practical level in the reception classes as cubes are taken from a bag and placed against the number from zero to ten that they represent. The children have to justify why they have chosen the number. Some find initial difficulties with this, but through patient discussion most are able to do this. On occasion when this is not always done the children do not arrive at the correct answer and so are slower at achieving the early learning goals. Most children are beginning to use the language of mathematics with reasonable accuracy to describe to adults what they are doing. Good attitudes to learning are being developed in this area of

learning as they are in all of the Early Learning Goals.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Many of the children, and particularly those who transfer from the nursery to the reception classes, enter nursery with very limited knowledge and understanding of the world beyond their immediate world of their home. This low base of understanding is compensated for through the range of beneficial experiences that the children are given, particularly in the nursery class. The good teaching in the nursery class makes certain that the children make satisfactory progress in their learning which is then sustained for those children who transfer into the reception classes. The satisfactory teaching in the reception classes gives the children a more limited range of experiences but nevertheless purposeful learning still takes place. The wider range of experiences in the nursery is well resourced and gives ample opportunities for the children to explore the world individually or in pairs and small groups as well as in whole groups. As a whole group they find out about the way to dress to protect themselves from the cold weather as they build up a selection of clothes. In the home corner currently a dress shop, they arrange the clothes on hangers, display items of the same colour together and take money and give change when someone purchases goods. As a small group they make biscuits with a mum helping them to make the mixture of flour and butter. They have the benefit of being taken through the whole process as they watch the biscuits cooking in the glass fronted cooker, knowing that they need to cool them when they have finished cooking before eating them at their snack time. In other small groups they build a train with soft blocks and ride along in it in their imaginative role play, but find out about movement from one place to another at the same time. Individually they use the computer and begin to understand the control of the mouse as they dress teddy, discover words in the animated alphabet and use the paint program to draw shapes and use colour. In the reception classes they extend their knowledge of the world about them for example, as they work excitedly but with interest outside with the nursery nurse describing through touch the frost on the benches and logs in the playground.

Physical development

72. Most children have very limited physical skills when they start in the nursery. The children who transfer later into the reception classes are still at the first stepping stone. From this low base the children work industriously and make good progress and their skills are improved to being well below average by the time that they transfer into the reception classes. The children's development is given good attention so that most are on the way to achieving the Early Learning Goals by the time that they leave the reception classes. In the nursery the children use a variety of scooters and tricycles outside their classrooms which they can ride and control quite well. They are developing a growing awareness of the use of large space as they negotiate bends, islands and ramps, As they go up and down and over and under they are fully involved and well-supported by the nursery nurse working with them. Indoors the teacher assists others to build blocks skilfully that make imaginative vehicles. Their awareness of more confined space is further developed as they use the climbing and balancing apparatus in the hall. The finer physical skills are enhanced as they use scissors to cut out shapes such as snowflakes and black boots for a collage on changing weather. These skills are then further enhanced in reception classes as they learn to use pencils with satisfactory measures of control to write and make illustrations to illustrate their writing. Good attention paid by the teacher to the use of space in the reception classes further develops the children's understanding of the need for safety in movement as they move around outside discovering the effects of frost in different areas of the school grounds. This wide range of experiences is planned methodically through the team approach of teachers and support staff who then monitor outcomes with care and astuteness.

Creative development

73. Children's creative development is very limited when they first start school. This low base is linked to their limited knowledge and understanding of the wider world beyond the immediate environment of their home. Good teaching of this aspect of provision is promoted by the team approach to planning in the nursery so that the children make good progress. The children find out about colour-mixing, sometimes through their independent exploration of the use of paint but also in a more focused way as they are mixing red and blue together to make purple. They are given varied experiences, such as making wax-resist pictures, drip paintings and cloud collages together using soft texture materials that widens their aesthetic appreciation and helps their creativity to flourish. The co-operative nature of making pictures together is further developed in the reception classes as the children illustrate favourite characters from stories. In the nursery the children experiment with instruments such as shakers to make rain sounds as they accompany one another when singing the Rain song. In one shared music lesson in reception their experiences of making music together was limited by the activity chosen by the teachers. Instead of giving chime bars to all children to perform in threes, only one set was in use and it took the whole lesson for everyone to have a go. The children sat patiently waiting their turn, and spontaneously clapped their class-mates' performance. However the rates of progress made were only satisfactory when potentially it could have been much better. In the nursery the children find out about colour-mixing, sometimes through their independent exploration of the use of paint but also in a more focused way as they are mixing red and blue together to make purple. Satisfactory teaching in reception classes enables the children to consolidate their learning and make steady progress in creative areas of their development.

ENGLISH

74. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 7 years olds at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average, and were well below when compared to schools with pupils of similar backgrounds. The proportion of pupils achieving level 3 at the age of seven was also well below the national average. There is no national Curriculum test data for Key Stage 2 since the school does not provide for eleven-year-olds. Standards over the last four years have shown an upward trend, a fact noted by HMI in their 1998 report. However, last year's results were low. Half of the group had special educational needs and a quarter had joined the school just before the tests. Some higher-attaining pupils had moved out of the area. The low results were not unexpected as the school's assessment and target-setting data shows. Literacy standards on entry to school are well below national averages, but as pupils progress through Years 1 and 2 there is evidence of improvement. This is due to an improvement in the quality of teaching and better assessment procedures, and shows that the standards reached are right for the pupils.

75. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading at both key stages are broadly in line with national averages, but that standards are below average in speaking and listening, writing and spelling. The impact of the exceptionally high level of pupil mobility tends to depress standards as many new arrivals have special educational needs. Pupils who have received their entire education at Westlands achieve well.

76. Further inspection evidence shows that the school has made considerable improvement since the time of the previous inspection. At that time standards in reading and writing were below average and pupils were making unsatisfactory progress. The quality of teaching varied from good to unsatisfactory and the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils was inappropriate. Since then the school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy and implemented it in all classes to improve pupils' literacy skills. Behaviour is now settled for most of the time, but when flare-ups occur they are handled well and do not interrupt the flow of the lesson. The school now sets appropriate and achievable targets for all pupils. It has introduced sound systems for ensuring that the wide range of pupils' learning needs are being met appropriately. These enable pupils to make effective progress. The unusually large number of pupils who have special educational needs are able to make good progress towards meeting their individual targets owing to the high quality of provision they receive in the school's Learning Support Base. The higher-attaining pupils also make good progress when their prior attainment is taken into account.

77. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening skills are below average for seven and nine-year-olds. In most classes, teachers are good role models for spoken English, and are very skilful at making stories come alive through using different voices for the various characters. Nevertheless, pupils' use of Standard English is unsatisfactory. Many pupils do not listen with sufficient attention and have to be reminded frequently by teachers to stop talking when others are speaking. The oldest pupils use quite a restricted vocabulary and are not always able to express themselves clearly or accurately. In response to teachers' questioning pupils' replies are frequently single words or phrases rather than more elaborate sentences. The school is well aware of this and carries out a language assessment on entry. Results show that 73 per cent of the current Year 2 scored below the standard for their age. In Year 2 classes pupils are given opportunities to extend their speaking skills through the use of a puppet theatre by being the narrator or one of the characters in Goldilocks and the Three Bears. In a Year 3/4 class doing some work on adjectives a pupil came up with "humungous" a word she had found in her reading book. Across the school however, sufficient opportunities have yet to be provided to extend pupils' language skills, particularly through the development and emphasis of key vocabulary. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to engage in discussion and debate, to express points of view and opinions. The action plan for English drawn up by school managers identifies these areas for continued improvement.

78. Standards in reading at the end of Year 2 and in Year 4 are average. In Year 2 most pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about the stories they are reading. Most read accurately, making few errors and with reasonable fluency and expression. They recognise simple words easily, pay attention to punctuation and at times enjoy the humour in the story. They read a range of reading scheme books to extend and broaden their reading skills and experience. Higher-attaining pupils enjoy poetry and can talk about some of its characteristics such as rhyme. The lower attainers read rather hesitantly and shyly, and are reluctant to talk much about their reading. Some older pupils show evidence of enjoyment of reading although some of the boys show embarrassment and little obvious pleasure when asked to read. They are not always able to explain the meaning of the text other than the literal interpretation, but read with reasonable independence. Girls on the other hand often choose to read poetry, give more expression and have a deeper understanding of the story-line within the genre of poetry. The higher-attaining readers are beginning to use the text to explain the author's intended meaning. They distinguish between fact and fiction and use an index, dictionary and

encyclopaedia, and the school library for reference purposes when researching a topic in other subjects such as history. A few visit the Droitwich Library, but all pupils have access to the school library on a regular basis. Regular opportunities occur for parents of pupils in Years 1 and 2 to visit the school library and select and read books to them. This is clearly a happy experience and enjoyed by all. Some pupils read to parents at home and this supports their progress. There is however, generally insufficient support for homework and the school is trying hard to involve more parents in helping their children practice reading at home or in school.

79. Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 and at Year 4 are below average. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils write in sentences mainly correctly punctuated with the most common words spelt correctly. They write for a variety of different readers including stories and letters using simple descriptive words. Although the writing is often well rounded the letters are not often joined in a cursive style. In Years 3 and 4 the quality of writing shows some improvement where more of it is better shaped and joined, and more extensive use is made of punctuation including speech marks and exclamation marks. Spellings however are weak and, often key vocabulary is used in writing in a very limited way. Pupils are given opportunities to write in a variety of styles including newspaper reports. They develop their understanding of this style of writing by using headlines to capture the attention of the reader. They produce only a limited quantity of written work, generally using a very basic vocabulary but lacking in highly imaginative ideas. The school is providing additional writing lessons aimed at giving pupils time to write at length and with creativity. The indications are that this is having a beneficial impact on standards and the quality of writing.

80. The quality of English teaching is good throughout the school. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced successfully into all classes. Literacy hour lessons are well planned. One unsatisfactory literacy lesson observed was because the teacher had not established herself in the class and did not maintain sufficient control to develop a satisfactory level of learning for the majority of pupils. The most successful teaching occurs where thorough planning meets all the differing needs of all pupils, and builds upon their previous learning. Learning objectives are shared with the class at the start of lessons and revisited during the plenary to check and assist with pupil's progress and learning. Teachers have a good knowledge of basic skills and use a variety of effective strategies. For example, in the teaching phonic sounds in a Year 1 class pupils worked in pairs with marker pens on specially prepared whiteboards. After carefully listening to the sounds of a range of three letter words spoken clearly by the teacher they wrote the beginning, middle and word endings correctly to build the word accurately. Teachers also use computers very effectively to develop these skills and the school has a good range of software to use across both key stages. Pupils demonstrate high levels of interest and sustained concentration when using these media and good learning takes place.

81. Learning support assistants are appropriately deployed by the teaching staff to support different groups of pupils including the lower attainers and those with special educational needs. Often these pupils will be withdrawn for a lesson to receive some very good teaching in the Learning Support Base. The Additional Literacy Strategy supports Years 3 and 4 pupils' development of literacy skills very effectively. Teachers mark work regularly, and follow the school marking policy by commenting positively upon the quality of the work, reminding pupils of errors and omissions, and showing them how they can improve their work. Teachers have developed some very effective strategies for dealing with poor behaviour including "time out" for example, which helps to defuse the situation in a low-key manner and allows the lesson to proceed uninterrupted.

82. Pupils' attitudes to English lessons are satisfactory overall throughout the school, and many demonstrate enjoyment and interest in the subject and work with enthusiasm.

However, a significant number of pupils have difficulty concentrating for a reasonable length of time, and are easily distracted. The school has invested considerable time and effort into pupils' personal development and providing them with a set of values to work towards. The school policy on inclusion is very strong and embraces all pupils. The school is working hard to address the underachievement of boys and to find ways of raising their interest levels and attitudes to learning. Provision of non-fiction books and fiction books on subjects of a particular interest to boys is one initiative the school is pursuing.

83. The co-ordinator for English provides effective leadership and management and is well supported by the head teacher and deputy head teacher. She has a sound understanding of her role, actively leads subject developments to improve standards. She has yet to take a full role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning through direct observation and this is an area for development. The curriculum is broad and balanced, well planned, and meets the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and Curriculum 2000. The introduction of a commercial scheme to help develop writing as pupils move through the school is a positive feature, and the use of spelling logs is focusing upon the need to improve pupils' competence in this area. The school has improved the quality of its resources and uses them well. Effective assessment procedures are in place, and standards are monitored regularly by the senior management team. The analysis of school test data is carried out and the results are used appropriately to set targets for higher standards in reading and writing, and to monitor pupil progress. Owing to the schools' strong policy on inclusion all pupils benefit from the provision made available to them in English at this school.

MATHEMATICS

84. In the 1996 inspection standards were found to be unsatisfactory at both key stages, and it was a key issue for action to raise standards. The subject was also found to be poorly resourced. When HMI inspected two years later and brought the school out of special measures they found that standards in mathematics were broadly in line with the national average at the end of Year 2, but still below at the end of Year 4. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000 the overall results were well below the national average, with boys showing significantly poorer results than girls. Over time there has been a fluctuating trend, with an improvement between 1996 and 1998, and then a decline back to unsatisfactory levels last year.

85. The school's data shows wide variation in year groups not least because of the high level of mobility that results in pupils leaving and joining the school at different times. The interruptions to learning that this causes clearly limits the potential achievement, of some pupils. Although there have been substantial improvements in the planning, teaching and resourcing of mathematics since the previous inspection, there are clear reasons why this has not yet had the desired impact on standards. Firstly, pupils' attainment in mathematics on entry is very low, and so teachers have to work very hard to develop these and bring standards up to levels which though improved are still considerably lower than national expectations. Secondly, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is well above average, so teachers again have to deal with a wider than average ability range, as well as a great variety of behavioural and learning problems. The school tries hard to break down barriers to learning, and is meeting with success, but it is an uphill struggle. Raising standards in mathematics remains a key issue for the school to continue to address.

86. This inspection judges that standards are below expectations at the end of Year 2, and in Year 4. Teachers have introduced the National Numeracy Strategy with confidence and some have begun to refine their approaches in the light of the learning needs of the pupils in their class. In a small minority of lessons observed in the inspection the teaching spent too long introducing the activity and this resulted in some pupils fidgeting and others

showing silly behaviour as they lost concentration. The best lessons observed in the inspection were where teachers ensured that their input was finely balanced with enabling pupils opportunities to “learn by doing” and so capture their interest and sustain their application in short bursts that resulted in good gains in problem-solving skills and independent learning. Inconsistent attention is currently paid to promoting mathematical vocabulary so that pupils can use this with accuracy in both their verbal answers to mathematical questions and in their written work.

87. In a Year 1 lesson during the inspection pupils were learning about odd and even numbers. They worked together to count in twos from zero and one, and learned to look for pairs of numbers. The teacher used mathematical language well, ‘Is this an odd number; has it got a partner?’. The pupils discussed the numbers and answered thoughtfully. They showed growing confidence in working with numbers to 20. As the lesson developed the teacher questioned the pupils to ensure that they had learnt the key facts and in some instances she challenged some higher-attaining pupils to think more deeply before answering. A majority of pupils in this lesson used the correct vocabulary because of the teacher’s insistence that they do so in the answers they gave to her questions.

88. The picture is similar at the end of the key stage. Although pupils have developed their knowledge, skills and understanding at a reasonable rate, their attainments are well below that expected. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were looking at pairs of numbers to 20, and identifying which were *more or less*. They used mathematical vocabulary well, using the terms ‘more’ and ‘less’ with confidence in their answers which were largely accurate and given with reasonable speed. They learned to solve number problems by mental calculation with appropriate support from the teacher, but their overall level of attainment was again below that expected nationally.

89. In Year 4 pupils are attaining levels which are below the national expectation. Again, pupils continue to develop mathematical understanding, but take on new learning at a very steady pace despite the best endeavours of teachers and support staff. In a Year 3/ 4 lesson, for example, pupils were working out additions and subtractions mentally, using two-digit numbers, learning that such calculations can be done in any order. They worked at this with enthusiasm, and developed their understanding well. They used appropriate mental methods, with support from the teacher, but a significant minority found it difficult to sustain concentration without the teacher’s help. Work seen in pupils’ books, discussions with pupils, and the work done in lessons all show attainment below that expected nationally.

90. Teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages, with many examples of good teaching. Subject knowledge across mathematics is satisfactory. The teaching of basic numeracy skills is good. Work is well planned and teachers provide well for the diversity of pupils in their classes. In some lesson plans, however, there is confusion about learning objectives. Some teachers are giving attention to the activities to be provided and what support pupils will require at the expense of identifying clearly what they expect different pupils to be able to know, understand and do by the end of the lesson. In the best lessons teachers had high expectations, and set a good pace of work throughout. In a Year 1 lesson the teacher had good working relationships, and good class control. She showed good subject knowledge and worked hard to meet the individual needs of all pupils.

91. Pupils are very well managed at both key stages, and the use of time, support staff and resources is good. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher dealt with disruptive pupils in a calm and quiet manner. She used praise well, and captured pupils’ interest with stimulating and well-chosen resources. Pupils were fascinated by a large, coloured number square that she used to support the number work activities. They quickly settled down well to roll dice, deciding which numbers are more or less than others. All were eager to be chosen and

participate, and there was good social development when they applauded spontaneously when a class-mate answered correctly.

92. Mathematics is effectively managed and the co-ordinator has a good vision of how to move forward and has established a useful action plan to guide future improvement. Emphasis is currently being given to number work and to providing opportunities for pupils to work with increasing speed and accuracy. This is leading to other aspects of mathematics not being given as much time as they need though pupils are being given experiences in all aspects of mathematics. Much work has been done recently to monitor, and set targets for improvement. There is a need to continue to monitor and evaluate both teaching and learning as part of the school's plan of improvement. The school's efforts so far are slowly bearing fruit, and the school is providing effectively in mathematics for a very diverse group of pupils.

SCIENCE

93. At the time of the previous full inspection in 1996 standards were found to be below average. Progress was judged to be unsatisfactory at both key stages. The quality of teaching at the end of Year 2 was satisfactory with some good features whilst in Year 3 and 4 it ranged from good to poor and was judged unsatisfactory overall. There was no co-ordinator or scheme of work for the subject. Science work was not specifically reported upon in the subsequent follow up visits by Her Majesty's Inspectors during 1998. Today, science is in a much stronger position though there remain areas for development as set out on the school's action plan for science. The weaknesses in the curriculum and teaching have been improved. Whilst standards are below the level expected, the quality of teaching is good and pupils make steady gains in learning. Science is now led by an influential co-ordinator who has clear insights into how to raise standards. Unlike in English and mathematics, the school has yet to set specific targets at either the whole school, class or individual level that could support the raising of standards in science.

94. The results of the 2000 teacher assessments show that pupils attained standards in science that were well below the national average at the end of Year 2. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher level 3 at the age of seven was well below the national average. Results in science were below average compared to similar schools.

95. Findings from this inspection show that standards at the end of Year 2 and in Year 4 are below average. They are judged to be at an appropriate level by the age of seven and nine years, given pupils' prior attainment. An evaluation of a sample of pupils' past work shows that most make steady progress in acquiring scientific knowledge and understanding, though some clearly rely heavily on the teacher to prompt investigation and the recording of findings. Pupils' limited literacy skill also impedes progress in writing in science. The sample revealed a uniform coverage of science and this suggests that an appropriate amount of time is now given to science. The use of a prepared scheme of work is providing a good basis to support teachers' planning and assessment of pupils' progress across all aspects of the subject.

96. In Year 1 pupils are given good practical opportunities to investigate the properties of a selection of toys as they find out about forces. They notice that the toys move in a variety of ways and can relate simple observations about why this might be. In discussion it is apparent that pupils understand about the two forces but do not have a sufficient grasp of key vocabulary to help explain their knowledge clearly. In Year 2 pupils consider the health-related aspects of a range of foodstuffs. They group foods according to their own decisions before they record findings in a format presented to them by their teacher. In Year 3/4 classes pupils undertake a study of humans. They look at models of teeth and discuss their similarities and differences of various kinds.

97. Progress in science is now satisfactory throughout the school for all pupils, including those with special educational needs who often make up a significant number of pupils in the class. The needs of these pupils are met through the carefully devised tasks for different levels of learning and the sensitive assistance given by teachers and support staff. Higher-attaining pupils also benefit from carrying out different forms of more independent recording of their science work.

98. Teaching is good throughout the school. Planning is undertaken carefully. Tasks are devised to capture and sustain pupils' interest as well as being targeted appropriately to meet different learning needs. Learning is well organised by teachers because they make a good range of resources readily available to pupils.

99. Attitudes to work in science are good across the school. Pupils are generally interested in tasks. They sustain their concentration as a result of their willingness to "have a go" at practical tasks. Behaviour is invariably good in consequence. As they build their knowledge base sequentially, pupils are well supported in their growth in knowledge and understanding about science. The science co-ordinator is rightly promoting investigative approaches to learning in science so that pupils' independence and problem-solving skills are fostered at every opportunity. There is scope for pupils in Years 3 and 4 to take more control of setting up experiments for themselves and making their own decisions about how to record their findings.

100. The co-ordinator is giving good leadership to the subject. She is well-informed about pupils' achievement throughout the school and through monitoring work has used the information gathered to establish a useful action plan for guiding improvement in science. The policy and scheme of work appropriately meet the needs of both teachers and pupils so that the work in science is being developed confidently. Resources are good and are being used to stimulate effective learning.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Standards in art and design are satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and in Year 4 and pupils make the expected progress. There is some good artwork on display about the school and pupils learn the necessary skills and knowledge about the subject. Standards in Years 3 and 4 are better than they were four years ago. The school is in a secure position to meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000.

102. The quality of learning in art and design is sound. Pupils including those with special educational needs are interested in the subject and they work productively in lessons. Skills and knowledge are built consistently. In reception, the youngest pupils learn to handle different tools successfully and to represent their thoughts pictorially. Older pupils produce patterns and pictures using a range of materials. Year 1, for example, experiment with different papers by screwing them up, flattening them out and tearing them carefully into zigzag shapes. They then use the knowledge and understanding gained from this to make their own designs using a combination of materials and techniques. By the time pupils leave school at age nine, they draw and paint competently and use pastels, chalk, fibre tip pens and coloured pencils to produce different effects.

103. The subject is taught effectively. Expectations, the use of available resources and the management of pupils are all good. Whilst all other aspects of teaching are sound, the identification of skills, knowledge and understanding to be learned in lessons and the setting, sharing and reviewing of these things with the pupils would benefit from enhancement.

104. The art and design curriculum provides the necessary opportunities for pupils to

develop skills and knowledge systematically as they move through school. Three-dimensional work and the use of work by familiar artists, sculptors and craftspeople to extend pupils' experiences and skills are not as strongly represented in the curriculum as in some schools. Nonetheless, art and design work makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development as well as to their personal, social and moral education. There are also good links between art and design and ICT, so that pupils' artistic talents are enhanced well by the use of graphics programs.

105. A keen member of staff who has not been long in the teaching profession co-ordinates the subject. She has some good ideas for improving the subject, though she has yet to have much opportunity to check standards and the quality of teaching and learning in other classes. The subject is in good hands for the future and standards and provision should prosper as the co-ordinator works to implement her ideas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Design and technology has been promoted effectively since the previous inspection and strengths reported in 1996 have been sustained even though the school, along with all others, has focused more on literacy and numeracy. Standards are as expected at the end of Years 2 and 4 and pupils including those with special educational needs make steady and satisfactory progress. The curriculum for design and technology has been improved since the time of the previous inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. Some good work is produced in design and technology, as shown in the work undertaken during the technology enrichment day held in conjunction with other local schools last year for the most skilled designers in Year 4.

107. In a good lesson in Year 2, pupils worked quietly and diligently as they observed different types of puppets and made drawings of them from their observations. The teacher spent time supporting those whose limited drawing skills caused personal frustration and she was quick to praise effort and achievement so that all pupils felt a sense of pride in what they were doing. Most pupils drew recognisable images of the puppets, some were very detailed in what was recorded. Pupils labelled parts of the puppet and described in simple terms how they worked. Two string puppets were from India and pupils found these fascinating to see move and then draw them. The teacher used time targets very effectively to ensure that all pupils worked productively, and to the level she expected. The teacher's good skills in managing the learning had a positive impact on pupils' concentration, motivation and effort and their attainment was at the level expected.

108. Pupils work sensibly in lessons, they have positive attitudes to the subject and overall behaviour is as expected. There is some restless behaviour in lessons, but on the whole, learning is orderly and purposeful because teachers motivate the pupils successfully and manage behaviour well. Skills and knowledge are taught soundly and pupils learn the full range of design and technology processes, including the plan, design, evaluate and improve stages. This is demonstrated clearly in the whole-school topic on greeting cards. Reception pupils produced simple one-fold cards whereas Year 3/4 incorporated more adventurous design elements such as moving parts and the use of a wider range of materials. The plans produced by the Year 3/4 pupils showed effectively how their original designs had been modified and improved in order to produce a quality final product. This topic also showed the good links between design and technology and other subjects, such as religious education.

109. The co-ordinator has worked hard and successfully to take the subject forward. She knows the areas needing improvement and can justifiably celebrate some successes. She is ready for future challenges such as the continued widening of the range of materials used beyond card and paper and the development of consistent ways to assess what has been

learned.

GEOGRAPHY

110. The school has improved standards in geography since the last inspection, when there was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement, but the work seen appeared to be below the expected levels. Although only one geography lesson was seen during the inspection, other evidence, including scrutiny of previous work, discussions with teachers and pupils, and examination of displays, shows that standards at the end of Year 2 and in Year 4 are in line with those expected nationally.

111. The school provides a series of worthwhile experiences in geography, as part of its cross-curricular topic cycle. The work is planned to ensure that, over a period, pupils experience work which builds geographical skills and understanding in a meaningful way. Despite the pressures on curriculum time brought about by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, the school has been successful in organising the curriculum to preserve meaningful work in this subject.

112. In Years 1 and 2 pupils begin to learn about geographical features, both in the home locality and further afield. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils learned about Brazil. They identified Brazil on a map and discussed how they might make the journey from England. They also learned about foods which come from Brazil, and enjoyed tasting chocolate after learning that cocoa beans are grown in Brazil. Although pupils were interested and keen to learn, the discussion was sometimes too dominated by the teacher, and went on too long to sustain the interest of all. The teacher made good use of 'Barnaby Bear' to make the journey more real, and keep everyone involved. The use of a recording of sounds of the rainforest was successful in maintaining the interest of pupils.

113. By the end of Year 4 pupils have studied a number of different areas, and are learning to compare and contrast their characteristics. In pupils' work seen in topic books Year 4 pupils have made good use of ICT, taking digital photographs around the school. They have also looked out of the windows and identified geographical features such as hills and fields. Maps of Droitwich town centre have been drawn, marking significant features and learning about map symbols.

114. The teaching of geography is satisfactory overall. Although only one lesson was seen other evidence suggests that pupils are given interesting work which is appropriate for their ages and abilities. Discussions with pupils and staff, and scrutiny of previous work and teachers' planning show that the subject is effectively taught. Good use is made of links with other subjects, particularly history, within cross-curricular topics, and teachers often develop opportunities to use information and control technology as a tool for learning. Pupils' work seen indicates that there is sometimes too much reliance on work-sheets, and teachers need to think about providing a wider variety of tasks to promote learning.

115. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. They enjoy finding out about the world, and the practical aspects of the work, such as mapping skills, and visits to the school's neighbourhood, and other localities provide enjoyable and stimulating activities which are accessible to pupils of all abilities. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, due to effective support and appropriate, interesting work. Learning is impeded by the high proportion of transient pupils. The combination of periods of absence, arrival and departure, combined with the effect of the use of the topic cycle could mean that some pupils miss whole topics.

116. The subject is effectively co-ordinated and this ensures that the requirements of the

National Curriculum are met. Due attention has been given to the recommendations of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in assisting teachers' planning and assessment, though these remain a foci for further improvement.

HISTORY

117. Since the school's previous inspection standards in history have improved. They were then judged to be below expectations, but are now in line with those found nationally, both at the end of Year 2 and in Year 4. Teachers are confident to teach history and enjoy the programmes of study. Their enthusiasm is infectious and inspires pupils to learn about history with success.

118. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are introduced to historical ideas by comparing the lives of people in the past with those of their present day equivalents. In a Year 2 lesson on Florence Nightingale, for instance, pupils looked at nurses' uniforms and discussed how they have changed. The teacher led a discussion based on pictures of Florence Nightingale, and a modern nurse. Pupils then went on to draw pictures and write about the similarities and differences. Some pupils found it hard to sustain their concentration and interest, but nevertheless worked hard to complete their tasks. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory gains in learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, and those of higher ability express their ideas during the discussion, and then go on to their written tasks. The large proportion of transient pupils can miss out on significant parts of the topic cycle.

119. Teaching is satisfactory overall at both key stages. Teachers plan interesting topics, and these are well resourced. Teachers generally are good at capturing pupils' interest, but have yet to consider fully the kinds of activities which are set. Too much reliance is currently placed on written tasks and worksheets. At its best the teaching is stimulating and absorbing for pupils of all abilities. In a Year 3/4 lesson on the Romans, pupils watched a video about Roman Britain. They discussed what life was like at that time. They learned the meanings of the terms; 'invader' and 'settler', and used a time-line to locate the events in relation to other known happenings. There is a good working atmosphere in history lessons which promotes good learning for pupils of all abilities. Lessons are well managed, and pupils concentrate and work well together. All aspects of the history curriculum are given appropriate coverage.

120. Work in history makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils learn to share and work co-operatively, particularly in practical activities. They also learn to appreciate other times and ways of life. More emphasis should be given, however, to the different cultures encountered in topics, so that pupils come to appreciate the richness and diversity of their cultural heritage.

121. The subject is effectively managed, and the co-ordinator has oversight of priorities for the subject, in line with the requirements of the School Development Plan. Resources are satisfactory, and organised so as to be readily accessible. Assessment practice is inconsistent even though there is an agreed approach to how progress should be tracked. Few teachers use on-going assessment to adapt next steps in learning to individual needs as pupils work their way through the topics. A positive feature is the way that some teachers log which pupils have met the lesson objectives whilst others have exceeded them. The best practice in this respect logs such information weekly whilst for others evaluations are undertaken less systematically. This is one aspect of subject management that requires more attention.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

122. The school has made good improvement to provision and standards in ICT since the

previous inspection. Standards are at the expected level by the age of seven and nine and all pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and skills. There are signs that standards and rates of progress are rising well, and in some cases the work seen by inspectors was of a good standard.

123. The prime reason for the advances made to ICT is the investment in staff subject knowledge and understanding. Computers are put to good use to support learning across the curriculum, with particularly effective use seen in English, mathematics, geography and art. Teachers look for every opportunity for pupils to profit from the use of computers in learning. The relatively modest level of resourcing does not deflect them from this, and they organise efficient rotas of computer use that ensure all pupils receive the same chance to succeed.

124. ICT is used effectively to promote educational inclusion. Some pupils have missed time through prolonged absence and, like those who join the school at a late date, have gaps in their knowledge and skills. Managers are careful to make sure that all pupils have every opportunity to use computers and to improve the standards they reach and the progress they make.

125. In many lessons, one or two pupils use a computer to practise or extend knowledge and skills introduced that session. In a particularly successful lesson for Year 3/4 pupils with special educational needs, pupils built a set of adjectives using the word processor for use in the story they were to write next. There was a good degree of enthusiasm for this task and the pupils completed more work than might be expected because they were so well motivated by the polished result produced on screen. This sort of response is far from unusual and pupils learn to become mature, sensible and independent learners as they work with computers.

126. Teaching quality is the same as learning quality. Both are good. Good subject knowledge, high expectations and effective teaching of basic knowledge and skills combine to ensure that progress in learning is good. The identification of the specific things to be learned in lessons and the setting and sharing of targets for learning in lessons, plus the review of these at the end, are aspects of teaching that could be boosted. However, the use of ICT in learning is one of the school's main strengths.

127. The curriculum is well planned, it covers the necessary topics and all learners benefit well from computer use. The management of the subject is very good and the coordinator has very good insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. She has worked hard, and successfully to eliminate the weaknesses and to spread the strengths throughout the school. The very good system of assessment of ICT knowledge and skills she has introduced is now serving as the model for assessment in many other subjects. The school rightly has a good reputation locally for its development and improvement of ICT.

128. There are sufficient resources to teach, and learn, the subject effectively. The school is working well to extend the use of the Internet to all classes. It is also building a website to assist pupils learn just how powerful a means of communication is ICT. Managers face the challenge of providing even better quality resources and possibly of establishing an ICT suite. They do this from a position of strength.

MUSIC

129. At the time of the 1996 inspection standards in music were broadly in line with what could be expected and progress was satisfactory. This situation has been sustained as standards are still in line with what could be expected for pupils at seven and nine years and progress is satisfactory overall, and good when pupils are taught by the subject co-ordinator. A strong feature of the provision for developing musical skills are the extra-curricular activities such as the recorder classes for both infant and junior pupils and the choir for the junior pupils. Support assistant and voluntary helpers enthusiastically support the co-ordinator in leading these activities which have a positive impact upon the pupils' enjoyment of the subject as well as enhancing their skills.

130. In infant classes, particularly in Year 2, pupils have good opportunities presented to them to use a range of instruments to develop their sense of rhythm. They accompany one another 's singing simple songs that are then developed into more complex songs. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different songs is extended and their singing skills are built up well. Pupils enjoy their music and perform with confidence. In an observation of the recorder club, pupils played together co-operatively. They were taught to finger notes accurately. The teacher introduced one note to beginners who then accompanied more accomplished players in producing a melodious piece of music. Rhythm and pitch in singing are produced by the small number making up the choir because new songs are not attempted until a familiar song with a similar rhythm and pitch have been practised. In a lesson with the subject co-ordinator the pupils used their bodies as percussion instruments, and practised tapping and making different sounds before moving onto using tuned and un-tuned instruments. In this way pupils discovered more meaningfully the use of rhythm but extended their learning by also finding out about duration in music making when part of a large group.

131. As a result of this good range of on-going learning opportunities progress is satisfactory overall and good when specialist teaching takes place Pupils with special educational needs, often make up a significant number of pupils in all classes, make good contributions to music lessons. They often do this as a result of the tasks presented to them being well matched to their abilities and because they work in pairs or small groups where

they are well supported by other pupils. Throughout school, time is spent on developing listening skills in music so that performance can be improved. These are central elements to assuring the satisfactory progress that is being made.

132. Attitudes to music are good throughout the school. Pupils are confident in their use of instruments which they use discerningly as well as adventurously, particularly when they are working in pairs. Performance levels are good because they are sensible in what they do in their practice times before showing one another what they have learnt. They respond with glee to teachers' expectations because of their high level of enjoyment.

133. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers plan thoroughly. They prepare resources well in advance of lessons beginning. They introduce ideas such as beat leading to rhythm very clearly and effectively. The teachers develop learning sequentially as a result of thorough preparation of tasks. All adults are good role models as they join in their music-making together, whether it is singing or playing instruments in both lessons and extra-curricular activities.

134. There is effective leadership of the subject by the deputy head teacher who has high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and leads by example. The well managed and well resourced scheme of work gives class teachers confidence to lead their own music lessons. There is, however, too little on-going assessment of progress made by pupils. Nor is there enough opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor progress systematically.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. During the last inspection pupils' standards in physical education at the end of Year 2 were broadly satisfactory, but at the end of Year 4 were unsatisfactory overall. Poor response and disruptive behaviour prevented the majority of pupils concentrating on their tasks and refining their skills. The quality of teaching for the youngest pupils varied from sound to unsatisfactory whilst for older pupils the quality of teaching overall was poor. Since then the school has improved significantly approaches to behaviour management, and pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved considerably. The co-ordinator has received training in leading the subject and established a useful policy and good scheme of work that assists both teaching and learning.

136. Inspection evidence shows that in the lessons seen there is improvement and standards are now satisfactory overall for pupils at the end of Year 2 and in Year 4. All lessons seen were mainly of dance, and no outdoor games or gymnastics took place during the inspection. The school has developed a successful reputation in participation in the local pyramid of school sporting activities, and have been involved in tag rugby, dance festivals, cricket tournaments, a swimming gala, football penalty shoot-out competition. Last year they were winners of the Pyramid football competition, and each year they receive ball skill-training and coaching with a local football club.

137. Pupils enjoy this subject and approach it with enthusiasm. However, there are still some occasions where the inappropriate behaviour or the lack of concentration of a small minority of pupils reduces the opportunities for the development of others.

138. At Key Stage 1 in dance lessons they understand that dance is a way of expressing feelings and are able to portray “frightened, happy, angry, grumpiness and worried” using facial expression and body movements. They are disappointed when the lesson ends and will have to wait a further week before they can develop their dance further. In Key Stage 2 in an introductory lesson in orienteering pupils demonstrated the ability to follow a planned route on a clipboard to markers on the gymnasium floor. This was quite a difficult task but because they held the clipboards correctly orientated they managed to follow the correct route. Pupils demonstrated good levels of application and concentration, as well as co-operation with their partner.

139. Progress for all pupils in physical education is satisfactory including the exceptionally high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. They are given effective assistance by the support staff and appropriate help by the teacher who will often pair them up with other pupils to encourage a spirit of co-operation amongst them, which helps their development. The considerable commitment the school has given to extra-curricular activities gives pupils very good opportunities to improve their progress even further. Special attention is given regularly to those pupils whose gross motor control needs further development so that they will be able to participate in the physical education curriculum fully. In swimming many pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 4, which is well in advance of the National Curriculum requirements.

140. The quality of teaching of this subject overall is satisfactory. Two unsatisfactory dance lessons observed both had shortcomings in the way they were taught that impeded the pace and level at which many pupils learnt. Teachers have now developed effective strategies for dealing with difficult behaviour. In one of the unsatisfactory lessons however, pupils’ behaviour fell to an unacceptable level as a minority took advantage of a situation where a temporary teachers was getting to know the class and could not immediately remember individual names to help her control. Lessons are well planned, and often planned jointly where there are parallel classes. They are based upon the school’s comprehensive scheme of work that puts topics into blocks of time throughout the year. In the best lessons seen teachers have a confident style, a good knowledge of the subject, teach at an appropriate pace, and have good control. There are effective procedures for the assessment of pupils’ development.

141. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. She is not able to monitor the teaching of physical education but she does monitor teachers’ planning. She ensures they receive appropriate training and has provided the school with good quality resources that are well organised, easily accessible and well used. The policy and scheme of work are up-to-date and there is a health and safety policy for staff guidance. Currently she is overseeing improvements to the fixed gymnasium equipment that are due to be completed during this term. She devotes a considerable amount of her own time to involving pupils in many extra-curricular activities and other members of staff as well. The annual sports day is very popular as all pupils are involved. As part of her vision for the future the co-ordinator is preparing a portfolio for the school to become a Gold Active-mark School, a nationally recognised achievement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

142. At the time of the previous full inspection four years ago neither standards nor progress was reported on owing to insufficient evidence. Standards were found to be at the level expected at the end of Year 4 and satisfactory progress was being made. There has been some improvement since then as standards are in line with the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school.

143. Pupils cover the areas of learning for their ages as set out in the locally agreed syllabus. They learn about a range of comparative religions whilst spending most time learning about the Christian religion and gain in their knowledge and understanding in line with what is expected. For example, in Year 2 they find out about different aspects of Jesus' life when they are given illustrated evidence of Him as a child and then making use of the Bible to describe further knowledge of how His life developed. In Years 3/4 pupils consider the more difficult idea of the meaningfulness of signs and symbols. They are well supported again by the use of illustrations and then linking the idea to the story of Noah's Ark. Evidence from previous work show that in depth studies of the Jewish and Hindu religions are also being made.

144. Progress is satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils are often very clear about their views which are based upon their personal backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress because adults and other pupils sensitively support them in making their contributions to discussions, and in their recording. All pupils make satisfactory progress because they are well encouraged by the adults who work with them to make valid contributions to discussions and to express themselves clearly in a focused way in their written work. Tasks for pupils in Year 3/4 classes particularly support this progress well because they have been devised to meet different levels of learning. Lower attainers have a framework for recording provided for them whilst the higher attainers have to devise and illustrate according to their own formats. Some pupils are also given the opportunity to use the computer as a form of recording their work appropriately. This is a positive feature.

145. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory in infant classes and good in Year 3/4 classes. Concentration levels sometimes vary in infant classes when support is not always readily available. Levels of concentration have matured by the time pupils have moved into Year 3/4 classes. They have their interest captured effectively by the good illustrations used and they sustain their motivation well into their recording of their learning.

146. Good attitudes are generated by the good teaching at Year 3/4 that builds upon the satisfactory teaching in infant classes. Where teaching is satisfactory pupils' knowledge bank is built up at a reasonable pace with patience and perseverance. Work is monitored appropriately, but much time is spent upon ensuring that pupils' concentration levels are being sustained. Where teaching is good in Year 3/4 classes teachers have planned thoughtfully bearing in mind the locally agreed syllabus requirements. Resources are provided that stimulate pupils' interest. Tasks are devised to match the different learning of pupils so that they are all able to make good responses to them. Support is offered through all adults asking challenging questions that make pupils think carefully about what they are recording. The approaches being taken to teaching and learning in religious education are supporting positively pupils' literacy skills development.

147. The subject has been temporarily co-ordinated by a member of staff for the last twelve months whilst the post-holder is on leave of absence from the school. The head teacher has an overview of its development as well. Resources are satisfactorily covering the requirements of the current locally agreed syllabus for religious education.