

INSPECTION REPORT

Marshbrook First School

Penkridge

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124148

Headteacher: Mrs M I Hinds

Reporting inspector: Richard S Moseley
16886

Dates of inspection: 9-12 July 2001

Inspection number: 195036

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:	4-9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Teddesely Road Penkridge Stafford
Postcode:	ST19 5BA
Telephone number:	01785 712780
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul Brailsford
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Richard S Moseley 16886	Registered inspector	Science, Information and communication technology. History. Geography. Physical Education. Mathematics Equal Opportunities	Characteristics of the school. The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well the school is led and managed? How well the pupils are taught?
R Mothersdale 13462	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well the school cares for its pupils. How well the school works in partnership with parents.
S.Mawer 18027	Team inspector	English. Art and Design. Design and Technology. Music. Religious Education. The Foundation Stage. Special Educational Needs.	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Marshbrook First School is smaller than most other First schools with 142 pupils, consisting of 75 boys and 67 girls. It has 15 part-time children in the nursery. An average number of pupils, ten per cent, are entitled to free school meals. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the school, although very variable, is broadly average. 14 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is just below average. There are three pupils with statements of special educational need, which is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school with many good and very good features. A majority of pupils reach high standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better throughout the school. It is particularly strong in Key Stage 2. The school has developed a good climate for learning, pupils' attitudes to their work are very good and there are very good relationships in the school. It is very well led and managed by the headteacher who has set a good educational direction. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Strong teaching in Key Stage 2, which is mainly very good, is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.
- Standards in English, mathematics and history are above average by the time pupils leave the school, mainly due to the effective teaching in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils have developed very good and positive attitudes to their work. Their behaviour and their relationships are also very good.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and clear educational direction for the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics for the higher attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Standards in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The resources for the children under five in the Foundation Stage in order to improve the curriculum they experience.
- The role of some curriculum co-ordinators to monitor, evaluate and develop their subjects further.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997. It has made good improvements and overcome most of the weaknesses pointed out in the last inspection and has improved in a number of other ways. With reference to the key issues in the last report, the school has raised attainment in design and technology, developed pupils' awareness of other cultures, implemented good procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality and lessened the headteacher's teaching commitment to give her more time to develop her leadership responsibilities. Some of the curriculum co-ordinators are beginning to develop their roles.

In addition, the leadership has introduced other improvements. For example, the governors now have a clear and longer-term strategic view of how the school is developing and the targets they want it to achieve. Monitoring and evaluation of the teaching has been introduced in order to raise its quality. The school is well placed to maintain these and other improvements and has a good capacity to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	B	A	B	B
Writing	C	A	A	A
Mathematics	C	B	D	D

Key		
well above average	above average	A
Average		C
Below average		D
Well below average		E

The pupils' results in writing in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 were well above average, in reading they were above average, in science they were average and in mathematics they were below average. It is a similar pattern when these results are compared to the standards attained by pupils in similar schools. The below average result in mathematics is mainly because pupils with higher attainment were insufficiently challenged. The majority of seven year olds in fact reached the expected Level 2. The small number of pupils in this cohort, only 16, also means that comparison to the national average is less reliable. However, the provisional results for 2001 show a similar trend and the school has recognised in its action plan that it needs to challenge the higher attaining pupils more effectively in mathematics. In reading and writing this year, pupils in Year 2 are likely to attain the national expectation. The 2001 test results are likely to be lower than last year but the numbers of pupils in the cohort makes it more realistic to compare to the national expectation. Also there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Over the last three years, standards have been very variable but often above average or well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

At the end of Year 4, attainments are in line with the national expectation for their age in science and above in English and mathematics. These higher standards in English and mathematics are mainly because of strong teaching in Key Stage 2 in literacy and numeracy. Pupils' attainment in literacy is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 but above this level at the end of Year 4. In numeracy, attainment is in line with the national expectation for the age for the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and above this level at the end of Year 4. All these results demonstrate that pupils' achievements in reading and writing in Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. In mathematics, they are satisfactory for a majority of the pupils in Key Stage 1 but the few higher attainers are not achieving as they should. By the end of Year 4 pupils' achievements in science are satisfactory and in

English and mathematics pupils are achieving well. Attainment in information and communication technology is below the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with it at the end of Year 4. Attainment in history is above the national expectation at the end of Year 4. In all other subjects where a judgement could be made, attainment is in line with the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4. Judgements could not be made in aspects of physical education, although they are in line with the expectations in games for their age and above this level in swimming. No overall judgement could be made in music, although standards in singing are above the national expectation throughout the school. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed syllabus throughout the school. The school has attained all the targets it has set.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils are very eager to learn. They are responsive and show very positive attitudes in all they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of most pupils in lessons and around the school is very good. They are polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships at all levels are very good and contribute well to pupils' very good personal development.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Most demonstrate very positive attitudes in all aspects of school life. They care about each other and respect each other's views. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, show a great deal of confidence by the time they leave the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:		Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall		Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Very 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.

The quality of teaching is mainly good with 62 per cent of lessons being good or better and 27 per cent being very good or excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection where 13 per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory. All of the very good and excellent teaching takes place in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, although the teaching is mainly satisfactory, there is also a fair proportion of good teaching. In the Foundation Stage, a small majority of the teaching seen was good but because of the lack of resources, it was judged to be satisfactory overall. This level of teaching ensures that pupils' learning is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and often very good in Key Stage 2 as pupils successfully acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in all their subjects and areas of learning.

Where the teaching is more effective, lessons proceed at a very good pace, all pupils receive challenging work whatever their abilities and most achieve very well. Where the teaching is not as strong, although most pupils receive appropriate work, on occasions the more able find the work a little easy. For example, in mathematics in Key Stage 1, most of the pupils make satisfactory or at times, good progress

because of the sound work prepared by the teachers. However, the higher attaining pupils do not always get enough opportunities to be challenged to a higher level. Consequently, these pupils do not always achieve as they should. The skills of literacy are taught soundly in Key Stage 1 and well or very well in Key Stage 2. The skills of numeracy are taught soundly to a majority of pupils in Key Stage 1 and often very well to pupils in Key Stage 2.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good broad balanced and relevant curriculum. It is enhanced very well by extra curricular activities and a number of well-organised visits out of school. The curriculum provided in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but is in need of more resources to enrich the learning environment and provide more opportunities for structured play and first-hand experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good. Teachers and support staff work closely together. These pupils are well integrated into the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for spiritual, social and cultural development is good and that for moral development is very good. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and taking care of their needs is largely good. The procedures for child protection are satisfactory and those for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are at an early stage of development.

A particular strength of the school is the way many opportunities are given for pupils to develop their confidence. For example, in assemblies, lessons and school performances, pupils are regularly asked to speak in front of others. Many do so with a confidence well beyond that expected for their age. Assessment procedures have been developed soundly in English and plans are in place to revise and extend assessment procedures in other subjects. The school has developed very good links with parents. Parents view the school as good. The contribution of parents to children's learning at home and at school is also good. The information provided to parents about the attainment and progress their children are making is satisfactory but is not always clearly explained in school reports.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Overall, leadership is good. Within this, leadership and management by the headteacher are very good. Some subject co-ordinators are beginning to build their roles well but generally the co-ordinators roles are underdeveloped.
How well the	The governors fulfil their roles well. The chair of governors

governors fulfil their responsibilities	works closely with the headteacher and has strengthened the governors' links with all aspects of school life.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, staff and governors have a good awareness of the school's performance, although some subject co-ordinators have yet to evaluate performance in their own subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Resources are readily available and used well. All money available to the school is used wisely and carefully and the school always applies the principal of getting best value.

The adequacy of staffing and accommodation to deliver the National Curriculum are good. Resources are satisfactory overall with some weaknesses in English, art and in the Foundation Stage. The headteacher has been very effective in identifying the school's priorities since she was appointed 15 months ago. For example, she identified early the need to monitor the teaching of English and this has helped to raise the quality of teaching in this subject throughout the school. The governors are forward looking and have worked hard to produce a good strategic three-year plan which is constantly reviewed.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes the school. • Their child is making good progress. • The teaching is good. • They can approach the staff with any problems. • Their child is expected to work hard and do their best. • Behaviour in the school is good. • The school is well managed. • The school helps their children to become more mature and responsible. • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. • Their child gets the right amount of work to do at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents feel that they are not kept well informed about how their child is getting on. • A few parents feel that the school does not work closely with its parents. • A significant minority feel that their child does not get the right amount of work to do at home. • A few parents feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

All views expressed by the parents were brought to the attention of the headteacher. Inspectors support most of the parents' very positive views of the school. They also judged that the school does work closely with parents, that it gives an appropriate amount of homework and that the extra curricular activities provided are very good.

Inspectors agreed with parents that information about their child's attainment and progress is not always clear in school reports.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2001, pupils' attainment in reading was above average and in writing was well above average. In mathematics, it was below average. When these results are compared to similar schools they show a similar pattern. The lower results in mathematics are due to a small proportion of pupils obtaining the higher Level 3. Most pupils, however, reached the expected Level 2. The cohort of pupils was also quite small with only 16 pupils, and it was more difficult to compare results with the national averages where classes have a larger number of pupils. The school has recognised that it needs to target the higher attaining pupils in mathematics with more challenging work to raise their attainment. The results of the national tests over the last few years have been variable but are mainly above average and well above average.
2. For this year's pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading and writing is in line with national expectations and achievement is satisfactory. This is lower than last year but 25 per cent of the class this year have special educational needs and the class is larger, giving a more realistic comparison to other schools. In mathematics, pupils' attainment is below the national expectation and similar to last years National Curriculum test results. This is again because a small proportion of pupils are not challenged to work at the higher levels of attainment or to achieve as they should. A majority of the class is working at the expected levels and their achievement is satisfactory.
3. At the end of Year 4, pupils' attainments in English and mathematics are above the national expectation and in science in line with the national expectation. Pupils' achievement in science is sound and they are achieving well in English and mathematics. This higher attainment at the end of Year 4 is largely to do with good, very good or excellent teaching, especially in English and mathematics where all abilities are challenged.
4. In English, attainment is in line with the national expectation for their ages in speaking, listening and writing by the end of Key Stage 1, and above the expectations at the end of Year 4. Frequent opportunities are given for discussion and older pupils respond to this well, sharing ideas thoughtfully. In writing, although most pupils in Year 2 form letters correctly, they are not prepared sufficiently for a joined script. Also, these pupils often find it more difficult to write accurate sentences and still make too many errors in their punctuation and spelling. Older pupils write with a good expressive language and correct grammar. All pupils at both key stages do not get enough opportunity to write for a wide range of real purposes, such as letters, stories, recipes, lists and poems. This limits their progress at times. Attainment in reading is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 but well

above the expectations in Year 4, where pupils read with increasing accuracy and expression. Assessment in reading for the younger pupils is too general and teachers are not identifying and focussing on pupils' specific needs. Standards in literacy are in line with the national expectation and above the national expectation at the end of Year 4.

5. In mathematics, all pupils demonstrate confidence and enthusiasm in basic number work at both key stages and by the time the pupils leave the school, their standards in number work are above the national expectation for their ages. For example, they use a wide range of mental arithmetic with addition, subtraction, division and multiplication sums. In Key Stage 1, pupils get few opportunities to try different approaches when solving problems or to develop their own strategies for working things out. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to explain and analyse their mathematical thinking but this is less evident in Key Stage 1.
6. In science, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4 is in line with national expectations in all aspects. Pupils have sound knowledge of materials and their properties, physical processes and life processes and living things. For example, work in their books indicates that pupils in Year 2 name the main parts of a plant, they investigate seeds and do experiments with seed germination. They grow plants and demonstrate the importance of light. Pupils in year 4 have a sound understanding of experimental and investigational science. They know the importance of setting up a fair test. Pupils' ability to set out the results of their investigations in a clear and logical manner is less well developed and the use of computers to support learning in science is only used on a few occasions.
7. In information and communication technology, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is below that expected for their ages. Some of these pupils still lack confidence in carrying out operations without the help of the teacher and their achievements are not as high as they should be. Younger pupils in Year 1 are developing their skills well as these pupils get extra support from parent helpers. Many pupils are confident with the keyboard and mouse at the end of Year 4. Most can save and print their work, log on to the Internet and load CD ROMS to carry out research work on occasions. Their word-processing skills are sound.
8. In religious education, attainment throughout the school is in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed syllabus and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. At the age of seven, most pupils have a reasonable knowledge and understanding of Judaism and Christianity. They have visited the Church and know about some of the special features. By the end of Year 4, pupils have gained sound knowledge and understanding of how Christians and members of other religions show a commitment to their Faith. For example, they write and illustrate in good detail the stages in the journey Moses made to the Promised Land. A strength throughout the school is the way in which teachers are very sensitive to pupils' feelings and thoughts in discussion sessions. However, there are some important gaps in pupils' knowledge

about stories in the New Testament. For example, a few pupils could not name who was the most important person in the New Testament.

9. Attainment in history is above the national expectation for their age by the time pupils leave the school. For example, many pupils in Year 4 have a good knowledge and understanding of the history of Britain, especially in Tudor times. They have an above average knowledge of all Kings and Queens from Henry VII to Mary. Some very good work seen in their books describes well the life in a Tudor street. In the remaining subjects, where a judgement could be made, attainment is in line with that expected for their ages. No judgement could be made on some aspects of physical education, although attainment is in line with the expectation in games and it is above the expectation in swimming. No judgement could be made in music, but pupils' attainment in singing is well above the national expectation.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in meeting their targets in language development, mathematical skills, improved behaviour and enhanced social and personal development. This represents an improvement from the sound progress that was identified at the previous inspection. Standards for pupils with special educational needs are generally below average for the pupils' age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They enjoy their work, stay on task and concentrate well on doing what is asked of them. For example, in a lesson where pupils were researching the history of the Aztecs, they could, by the end of the lesson, come back to their teacher with a strong view of the impact of the Spanish invasion on the loss of Aztec culture, and state many facts on aspects of Aztec life. Pupils are enthusiastic about activities and work well together. For example, in a hockey lesson where pupils were anxious to get out and start playing, they still observed the game's rules and listened to and remembered the skills taught by their teacher. Pupils interviewed, have very strong views on the subjects they enjoyed the most, mathematics taking a very strong lead, and wanted to emphasise how much they 'loved' school.
12. Pupil's behaviour in the school is very good. A very small number of pupils have been disruptive in the past, and the school has had to exclude two pupils temporarily. Parents commented on the very good behaviour of pupils out of school. Pupils interviewed, do not feel bullied by any other pupils in the school but said they could cope with bullying if it happened, by remembering messages from assemblies and circle times. Pupils play well together in the playground, for example, sharing skipping ropes for traditional games and singing songs. Pupils' very good behaviour has a very good impact on their learning. For example, in a lesson where a large number of resources were being used to look at the properties of opaque material, pupils could carry out a series of experiments, without distraction, and with total concentration on finding answers.

13. The personal development of pupils is good and their relationships with others, very good. They have responded well to the challenges presented by the staff who reward pupils for developing their personal skills and relationships. Older pupils can accept a range of responsibilities in the school through being a monitor in charge of, for example, picking up litter or helping with the library. Staff enjoy very good relationships with pupils and parents commented on the great affinity between staff and pupils.
14. Overall, pupils' attendance at the school is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. The school has few unauthorised absences. The numbers of pupils who are late to school has fallen dramatically since the previous inspection, although some families continue to bring their children to school after registration time.
15. There are three pupils who are on the register for special educational needs for emotional and behavioural difficulties. They are well supported by the staff, who understand their needs and work towards meeting their Individual Education Plans within the normal classroom setting. At lunchtime, these pupils mix socially with the help of the mid-day supervisors who have been trained in behaviour management. The targets set for these pupils by the local education authority are challenging and are also practical and clear. These pupils are beginning to develop positive attitudes to their work and better relationships with their peers and adults. All the special educational needs pupils in the school are totally integrated and everything is done to build up self-esteem and avoid highlighting the disabilities of any pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is largely satisfactory with 30 per cent of the teaching being good. In Key Stage 2, it is stronger with 92 per cent of the teaching being good or better. Fifty per cent is very good with a small amount of excellent teaching. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school. This shows a good improvement since the last inspection where most teaching was satisfactory and there was a proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers have worked hard to improve their teaching. They have had good support from the headteacher and key stage co-ordinators, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. In fact, the strategies used to plan for literacy and numeracy have helped to give a more consistent structure to planning in other subjects. The improvement in the quality of teaching, especially where the teaching is good or better, has resulted in a good improvement in learning as pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in all of the subjects they are studying. Nevertheless, there is a higher proportion of satisfactory in Key Stage 1. This is mainly related to a lack of challenge to the more able pupils in mathematics.
17. Where the teaching is very good or excellent, teachers have high expectations about the quality of pupils' work. This ensures that in most

lessons, pupils of all abilities are given challenging work and most pupils in the class make good or very good progress and achieve well or occasionally, very well. This was seen in a science lesson for pupils in Year 3. The teacher devised a 'discovery' lesson where pupils had to find out what sort of materials produced the strongest shadows. Pupils were given a good range of objects. Some were opaque, others were transparent. The strongest feature of the lesson was the way the whole class was involved in making suggestions on how the experiment could be carried out. This motivated pupils of all abilities to predict the outcome and make the test fair. Pupils were excited and eager to learn and by the end of the lesson had reached valuable conclusions. This challenging lesson also proceeded at a good pace with the teacher often expecting that sections of the lesson be finished in a stated time. This ensured that pupils worked hard and persevered to the end of the lesson.

18. Where the teaching is less effective, it is sometimes because the ideas devised by the teacher are not as challenging to all higher attaining pupils. For example, in some mathematics lessons in Key Stage 1, although work is set for the different abilities, that set for the higher attaining pupils is not hard enough and they quickly finish and then mark time until others in the class have finished. This results in these pupils not progressing as well as they should. These lessons can quite often proceed at a slower pace and teachers' expectations of the quality of work are not as high as in Key Stage 2.
19. All teachers, in both key stages, have a number of good or very good strengths. For example, the relationships that exist between the pupils and teachers are very good and a strength of the school. This encourages many pupils to try their best and please their teacher. This was seen to very good effect in a Year 1 design and technology class. Pupils persevered throughout the session and were anxious to make valuable suggestions about the layout and design of a local adventure playground. The teacher was able to encourage most pupils to make a good contribution to the discussion and describe some good ideas. All teachers have very good class control. This ensures that behaviour is nearly always very good and pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other.
20. All teachers occasionally plan work for pupils to take initiatives in working independently, often in literacy, numeracy and science lessons. However, these opportunities are not given frequently enough. For example, in art and design, all pupils in the class often use the same materials, which have been chosen by the teacher. In some written work, especially for topics, the content is not the result of personal research work but generally led by the teacher. Consequently, in these lessons, the content is very similar. At the moment the shortage of non-fiction books in the library restricts opportunities for teachers to encourage pupils to carry out personal research. The school has recognised these weaknesses and identified this as an area for development.

21. Teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach is largely good. In all subjects, new schemes of work have been introduced and teachers are slowly acquainting themselves with these. However, there is little guidance for this from many of the subject co-ordinators, who have still to develop their leadership roles further. However, the co-ordinators for English and mathematics have been able to give guidance and are beginning to develop their leadership roles well. This has resulted in an improvement of the teaching at both key stages. Teachers' confidence in the teaching of information and communication technology is less well developed and consequently computers are underused to support learning in most subjects. The co-ordinator is aware of this weakness and has already started a training course for teachers in this subject. The teachers' use of ongoing assessment, including the marking in pupils' books, although variable in quality, is broadly satisfactory and on occasions good with some valuable comments, which tell pupils what they have to do to improve.
22. The teaching of literacy has been a major focus for the school during the last two years and is now well established. The quality of teaching in this area is at least satisfactory and often good or better. Written planning is done well and includes appropriate work for the varying needs of pupils. However, teachers' planning across both key stages does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write at length for real purposes, such as letters, stories, recipes and diaries. Teaching methods are sound, ensuring pupils are motivated and maintain concentration to the end of the lesson. Where the literacy lessons are good or better, teachers' expectation of pupils' work is higher, the pace of the lesson quicker with pupils set a given specific time to finish their work. The teaching of numeracy has received sound attention and a good format of lesson has been established throughout the school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good in Key Stage 1 and very good or excellent in Key Stage 2. The work planned for pupils in Key Stage 1 is good for the majority of pupils in the class but sometimes fails to challenge the higher attaining pupils. These pupils require more opportunities to try different approaches to problem solving, to discuss their work and explain their thinking and to be given work that keeps them occupied to the end of the lesson.
23. The teaching and progress of pupils with special educational needs is generally good. For pupils without a statement of special educational needs support is usually provided by the class teacher in the classroom, who in most cases plans work that closely matches pupils' identified needs and targets. This represents an improvement from the previous inspection. The few pupils who receive additional help for literacy are withdrawn for short periods of time and receive intensive and effective teaching from a support assistant. The teacher and a support assistant generally support the three pupils with statements within the classroom. More needs to be done by the support assistant to record and measure the progress that these pupils are making in their lessons when she is teaching them. At the moment the outcome of the lesson is not recorded and information is only passed verbally to the class teacher. This information is important and needed when progress is reviewed.

In all cases the Individual Education Plans are clear, specific and achievable and are easily built into the normal planning of the lesson and delivered by the class teacher or support assistant.

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

24. The school has taken effective action to strengthen the curriculum since the previous inspection by improving the provision for design and technology. It now provides a reasonably broad and balanced range of relevant and worthwhile activities for all pupils. More opportunities are needed for problem solving in mathematics at Key Stage 1 and the further development of skills in information and communication technology. Also, in art this year, a limited range of work has been covered. In all other subjects, enough time is given for them to be taught in sufficient detail. There are detailed curriculum guidelines in all subjects and teachers' planning meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, including the provision for religious education. The school has recently adopted some of the national guidelines for the non-core subjects. These developments are having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning by ensuring all aspects are covered with new and well thought out ideas. The planning of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is thorough in all the agreed areas of learning and provision is satisfactory. More resources are needed to give more opportunities and a greater focus for structured play and first-hand experiences. The work in reception prepares them well for the transition on to the National Curriculum.
25. Useful links are made across different subject areas and this is helping to enrich the curriculum. It is particularly successful in the way that history has been planned to provide a good range of writing opportunities for the pupils. History is also well linked to geography with a good use of maps.
26. The implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been effective in raising standards particularly at Key Stage 2 and provision is good overall. The generous amount of time for English and mathematics is having a positive impact on pupils' progress in these subjects, especially at Key Stage 2.
27. The school continues to provide a very good programme of extra-curricular activities, which enriches the experiences of most of the pupils from Year 2 and adds significantly to their learning. All staff are involved in these activities that range from French and an Internet club to sports and an art club. The instrumental teaching in the school is also a strength, with about a third of the pupils from Year 2 benefiting from lessons and using their skills to perform in the school band. Older pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to an outdoor centre for three days. This develops their social skills well.

28. The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils it identified as having special educational needs and provision is good. Pupils' targets are reviewed regularly to assess not only their progress, but to also to make sure their needs are being met. Staff make every effort to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have full access to the same wide range of learning opportunities within the curriculum as the rest of the school.
29. The contribution of the community and particularly the close links with other local schools are very good and provide a wealth of additional opportunities within the curriculum. Pupils regularly join neighbouring schools to take part in sports sessions. They work with the local council on a litter-picking day to improve the neighbourhood. They visit the buildings in the village and around to enrich their historical knowledge and understanding. There is regular contact and a very good relationship with the middle school, which helps in the smooth transition of pupils at the end of Year 4. Valuable links include a sports day with Year 5 pupils, paired reading sessions with some of their older pupils and a regular visit from the middle school headteacher to take assemblies at Marshbrook.
30. Personal, social and health education and citizenship receives a very high profile in the school. The provision is good and appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils. Sex education, together with awareness of the misuse of drugs and keeping safe and healthy are planned and taught effectively within the science curriculum. Personal and social education along with citizenship, is taught formally in lessons and there is also a very strong contribution across and beyond the curriculum, such as in the cycling proficiency training many pupils receive. Targets are set for the pupils in personal and social education and their progress has begun to be monitored this year.
31. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good, while their spiritual, social and cultural development is good. This represents a considerable improvement from the previous inspection, especially as cultural development was unsatisfactory and an issue for development. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted well in assemblies where a positive sense of community and shared values are celebrated together. It is heightened at times of special religious festivals and through the celebration of achievement assemblies. There are also some good opportunities for pupils to experience awe and wonder especially in art, music and history. The displays around the school show clearly the feelings and emotions often felt by the pupils in their work. For example, older pupils express in writing their own feelings of exploring the secret hiding places of the Kings at Moseley Old Hall, while younger pupils experiment with colour to make imaginative landscapes in the style of Monet. In music, pupils display a real joy for singing and the inspirational teaching by the peripatetic teacher lifts everyone's spirits and gives the pupils very special memories. The spiritual appreciation of the natural world is celebrated in the enclosed garden patio with lots of opportunities for pupils to study the growth of plants and care for small animals.

32. Moral development is promoted very well through the caring relationships within in the school. It is particularly noticeable that the older pupils are encouraged to care for the younger children at lunchtime and help to organise games with the mid-day supervisors. Staff provide very good role models in reinforcing high standards of behaviour and sharing positive values with the pupils. The school is a well-ordered community where pupils are taught to know the difference between right and wrong. Assemblies are regularly used to praise pupils for their positive behaviour and 'super star' certificates are awarded for kindness and concern for others as well as good work. All pupils feel safe and happy in the school and this has a positive effect upon their learning. Many aspects of the planned curriculum also include moral elements. For example, texts like 'Worry Guts' that are being studied by Year 4 and issues of poverty and hunger in geography. This gives an indication of the way pupils are made aware of current moral and environmental issues and are encouraged to take an interest in the world.
33. Provision for social education is good. Pupils work well together when given the opportunity to do so. Older pupils are given additional duties around the school and take their duties as monitors very seriously and are keen to do their best. Pupils show a very good understanding of the needs of others in their close involvement with charities such as 'Food Aid'. The school is currently planning a school council, to begin next term. The yearly residential visit for pupils in Year 4 aids social development well.
34. The cultural provision for pupils' learning is good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection when it was unsatisfactory. A stronger programme is in place now to raise pupils' awareness of the diversity of cultures. Visitors to the school such as the president of the local synagogue are supporting this. The school has also set up a very valuable Internet link with a multi-faith school in Birmingham. There are fewer opportunities to visit different faith centres. Teachers are now beginning to create some worthwhile opportunities in religious education for pupils to learn about life in a multi-cultural society through the celebration of religious festivals and the teaching of Christianity and other faiths. This programme is still in the early stages of development and more focus is needed on the teaching of Christianity. In geography, history and art, pupils learn about other cultures and ways of life. Pupils are also being helped to appreciate the richness of the cultural traditions of their own local area through a good range of visits and visitors.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school makes good provision for the well-being of its pupils and their educational, personal support and guidance. A tracking sheet that highlights the personal skills of the pupil is developing these still further. The school is refining this system to accurately match the needs of its pupils, and the sheet serves to consolidate the good knowledge that staff have of their pupils. The introduction of the house system in school has introduced a friendly ethos of

competitiveness and concept of teamwork amongst pupils, as well as self-awareness. Whilst striving to maintain a level of good behaviour and work to gain house points, pupils can see the results of their efforts in house points gained, or lost. Each class has a Brainwave and Worry box to bring their thoughts to the attention of the school, without having to approach a member of staff. An adult who works in the school is available to deal with any personal issues a child may wish to discuss in confidence. The school works closely with the middle school to make the pupils' transfer from one school to the next as stress free as possible. Year 4 pupils interviewed were excited about the move and felt well prepared. They had met their new headteacher, visited the school, knew about the buddy support system of older pupils and were aware that the schools' had exchanged information about themselves.

36. The school has very good health and safety procedures, which are supported by the governors and all members of staff. Five members of staff are trained in first aid procedures, and the school offers clear guidance to staff on their responsibilities when dealing with emergencies. All the necessary checks for fire safety, equipment checks and electrical appliance safety are carried out on a regular basis and recorded. The school has clear procedures for the dispensation of prescribed medication to pupils. The school supports a road safety campaign for older pupils, with a safe cycling course. To ensure that pupils have a well-balanced meal at lunchtime, the school has supported the Goody bag initiative as an alternative to a cooked school lunch. The school is promoting healthy eating, both at lunchtimes and in science lessons.
37. The school's procedures for child protection are satisfactory and in line with the recommendations of the local child protection committee. The school's child protection procedures are currently being formalised in a specific policy for the school, and training has been organised for all staff in the up to date requirements of child protection measures.
38. Monitoring procedures in the school that ensure pupils' good behaviour, absence of bullying and maintenance of discipline, are very good. The school has worked closely with behavioural support services, parents and the pupils to focus on strategies that encourage positive aspects of behaviour, especially where pupils require individual behaviour plans. The school has clear procedures and more formal sanctions and consequences for unacceptable behaviour, but consistently emphasises a positive approach in its class and school rules. The school's Anti-Bullying policy allows no one to dismiss an accusation of bullying without thorough analysis of the allegation.
39. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good and have improved since the previous inspection. The school works closely with the Education Welfare service and any concerns over attendance and punctuality are routinely referred to the Education Welfare worker. Parents are encouraged not to take their children away from school, for holidays, during term time. Competition is encouraged between the school houses for good attendance and certificates are awarded to pupils for their 100 per cent attendance over a term. The school has been very successful in encouraging

good punctuality to school and monitors unpunctuality through a late book. The school does not have procedures for signing pupils in and out of school during the school day, but is reviewing this area. There are a few inconsistencies in the marking and totalling of registers and these have been pointed out to the headteacher.

40. School procedures for assessing the achievements of pupils are broadly satisfactory but the school has recognised that this is an area in need of development. For example, a valuable range of information is recorded in English of what pupils know and understand. As a result, teachers often plan work that meets the needs of all pupils. Group targets are set which aids the progress of pupils. However, this type of assessment is not used systematically throughout the school. Also, the home/school reading diaries do not contain any assessments of pupils' progress. This means that both parents and pupils may not be aware of how well or otherwise they are doing. In mathematics, assessment procedures are only just being developed and very few records are kept in science. This makes it more difficult for teachers to plan specific work to match the needs of all pupils. Pupils are assessed carefully in the nursery and reception classes in relation to the early learning goals. This information is transferred to Year 1 in a clear usable format.
41. All members of staff are fully informed about any medical problems that the pupils with special educational needs have. This particularly applies to the two pupils with physical difficulties who are encouraged to become independent in their learning and social skills. Where specific resources are needed to enable this to happen the school does everything it can to provide them. The assessment and recording processes that are part of the strategies for all pupils are also used in assessing the progress of pupils with special educational needs. However, more written records need to be kept by the support assistant relating to attainment and progress of pupils with statements. Specialised staff from the local education authority sometimes carry out more specialised tests particularly when pupils are showing limited progress or are moving up a stage on the school's register of special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The parents' views of the school are good and most parents are impressed with the school's attitude to learning and creation of a pleasant, friendly and caring ethos.
43. The school, frequently via the regular newsletters, constantly asks for the support of parents. For example, in providing good role models on road safety by not parking on the yellow zigzags outside school, or driving into the school grounds at a time when it endangers pupils' safety. Parents are involved in sharing celebrations of their children's success in school. For example, when pupils are rewarded for their good behaviour with a 'Star Status' certificate or 'Special person of Marshbrook' status, parents receive a

'Star Status' postcard to tell them about it. Parental views on homework provision are mixed, with some parents considering the amount that their children receive is adequate, whilst others wish for more. Inspectors judged the homework given was broadly adequate. Staff are available to parents at any reasonable time to discuss their concerns about their children, and the headteacher is out in the playground every morning to circulate and meet with parents. Parents are invited into class assemblies on a regular basis. Parent helpers provide valued skills to the school, for example, during the inspection, one parent was coaching pupils in hockey skills and two other parents were working in the school library and assisting pupils research information on the library computer. Occasional workshops are held for parents in school, for example, one recently focused on the Foundation Stage, and parents of new children into the nursery and reception classes, are welcomed in for an induction/information afternoon and evening.

44. Some parents are concerned that they do not have enough time in parents' evenings to talk about their child's progress. This concern is coupled with some parents' perception that they do not have a clear idea of how well their child is achieving. Pupils' annual reports are personal and informative, but they do not contain guidance on pupils' levels of ability. Parents require a clearer picture of the level of attainment and standard of work of their child, so that they can accurately judge, from year to year, the rate of progress.
45. The school works hard to keep parents informed of what is happening each day in school, and is about to create a web site where parents can log on to discover up-to-date information about the school. An invitation to parents to contribute to the school development plan met with very limited parental response and parental attendance at open coffee morning sessions was not sufficiently good to continue the meetings. Parents did however respond well to a school questionnaire on behaviour and discipline and the home/school agreement. The school benefits from a very active and hard working Parent Teacher Association, which consistently raises funds to buy resources for the school, and organises a series of informal social events, such as this year's Valentine Disco. Parents work closely with the school, for example, in providing an informal parental monitoring service, in the playgrounds, at the start and end of the school day.
46. The parents of children with special educational needs are invited to attend meetings to discuss the progress and achievements of their children. The school is very anxious to work in partnership with the parents and there is a good level of involvement. Several parents commented on the good level of special educational needs support their children receive at the school. Parents are encouraged to help at home with their child's learning, and support the work of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. Leadership is good overall. It was a similar picture in the last inspection. Within this, the headteacher gives very effective leadership. Since she was appointed, only 15 months ago, she has provided a clear vision and a good educational direction for the school. She combines her teaching commitment of nearly two days with her leadership duties very well. The senior teacher and key stage co-ordinator support her well. She has been successful in developing an agreed sense of purpose amongst the staff and has begun the process of evaluation and monitoring of the teaching and learning. All staff have a strong commitment to improve. This has resulted in the creation of an effective school. She has ensured that the school's priorities for development are very appropriate. The successful introduction of the Literacy Hour and Numeracy Strategy, the development of a long-term strategic view for the school through the governors and improvements in the resources for the development of information and communication technology, are successful examples of these priorities. All these introductions have resulted in a steady improvement on standards by the time pupils leave the school and the development of good plans for short and long-term development.
48. The governing body is very supportive. The chair of the governors is fully committed to the school. He is involved in the life of the school, visits often and engages in professional dialogue with the headteacher on regular occasions. A number of other governors visit the school and support aspects of the curriculum. Many governors have been linked to subjects in which they have a particular interest. The governors with a link to the provision for special educational needs, literacy and numeracy, have been particularly effective and meet the co-ordinators regularly and in some cases have observed lessons in order to be more fully informed. All governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are closely involved in the production and evaluation of the yearly action plan. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, they have also strengthened their longer-term vision of the school. For example, they have studied the likely changes that may take place in the community that could affect future numbers of pupils on roll. They have adopted a strong marketing strategy and are beginning to raise the profile of the school. In this they have been successful and numbers are rising. Governors have fulfilled their statutory duties well.
49. The headteacher has introduced monitoring and evaluation of teaching, especially in the teaching of literacy. This approach was new to most members of staff but she has handled this well with sensitivity. There has been an agreed timetable of observations, set against an established range of criteria. Written feedback has been provided and the outcome of the observation is discussed with teachers. Some of this observation is carried out by the key stage co-ordinators. All this monitoring and evaluation has been effective as the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers' planning is also examined and pupils' work is analysed. This is all linked to the school's successful introduction of Performance Management and self-analysis, all of which is new and clearly identifying strengths and future areas for development. For example, the need to extend

a greater challenge to the higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1, especially in mathematics, has been clearly recognised in the school's Action Plan.

50. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators is only partly development. Being a small school, many teachers, including the headteacher, have responsibilities for at least two subjects. There has been a concentration on the development of literacy and numeracy over the last two years and little or no curriculum time has been available to the co-ordinators to monitor their subjects, other than in English and mathematics. Consequently a number of subjects are in need of further development and leadership in order to improve the provision and raise attainment further. A number of these subjects have already been identified in the school's plan for this development over the next two years, including even further development in English and mathematics.
51. The aims of the school and its values as set out in the school prospectus are appropriate and implemented well. The leadership has developed a very good ethos in the school. Pupils have developed very good attitudes to learning and they are very enthusiastic and enjoy school a great deal. There are very good relationships. There is a commitment by the leadership to raise educational standards for all and provide equal opportunities. The yearly action plan and the three-yearly school development plan effectively supports management. It is carefully costed. Funding is linked very carefully to educational priorities. For example, money has been set aside to improve the amount of classroom support.
52. There are sufficient and well qualified teaching staff to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. Support staff are effective and work closely with the teachers. The school's accommodation is good. Classrooms are generally spacious for the type of school and the school benefits from an art and resource room. Two hard surface playgrounds and an extensive grass playing field offer pupils good opportunities for outside games. The school has improved the environment of the outside areas in its recent Going Green campaign, and the inside of the school, with new carpets and furniture. Children under five do not have a secure area for outside play, but fencing off areas of the school car park has improved all pupils' safety when coming in and out of school, since the previous inspection.
53. There are satisfactory and adequate learning resources in the school. The school makes good use of the community to support topics in the curriculum and has a good range of computers, in every classroom, to support learning. The library does not have sufficient non-fiction books to support independent learning and research work for pupils. There is a shortage of resources in art and design and for children under five to give them a free choice and opportunity for structured play.
54. The management and organisation of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. However, the special educational needs co-ordinator is also a full time class teacher and has no additional time during the day to carry out her duties. She is not in a position to be able to

effectively monitor the whole provision for special educational needs and particularly the teaching and learning. There is an identified governor. She meets regularly with the co-ordinator and has been successful in gaining a good knowledge and understanding of the work being carried out in the school. The governors' annual report and the school prospectus provide good information on special educational needs. Accommodation is adequate for pupils. The funds available to the school are used appropriately to promote the school's priorities in this area.

55. Careful financial planning supports educational developments very well. For example, there is a strong commitment to provide best value and all money is spent wisely and carefully. The school has quite a high carry over budget but this is mainly because very recently extra money became available to the school from the local authority of which it was unaware of at the time of planning. The quality of financial control by the school secretary, headteacher and chair of the governors financial committee is very good with a very strong link to County Hall. The school, with the help of the governors, has also been successful in bidding for extra money and specific grants. For example, the school obtained money from "Seed Challenge". This money, together with a good amount raised by the parent teachers association, provided carpeting in all rooms. Also, a bid for additional funding for computers and software was successful. The management systems now in place, including the very effective leadership by the headteacher, dedicated team of teachers, support staff and governors, have ensured a number of improvements since the last inspection. The school has a very good capacity to maintain its effectiveness and introduce further improvements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. To maintain the quality of education and promote further development, the governing body, headteacher and staff should address the following issues:

(1) Continue to raise attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 by:

- Planning specific work to challenge the higher attaining pupils.
- Providing more opportunities for these pupils to try out their own ways of solving problems and to be able to explain their mathematical thinking.

(these are outlined in paragraphs 5 18 22 74 and 76)

(2) Continue to raise attainment in information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 1 by:

- Further development of pupils' independent skills when using computers.
- Further development of teachers' confidence in order to use computers and the new software resources on a regular basis to support learning in most subjects.
- Using the very good assessment procedures that have just been devised.

(these are outlined in paragraphs 7 21 78 82 96 102 103 106 and 109)

(3) Continue to develop provision in the Foundation Stage by improving resources to extend the opportunities for structured play and first-hand experiences

(these are outlined in paragraphs 24 57 60 63 and 64)

(4) Continue to develop the role of the subject co-ordinators; to monitor and evaluate their subject; to improve the quality of the teaching and learning in all subjects and to raise pupils' attainment further.

(these are outlined in paragraphs 50 54 82 83 87 96 and 112)

ISSUES 1,2 AND 3 HAVE ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED BY THE SCHOOL AS AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT.

In addition to the above issues, the following more minor issues could be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Further development of the experimental and investigational aspects of science, as well as assessment in the subject.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate teachers planning to ensure there is always work to challenge pupils of all abilities, especially in Key Stage 1.
- The improvement of the school/home reading diary to indicate progress.
- Improvement to the year school reports to indicate more clearly to parents pupils' attainment and progress in the different subjects.
- Providing more opportunity for pupils to write for real purposes such as letters, poems, stories, speeches, recipes and diaries.
- Improve the provision of non-fiction books in the school library.
- Further training of some staff in child protection procedures.

- Improve the records kept by the special educational needs support staff for pupils with statements.
 - Continue to plan more opportunities for pupils to work independently on tasks.
 - Improve the use of instruments to compose music.
- (these are outlined in paragraphs 81 49 4 70 44 71 53 37 23 7 20 and 109)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	21	34	38	0	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	YrR – Yr4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	16	126
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YrR – Yr4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	20

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2	14	4	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	10
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	13	15	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (100)	93 (100)	81 (100)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	10
	Girls	4	3	3
	Total	15	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (96)	81 (100)	81 (100)
	National	84 (82)	82 (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	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	140
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	104.75

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

Total number of education support staff	1.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	252,148
Total expenditure	251,362
Expenditure per pupil	2,064
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,320
Balance carried forward to next year	14,106

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	142
Number of questionnaires returned	46

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	52	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	52	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	49	23	7	2
The teaching is good.	57	35	2	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	57	22	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	22	17	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	43	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	26	52	20	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	48	35	4	7	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	50	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	38	22	0	0

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

57. There have been some improvements for children in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection, although overall, the provision remains satisfactory. Planning and assessment procedures are particularly thorough and this, along with some effective teaching, has resulted in good progress being made in reading, speaking and listening and mathematics. The main weakness in the provision is the lack of resources to extend the opportunities for structured play and first-hand experiences. Staff work very hard within these limitations to try and provide a rich and varied curriculum. However, the shortage of resources limits children's achievements in some of the areas of learning. Progress and teaching, although satisfactory, is not as good as it could be with more resources. Children are admitted to the small nursery in the term after they are four and to reception at the beginning of the year in which they are five. There are currently 15 children in the nursery and 26 in reception. Almost all have attended either a local nursery or a playgroup. There are close links with parents to ensure a smooth transition.
58. The attainment of children on entry varies from year to year with each cohort in this small school, but it is usually average in all the areas of learning. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of children achieve the expected levels in all the early learning goals. About half will exceed these levels in mathematics and a quarter in reading.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Children make sound progress in developing their personal, social and emotional skills through satisfactory teaching and have very positive attitudes to learning. The teachers and other adults promote a good working atmosphere and there are clear classroom procedures in which the children grow in self-confidence and self esteem. The children quickly learn to share equipment and take turns when playing in the shop or choosing instruments to play for music. They concentrate particularly well during the lessons for literacy and mathematics and group reading sessions. It is here where the gains in learning are greatest and where the children have made the most progress. Most can work independently on their tasks but because the resources are in short supply, some children move quickly from one activity to another and there are not enough opportunities for them to choose what to do or initiate their own ideas. Behaviour from most of the children is very good.

Communication, Language and literacy

60. The children achieve well in reading and speaking and listening in both the nursery and reception through good teaching and make satisfactory progress in writing. The recent focus on 'Bob the builder' in reception has provided

some good opportunities for the children to improve their spoken, written and reading skills through direct teaching but less so through opportunities for structured play. Most of the children are becoming fluent and articulate speakers. In both the nursery and reception they talk spontaneously about the 'big book' they are reading together and what will happen next. They are very good at listening to others and waiting for their turn to speak. In writing, higher attaining children in reception can write their own simple words and all of the children can write their own name. They are encouraged to write freely but need more real experiences, to have a reason for writing. For example, the reception children were asked to write a letter to Bob the Builder asking him to come and mend something. These children struggled with ideas because they hadn't had the chance to imagine and explore situations about building beforehand in a practical way with suitable resources. All the children enjoy sharing books and handle them carefully, with the higher attaining and average children in reception progressing very well on the reading scheme. They particularly enjoy talking about the characters in the books. The literacy hour in reception is helping children to read simple stories with good levels of independence and fluency. There is a high focus in the teaching on learning phonetically the key words from the reading scheme, and the good visual displays in the classroom help to add interest and learning opportunities for the children in both the nursery and reception. Comprehensive records are kept on the children's progress in reading and this has a very positive impact on their levels of achievement.

Mathematics

61. This area of learning is well taught with good levels of achievement. It is promoted successfully through some practical activities and numeracy sessions. The school shop helps the children in reception and nursery to recognise and use money to ten pence and beyond and for the higher attaining children in reception to confidently count coins to £1. One child with ten pence to spend knew that she needed another two pence to buy the toy she wanted. Many children in reception count in two's, fives and tens. In nursery, children make a necklace with a repeated pattern of three colours of pasta. Reception children already record their work formally and most write their numbers correctly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Children are very interested in their world and staff try to provide a varied range of experiences for them to explore and investigate further. The teaching and progress is satisfactory. The children are keen to learn about new things and teachers are generally skilled at asking the right questions to help the children learn. After a visit to a stately home with a display of old and new toys, the children wrote freely about their favourite toy and painted pictures. The current story of 'Magnetic Lofty' in reception is developed further with the children experimenting with magnetic and non-magnetic objects. All the children are encouraged to observe and find out about living things using the enclosed garden in the school. Some well finished models of

dinosaurs have been made by the reception children while the nursery have made their own kites. Although the children have had a visit from the police and occasionally other visitors, this important resource for extending the children's learning is underdeveloped.

Physical development

63. Children by the end of the reception year reach the required standards of agility and co-ordination through satisfactory teaching and make sound progress. Staff in both the nursery and reception successfully help the children to work with increased confidence and control with pencils, scissors, brushes and other tools. In the classroom and outside, most children are well co-ordinated and move freely with a good awareness of space, but have few resources such as bikes or climbing frames to extend their movements further. An outdoor area for learning for these children is in the planning stage of development. At the moment the children receive two lessons in the hall to develop their physical skills. The music and movement session for nursery and reception, using a taped programme, was too difficult for the younger children to follow and did little to extend their imaginative responses. However, this form of planning with a taped programme is not used regularly with the children.

Creative Development

64. Children have some worthwhile opportunities to express themselves creatively through satisfactory provision and teaching. In music the children express themselves well, adding sounds with the percussion instruments to accompany stories and songs. They are given opportunities for imaginative play within the lessons planned for them, such as the shop, but the resources that are available are in short supply and not sustaining the children's interests sufficiently or extending their creative development enough. For example, there are a few dressing up clothes but not of sufficient quantity and quality to provide a good focus for learning and achievement. Children mix their own paints and show an increasing awareness of shape, pattern and colour in their imaginative artwork.
65. Good home-school links have been established. Parents are welcome to come into school at the beginning and end of the day and a positive and friendly atmosphere has been established. The support parents give to their children at home with reading is having a very beneficial effect on raising achievements for many children. The home-school reading books are used very well to communicate information about the progress the children are making and the help they need at home.

ENGLISH

66. Pupils' attainment in English at age seven is in line with the national expectation and their achievement is satisfactory. The picture was the same in the previous inspection. In the national tests in 2000, standards were above average in reading and well above average in writing. However, there were only 16 pupils in that year. This makes comparisons to the national averages more difficult to make. It only needs a larger number of higher attaining pupils or a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs to make a big difference to the overall result. There is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year's Year 2 class. No comparison can be made for the nine year old pupils, as the national tests are not taken until 11. However, inspection evidence for this year's pupils in Year 4 indicates that attainment in speaking, listening and writing is above the national expectation for pupils' ages and well above the expectations in reading. Attainment overall is above the national expectation for pupils' ages at the end of Year 4 and their achievement is good.
67. The better achievement at Key Stage 2 is due in part to the good and very good teaching. The teaching of literacy has been introduced satisfactorily in Key Stage 1, with some good features. The Literacy Strategy has had a more effective impact in Key Stage 2 where the teachers sometimes have higher expectations.
68. There are some weaknesses in the development of writing at both key stages, where not enough opportunities are given for pupils to write for real purposes, such as letters, diaries, recipes, lists and poems. The school has been rather slow to react to the improvement needed in handwriting and library skills identified at the previous inspection. However, with the recent appointment of the new headteacher these areas are improving, weaknesses have been identified and targets for improvement have been set in the school's Action Plan.
69. Standards in speaking and listening by the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the national expectation and achievement is satisfactory. In Year 2, pupils show in their answers that they have listened carefully to the teacher talking about holidays and politely wait for their turn to speak. However, more book resources and stimulating ideas are needed to give the pupils a reason for talking and a purpose for their reading. The use of a work sheet with a picture of a seaside holiday is not challenging enough. In discussing the books they are reading, the higher attaining pupils speak confidently and fluently. They are happy and relaxed with adults and use a wide vocabulary to express their ideas. A few of the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs answer enthusiastically but their speech lacks fluency and there is little detail in their responses. To help the pupils improve their speaking and listening skills frequent discussions take place, not only in the literacy hour, but also in many other lessons. The current book 'Worry Guts' is giving the pupils lots of opportunities to discuss moral and social issues together. Good ideas are shared thoughtfully, with everyone listening to one another. Because of the very good relationships in the school there is a climate where pupils feel comfortable to talk, knowing that adults will always value their

ideas. More needs to be done to develop a planned programme of drama within the speaking and listening framework. However, a very popular and well-attended drama club is held after school and this develops the skills of those who attend.

70. By the age of seven, standards in reading for this year's pupils are in line with national expectations and achievement is satisfactory. The few higher attaining pupils read fluently with expression, understand the text, recognise the structure of the stories and give reasons for their favourite books. They also have a good knowledge of alphabetical order in using dictionaries. The much larger group of average and lower attaining pupils are more hesitant in their reading but they recognise familiar words in a simple text. Assessments in reading are too general and teachers are not identifying and focusing on what pupils need to do to become more fluent and read with meaning and enjoyment. Although parents receive the home-school diaries, there is no information in it to inform them of the focus of their help. This was a weakness from the previous inspection that has not been addressed. These improvements are needed in order to raise the pupils' levels of achievement further. As they move through the school, pupils build on what they have learned in Key Stage 1 and read with increasing accuracy, understanding and expression. They attain standards well above the national expectation for their age by the time they leave the school. These pupils achieve very well. Many of the higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand the significant ideas of more challenging texts such as Harry Potter. Suitable books for group reading sessions are gradually being introduced but there are some outdated books being used that do little to stimulate an interest or reason for reading with expression. Pupils use dictionaries confidently but there are fewer opportunities in the teaching for pupils to carry out independent research because of a shortage of non-fiction books in the library.
71. Standards in writing are in line with the national expectation by the age of seven and progress is satisfactory. Although most pupils form their letters correctly, they are not prepared sufficiently for a joined script. This was a weakness in the previous inspection. A scheme has now been introduced and pupils practise their handwriting regularly. Only a few higher attaining pupils can write a good sequence of sentences and there are still many errors in their punctuation and spellings. Other pupils write a few short words or phrases but lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are not writing independently. There are few examples of writing for different purposes in the literacy lessons but sometimes writing is practised in other subjects. For example, pupils keep a diary of holiday events linked to 'Barnaby Bear' in geography. A greater focus is needed in the teaching to improve the variety, structure, content and accuracy of sentences and help pupils to plan and sequence their writing more successfully. The 'big book' texts should be used much more to link the reading and writing. By the age of nine, attainment in writing is above average and achievement is good. Many pupils use good expressive language and the correct grammar in a variety of work that includes reports, diaries, poetry, and responses to stories. There

are some good examples of well-planned writing for the history topics on the Tudors and the Aztecs. More needs to be done to give pupils opportunities to write for a real purpose, sometimes with others and to initiate their own ideas in their written work. Different authors should also be used to help pupils to improve the ideas, structure and style of their writing. There is a weakness in not giving pupils the chance to draft, edit and improve their own and the work of others. The written work of most pupils is well presented but a minority of pupils, in Year 4, are not using joined handwriting. Information and control technology is beginning to be used to support the written and research aspects of English through the school.

72. The quality of teaching overall is good. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good or better in Key Stage 2. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. This is largely attributed to the monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and the co-ordinator. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The best teaching seen in Key Stage 2 was characterised by a high level of challenge, pace and enthusiasm. The teachers are very skilled in the strategies used to raise achievement. For example, in order to help pupils to use expression in their reading one teacher examined with the pupils the meaning and feeling of the characters in the book they were reading. By the time she had finished pupils were enthusiastically reading with expression and very reluctant to put the book down. With this type of teaching, pupils are well prepared for the independent work, time limits are set for them and they are reminded of the targets for the lesson. The work set is carefully adapted to meet the needs of the ability range within the class. These qualities are sometimes missing in the satisfactory lessons in Key Stage 1. There are sound procedures in place for assessment but more use should be made of the results in order to challenge all the pupils, especially at Key Stage 1. A strength of all the teaching is the very good relationships established with the pupils and the encouragement given to them to behave well and work hard. Positive attitudes and very good behaviour were observed in all lessons.
73. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented in all classes and its effectiveness is good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. The shared work is generally taught well, but the last part of the lesson occasionally lacks variety for the pupils and is sometimes just a sharing of work rather than a consolidating and extending of learning. Teachers extend pupils' speaking and listening skills very well through other subjects. Writing quality in other subjects, although variable, is satisfactory overall.

MATHEMATICS

74. National test results for the Year 2000 show that standards were below the average. When compared to similar schools, pupils' results were again below average. However, it must be pointed out that a large majority of the pupils did reach the expected Level 2 but not enough pupils reached the higher Level 3 to give a higher overall average. The previous inspection indicated that pupils in Key Stage 1 were working in line with the national expectation.

Inspection evidence for this year's pupils, in Year 2, indicates that although a good majority of pupils have reached attained standards in line with national expectations, there are still not enough reaching the higher levels of attainment. Those higher attaining pupils are not achieving as they should. The school has analysed all these results, recognised the problem and is developing strategies to address the issue.

75. The attainment of pupils by the time they leave school at the end of Year 4 is above the national expectation for their ages. These pupils are achieving well. Standards in numeracy across the curriculum are slightly below average in Key Stage 1 and above average by the end of Year 4.
76. The quality of teaching is largely satisfactory, with some good teaching in Key Stage 1 and largely very good, with some excellent teaching in Key Stage 2. Where lessons are satisfactory, the ideas used, the use of time and resources and teachers' expectations of pupils' work, is largely satisfactory and sometimes good for the majority of pupils in the class but often fails to challenge the higher attaining pupils. These higher attaining pupils get few opportunities to try different approaches for overcoming the difficulties that arise when solving problems. They sometimes finish the work set well before the others and then waste some of the time allocated for mathematics. These higher attaining pupils also get few opportunities to discuss their mathematical work or explain their thinking. Where the teaching is very good or excellent, teachers plan well to challenge all abilities. They use a variety of ideas which motivates and stimulates pupils. These pupils often become fascinated with mathematics and enjoy the challenge of finding out answers to problems. This was seen in a lesson for pupils in Year 4. The teacher introduced the lesson well with a good mental starter. She thought of a secret number and pupils had to ask a variety of questions to eliminate blocks of numbers until they could pinpoint the number well. Later on, pupils had to halve quite large numbers until they couldn't be halved any more by whole numbers. This game was then raised to a higher level of thinking as pupils had to find large numbers that could only be halved once or twice at the most, such as 2,222. In these lessons, pupils of all abilities have the opportunity to progress and achieve well, they developed their understanding of thousands, hundreds, tens and units very well.
77. Pupils investigate properties of numbers. An example was observed in the Year 1 class where pupils used cards numbered one to ten and placed them in two circles with one number in the middle. Numbers on the left had to be less than the number and those on the right more than the number. The challenge was for pupils to realise that putting five in the middle would give an equal set of cards on either side. Pupils in Year 3 have a very good recall of number bands and strategies for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. In their work on shape, space and measurement, Year 4 pupils measure very accurately using metric systems in length and capacity. For example, they find perimeters of simple shapes. By the time pupils leave the school, many are developing their own strategies for solving problems and using these strategies both in working within mathematics and applying mathematics to practical contexts. This was seen to good effect in a lesson for pupils in Year 3, where they worked with three digit numbers indicating the

weight of parcels to be sent through the post. Pupils constructed their sums in individual ways, could explain their thinking and work confidently with grams and kilograms.

78. The co-ordinator for mathematics gives good leadership, well supported by the headteacher and numeracy governor. Observation of mathematics lessons throughout the school has begun, giving the co-ordinator an appropriate opportunity to monitor pupils' progress, as well as teaching and learning in the subject. There is a good scheme of work and the National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced well. The co-ordinator has identified the need to raise attainment in Key Stage 1 by providing more challenge to the higher attaining pupils and has plans to address this weakness shortly. Assessment procedures are satisfactory at present but a fresh focus on this aspect with more specific group and individual targets is planned. The use of computers to support learning in mathematics is developing well but this is to be extended as new resources recently purchased are introduced and teachers' confidence to use them is developed further.

SCIENCE

79. Attainment in science for this year's pupils is in line with those expected for pupils' ages at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are achieving as they should. It was a similar picture in the last inspection. Pupils attained similar standards in the National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2000 at the end of Key Stage 1.
80. This year's pupils, in Year 2 have a satisfactory knowledge of all the components of science. For example, they know about the importance of batteries in an electrical circuit and that sound is caused by vibrations. They make simple electrical circuits and can explain why a circuit may be incomplete and does not work. Pupils make careful observations of wildlife and are beginning to identify some of the plants growing in the school grounds. For instance, pupils in Year 2 were seen collecting leaves from trees and using a simple key to identify them. In Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of physical processes, materials and their properties and life processes and living things. For example, pupils in Year 4 investigated teeth by studying dentists models and most could correctly name different types of teeth, such as molars, canines and incisors and explain the different functions of each when eating. Pupils' ability to investigate problems is satisfactory. For example, pupils in Year 4 investigate electrical circuits in a more advanced way and are able to predict what might happen if they double the number of batteries or double the number of bulbs. Pupils' abilities to write up their investigations in a clear and logical manner is less well developed throughout the school as pupils in different years use different ways of doing this. Pupils throughout the school are developing a good scientific vocabulary and are using English well in science. For example, pupils in Year 3 understood and used words like opaque, translucent and transparent during their investigations into light and shadows.

81. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection but these lessons and an analysis of pupils' work in their books indicates that the quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but very good in Key Stage 2. Particular strengths in the teaching in Years 3 and 4 are found in the way experimental and investigative science is taught. Planning for these lessons is very good. Teachers make the objectives clear. They encourage pupils to predict what might happen, insist they make the test fair and ensure pupils are given a good range of resources. Also, they do not over-prescribe to the pupils what to do but encourage them to make suggestions and be totally involved with the teacher in setting up the investigation. This was seen to good effect in a lesson in Year 3. They had to demonstrate that the more solid and opaque an object is, the better shadow it would make. By being heavily involved in making suggestions, they were more enthusiastic, worked hard and reached valuable conclusions. However, this still represents a whole class approach and few opportunities are planned for the higher attaining pupils to set up and investigate problems independently. Where the teaching is satisfactory, there is less emphasis in teachers' planning to provide specific work for less able pupils, as well as the higher attaining pupils. This is mainly because assessment procedures in science have not yet been devised and it is therefore more difficult to identify the particular needs and abilities of pupils. The co-ordinator is well aware of this weakness and has plans to develop the investigational aspects of science over the next year. Numeracy and literacy are well developed in science teaching but the use of computers for presenting records or carry out research is underdeveloped.
82. The co-ordinator leads the subject well but is aware of the need to develop the subject further by improving aspects of the science curriculum, developing assessment records and using information and communication technology more. A good scheme of work is being introduced at present but this will need monitoring and evaluating. The subject is well enhanced by a number of out-of-school visits to places of scientific interest. For example, to the Snibston Discovery Museum, Shugborough Estate and to Cannock Chase for pond-dipping activities. Pupils grow plants in school, look after a guinea pig and study the natural environment of the school grounds well.

ART AND DESIGN

83. The attainment of seven and nine year olds is similar to that found in most schools and progress is satisfactory for all pupils including those with special educational needs. While these standards have been maintained from the previous inspection, the range of work covered this year is rather narrow. This is not the usual pattern and photographs show that pupils have in previous years explored a good variety of work. This year more focus has been on topic work and the opportunities to work on art for its own sake have been less. The co-ordinator has covered a good range of work with her own class and the art club she takes, but is not really aware of the provision in the rest of the school. This is because she has not had any release time to monitor the teaching and learning and her role is underdeveloped.

84. By the age of seven, pupils demonstrate satisfactory skills in using a limited range of media, tools and techniques in their drawings and pictures. Their work is mostly linked to science and history topics and too much use is made of crayons and the colouring-in of printed work sheets at times. Important skills in using paints, pencils and other materials are missing in the work on display. However, photographs show that pupils have used their skills soundly this year in some observational drawings of pumpkins in Year 2 and composed a 'cityscape' with collage materials in Year 1.
85. By the age of nine, pupils' skills in painting, printing and pattern making are developing soundly, as well as their understanding of the materials and methods used by some important artists. In Year 3 the work of Turner is used very well to help pupils express their ideas of boats in a storm. Cultural awareness is being developed through the printing of Sikh designs and the making of Aztec shields and headdresses. Most pupils are competent in applying different techniques with pencil, pastel, ink and brush to their work. Good use is beginning to be made of information and control technology software. Pupils in Year 3 printed some imaginative rainbow designs to accompany their writing, with good skills used in exploring shape, colour and pattern.
86. Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Displays around the school have improved since the previous inspection and reflect the care teachers take in celebrating the achievements of the children. The decision for all the pupils to work on a similar theme in their paintings, using the ideas of Monet, is a good one. It has motivated pupils well and produced a sharing of ideas. On occasions there are lower expectations and lack of choice for the pupils owing to limited resources. For example, some pupils in Year 2 copy pictures of butterflies from books with felt tip pens, while pupils in Year 4 make drawings of bottles without any choice of pencils. Although pupils have sketchbooks, they are not used widely enough to practice their skills or record ideas and observations that will support them in their work. The school has a kiln but clay work is not widely taught, although pupils in Year 2 are making their own model faces to place on the 'Marshbrook Tree' in the patio area.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87. By the age of seven and nine pupils attain the same standards found in most schools and make steady progress in their learning. This is significantly better than the previous inspection when standards were low in the school and progress was unsatisfactory at Key Stage 1. The co-ordinator has been successful in improving the subject knowledge of teachers so that they are more confident in their teaching. National guidelines are now used, which has improved planning and coverage of the National Curriculum. Resources for food technology and construction kits have been introduced to help widen the curriculum and pupils at Key Stage 1 now have more opportunities for

practical work. The co-ordinator is well aware that more still needs to be done to raise achievement further, but has no release time to monitor the teaching and learning.

88. Pupils in Year 2 make models in connection with their favourite nursery rhymes. The quality of the finish is good and pupils are given a suitable choice of materials to use. The moving parts work well. Although a simple drawing was done first and pupils also made models from construction toys, the design element of the subject is not as well developed. Pupils are not yet beginning to make more realistic plans or using labelled sketches and giving reasons for the materials they have chosen. This is needed to raise achievement further. There are good opportunities for the pupils to work together on their tasks and to discuss the finished articles together. This helps in the development of their language and social skills. In Year 1, pupils are busy making their own model adventure playground equipment and using construction kits to try out their ideas. The gains in learning would be greater if all the pupils had access to kits with moving parts so that the outcomes could be similar to the design intention.
89. By the age of nine, there are some satisfactory examples of pupils' developing their skills in designing, making and evaluating. In making a package for biscuits, the pupils evaluated several packages for suitability before drawing their own design. They drew their own with accurate measuring skills and described the stages of the making. Unfortunately all the pupils' packages were taken home, so no judgements could be made on the finished product. However, written evaluations were made and these were useful in describing how improvements could be made the next time. Pupils in both Year 3 and Year 4 have recently made 'pop up' books of aspects of the Tudors using split pins and levers for the movements. No designs or evaluations have been kept for these books. The finished product lacks some detail and precision with an over-reliance on coloured pencils and crayons. The pupils also used the same materials chosen by the teacher. This limits significantly the challenge and learning opportunities in the design making and evaluation.
90. Pupils of all ages are given good opportunities for developing their skills in food technology and careful attention is given to the hygiene aspects. Practical activities such as making fruit salads and sandwiches always involve the pupils in choosing, preparing, making and evaluating the finished product. This makes a good contribution to pupils' personal, health and social education and particularly enhances the chances pupils have to work together and share their ideas.
91. Teaching at both key stages is satisfactory overall. Some good links are made across different areas of the curriculum and the food technology builds particularly well on the healthy living topics in science. In Year 4, a good lesson on making sandwiches involved pupils in using the computers to record their preferences for fillings and kinds of bread on a database. When examining the texture of different breads together, pupils were very sensible

and worked productively together on their tasks with very good levels of behaviour. There were high expectations from the teacher in this lesson and pupils were challenged at each stage of their learning. Overall, pupils have limited choice in the resources and materials they use; the design aspect is covered but with limited detail in key Stage 1 and the finished article needs to be tested more to see if it functions well.

GEOGRAPHY

92. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. However, this lesson, together with an analysis of pupils' work in their books, teachers' planning and an interview with the geography co-ordinator, indicates that pupils' attainments are in line with expectations for their ages and their achievement satisfactory. This is the case at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4.
93. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a satisfactory knowledge of the local area. For example, they are able to draw a map of their journey to school. They carry out simple tasks and select information using resources that are given to them, such as atlases and maps. They express their views about different aspects of the land around the school. They write about their likes and dislikes about the view from the school across the fields, as well as discussing their perception of an adventure playground that is being built in the village.
94. By the end of Year 4, pupils are developing a wider understanding of their world and study places such as Aylesbury and compare this to their own area. Pupils have a sound understanding of the many different climates in the world, such as polar, continental, desert, tropical and equatorial. They describe the differences well. They are aware of places abroad as they indicate on a map where pupils in the class have been on holiday. They use maps and globes and are beginning to understand the use of grid references to identify places on a map.
95. In the one lesson seen, the teaching was good. The teacher had prepared the lesson well by devising a range of well thought out ideas to motivate and interest the pupils. The lesson was about interpreting weather records which had been kept daily by the class. This study was linked well to the topic of climate. Pupils were encouraged to use symbols to report the different weather recorded for each day, such as clouds, sun, rain and days where it was both cloudy and sunny. Finally, temperature readings were taken from different parts of the playground and contrasts were discovered with those areas in direct sunshine and those in the shade. The lesson made a sound contribution to literacy development, as there was a good use of geographical language.

96. The co-ordinator is in the process of introducing a new scheme of work and the policy, which is out of date, will be revised shortly. The co-ordinator is well aware that she has had little opportunity to evaluate and monitor the subject throughout the school because of the recent concentration on other subjects, such as mathematics and English. Resources are broadly satisfactory. New globes have recently been put in all classrooms but the co-ordinator is aware that information and communication technology is underused to support geography. The subject is enhanced by a number of visits out to places of geographical interest, such as a local farm and the local village. A river study is undertaken. There is a close link with history in the use of maps of the world. For example, in a history lesson on the Spanish invasion of Mexico, the teacher used the map well to ensure all pupils knew where the relevant countries were and the name and expanse of the ocean between.

HISTORY

97. Only one lesson could be seen during the inspection. However, work seen in pupils' books was scrutinised, teachers' planning was inspected and the subject leader was interviewed. Inspectors were able to judge that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national expectation and it is above the expectation at the end of Year 4. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving satisfactorily in Key Stage 1 and they are achieving well in Key Stage 2. The improvement in Key Stage 2 is largely due to the quality and depth of work covered. These higher standards in Key Stage 2 are an improvement on the work seen in the last inspection where attainment was then in line with national expectations.
98. In Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge of history and some of the changes that have taken place over the years. For example, work seen in their books indicates that pupils know the difference between old houses and modern ones. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, know that houses with thatched roofs are a fire hazard. They compare modern kitchen equipment with that in use one hundred years ago. Some pupils were able to write some interesting facts about the great fire of London. By the age of seven, pupils have a developing sense of chronology and know that some things take place in the recent past but other things happened a long time ago.
99. By the age of nine, pupils develop good skills in researching historical sources and using evidence. For example, through research into fact sheets and books they are able to find out and write about life in a Tudor street. They have a clear picture of the difference between rich and poor in Tudor times. They compare life in the country to life in town during the reign of the Tudor Kings and Queens. Pupils are able to describe a number of important events in depth and write about the changes that occurred. For example, the effects of the sinking of the Mary Rose.
100. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and the teacher demonstrated a very good understanding of how to teach history and had devised some well thought out activities to motivate the pupils, For example, the lesson seen investigated modern Mexico. Pupils identified by research

which aspects of the present country are influenced by the Spanish Conquistadors of the 16th Century and which by the native Aztec civilisation. This proved an exciting piece of research which challenged all abilities very well. By the end of the lesson, pupils were able to identify various items like the alphabet, plants, religion and building and say which were imported by the Spaniards and which were influenced by Aztec culture.

101. The subject is well led by the well-qualified history co-ordinator. A new and good scheme of work has been introduced and is being trialled in Key Stage 1 and adapted in Key Stage 2. The resources are very good, especially in Key Stage 2. The subject is enhanced by a number of out-of-school visits and visitors into school. For example, the Tudor Moseley Old Hall is visited by Years 3 and 4, Shugborough House is visited with its Victorian kitchen and the local village of Penkeridge is studied, which has a number of historical buildings and connections. A role-playing actor has visited the school dressed as a Roman and the pupils were invited to ask questions and engage in discussion.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

102. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. However, evidence was obtained from an analysis of pupils' work displayed on the walls, discussions with pupils, an examination of teachers' planning and an interview with the co-ordinators. This indicated that attainment is in line with national expectations by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are making sound progress and are achieving as they should for their age. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment overall is below national expectations, although a small majority are reaching the expected level. It was a similar picture at the last inspection, although attainment was then in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. The school was handicapped for some time by limited resources but this has now improved well.
103. At the end of Key Stage 1 a small majority of pupils show confidence in carrying out basic control operations by using the keyboard and mouse. They use the mouse carefully to select options, sometimes changing the size of text. Pupils know that it is important to give the computer the correct instructions in order for it to produce the desired results. A number of pupils enter information well, save their work and retrieve it through printing it out. However, a significant proportion still need help to carry out many of these operations. A proportion of pupils in Year 1 have good skills in information and communication technology. For example, they were seen moving text around the screen using the "Granny's Garden" program. They were able to change the colour, insert capital letters and many able to print their work independently.
104. At the end of Year 4, most pupils use the computer with confidence. They load CD ROMS and investigate the stored information independently. They save any information they require and print it out. They use the computer to produce text and poetry generated in literacy lessons. They present it individually, deciding their own letter size and font. For example, work displayed on the wall about a fictitious journey to 'The Castle of Baroness Jugular' was of good quality. It demonstrated that the whole class are aware

of the wide range of options available when using computers to present work. Pupils in year 4 also log on to the educational Internet when they require specific information. They are beginning to understand what a database is and the use of spreadsheets. They talk about their experiences of information and communication both inside and outside school. For example, pupils are able to name the type of computer they have at home and describe how they would like to improve it with more capacity.

105. In the one lesson seen for pupils in Year 1, the teaching was of good quality. The class teacher was assisted by a parent helper who was very knowledgeable and skilled. She provided a good level of support, but in such a way that pupils were encouraged to become independent users. Pupils were not left unsupervised and the teacher intervened only to ensure progress was made. The tasks undertaken were challenging and enjoyable. For example, the program used required the pupils to put the operations of getting dressed in a school uniform into the correct order.
106. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator. She is developing the subject well by building up resources and giving training and guidance to teachers. She has worked hard and made many improvements. Teachers' knowledge and confidence is variable and the co-ordinator has developed a course for teachers which will be continued in the autumn. The school has obtained a good grant and the co-ordinator has bought some very appropriate software. However, these are very new and many are not yet used. Also, some teachers will need more guidance and confidence before they can be used. Consequently, the co-ordinator is aware that the use of computers to support learning in most subjects is still underdeveloped. Also, there are very few opportunities timetabled for the specific teaching of information and communication technology. Good assessment procedures have been devised to evaluate pupils' skills and identify their progress but these are not yet used. A number of parents give up their time on a regular basis to work with pupils in Key Stage 1. This is a very valued contribution and is rapidly helping to raise attainment. There is a good link with the Middle school. Pupils in Year 4 are intending to make regular visits to have instructions on using computers. This is a good preparation for when they eventually attend the school.

MUSIC

107. No overall judgements can be made on pupils' attainment and their progress as only one aspect of music was seen. This was singing which was of high quality and shows that pupils have made good progress in this area of the curriculum. It exceeds the standards expected for their age. Only one lesson was observed. A specialist music teacher took this. He occasionally has the whole school together to prepare them for a special concert. The normal arrangement is for lessons to be taken by the class teacher. About a third of the pupils from Year 2 onwards also benefit from very good instrumental teaching and play together about once a term in the school band. Their attainment is often above average and they are making good progress. No

judgements can be made on standards in composition or appraising music, as these were not observed. In the last inspection, pupils' attainment was judged to be in line with the national expectation for their age.

108. Singing has a high profile in the school and all pupils respond with enthusiasm and are highly motivated. Younger pupils have learnt a good range of songs and often add their own actions and an accompaniment with the percussion instruments. Older pupils sing tunefully with good phrasing and tone. The inspirational teaching by the visiting music specialist challenged the pupils considerably and their achievement levels in this lesson were very high. They were particularly skilled at copying rhythmic patterns correctly and imitating pitch exercises. Pupils also sing well in assemblies and have the chance to perform to a wider audience in termly concerts in the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to hear a wide range of music from different times and cultures and the assemblies promote this well. The listening skills of the pupils are good through the school and older pupils sometimes appraise the music they hear.
109. Pupils, by the age of nine, are at the very early stages of understanding the language and structure of music. In discussion with them, and examining teachers' planning, there are very few opportunities for pupils to use instruments to compose and improvise music together or to make up their own pictorial scores. The percussion instruments are rarely used. This important aspect of creating and developing musical ideas is a weakness in the provision. It is also of particular importance for those pupils who are not fortunate enough to receive instrumental tuition. Information and communication technology is not yet used to support the teaching of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

110. Only one lesson of physical education was seen and it is not possible to make a judgement on pupils' attainment over the full range of the curriculum. In the lesson seen, which was a games lesson, the attainment of the pupils, including those with special educational needs was in line with the national expectation. Pupils were achieving as they should. Teachers' planning indicates that all areas of the curriculum are covered and the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. At the last inspection, attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4. In the lesson seen, which was a hockey lesson for pupils in Year 3, they could follow the rules of the game well, demonstrate a competitive spirit and maintained appropriate physical exertion. Pupils have sound hockey stick skills, dribble and pass the ball well and receive the ball while on the move. They also work with a partner well to improve their skills. Teachers' records and evidence indicates that in swimming, pupils attain standards above the national expectation, with many pupils swimming unaided for a sustained period over a 25 metre distance by the time they leave the school. Pupils achieve well in swimming.
111. The quality of teaching in the one lesson seen was of very good quality. The teacher had a very good understanding of how to teach the skills intended. The teacher encouraged pupils to demonstrate and criticise their own performance in order to improve. The teacher demonstrates very good class control and manages the pupils very well. There is very good co-operation between the teacher and a skilled parent helper to demonstrate and

emphasise the correct technique of handling the hockey stick and striking the ball.

112. The subject co-ordinator is aware that little development of the subject has been possible over the last few years as the school has been concentrating on other subjects. Also, no curriculum time is available for evaluating and monitoring the teaching and the learning in the subject. She is anxious to develop the dance and gymnastics elements of physical education. In dance, there is a need for teachers to provide opportunities for pupils to be more creative and to place less emphasis on the use of taped lessons. Gymnastics will be reintroduced in the autumn as new climbing equipment is at present being fitted in the hall. A new and good scheme of work is being introduced. The subject is enhanced by a number of extracurricular activities, including football and a games club. There are regular competitions with other schools. Year 4 pupils attend a one-week residential course where appropriate outdoor and adventurous activities take place.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

113. Attainment in religious education is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and meets the expectations of the Locally Agreed syllabus. At the previous inspection similar standards were found. All pupils including those with special educational needs generally make sound progress as they move through the school. The co-ordinator, who is also the recently appointed headteacher is very aware of some gaps in the older pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity. This is because it was not taught progressively through the school in the past. Now there is a much more detailed and progressive framework to follow, which is taken from the agreed syllabus. The co-ordinator is also carefully monitoring the teachers' planning. Apart from one linked religious and personal and social education lesson in Year 1, no lessons were observed. Judgements are made on the planning, talking to pupils and looking at their work.
114. At the age of seven, most pupils have a reasonable knowledge and understanding of Judaism and Christianity. They have visited the local church and know about some of the special features there. They describe the importance of the clothes Jewish people wear for their worship and try on some of the clothing. They have also learnt about life at the synagogue from a talk given by the president of the Jewish community. Pupils often celebrate special religious festivals in assemblies and this helps to increase their knowledge and understanding further. In lessons with a personal and social link they listen attentively to the teacher and make good connections between the stories they hear about religion and their own attitudes to life. These pupils have a very strong moral awareness and a good understanding of forgiveness, tolerance and care for others.
115. By the end of Year 4, pupils have gained some knowledge and understanding of how Christians and other religions show a commitment to their faith. For example, they write and illustrate with good detail the stages in the journey

Moses made to the Promised Land. They find out about famous people such as Gladys Aylward and St. Bernadette and make a special study of the Sikh religion. There are, however, some important gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, especially about the stories in the New Testament and the pupils have not had the chance to visit any other faith centres. Also, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to find out information for themselves. Some of the work in the pupils' books is the same and copied from the board. Although the co-ordinator has increased resources so that pupils can study other faiths, there is still a shortage of books in the library. A strength throughout the school is the way in which teachers are very sensitive to pupils' feelings and thoughts in discussions. However, where lessons have a dual role with personal and social education, the religious education part of the lesson is not covered in enough detail.