

INSPECTION REPORT

PERRY BEECHES INFANT SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103164

Acting headteacher: Mrs Denise McManus

Reporting inspector: Mr J Donnelly

23637

Dates of inspection: 7 - 10 May 2002

Inspection number: 197778

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Infant |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Beeches Road Great Barr Birmingham |
| Postcode: | B42 2PY |
| Telephone number: | 0121 360 4222 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs Maureen Bowyer |
| Date of previous inspection: | September 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|------------|----------------------|---|--|
| 23637 | J Donnelly | Registered inspector | Mathematics Physical education | Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further |
| 9798 | V Ashworth | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents How well does the school care for its pupils |
| 30075 | M Duggan | Team inspector | Science Religious education Equality of opportunity | |
| 15691 | J Finch | Team inspector | Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Information and communication technology Music | |
| 20707 | D Brettell | Team inspector | English Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language | |

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|------------|----------------|---|-------------------------|
| 24758 | D Townsend | Team inspector | Geography History Provision for pupils with special educational needs | |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Perry Beeches Infant School caters for pupils aged four to seven. The school, which has a three-form entry and 241 pupils on roll, of whom 124 are boys and 117 are girls, is about average size nationally. Attainment on entry for the current Reception class is broadly in line with national averages. The Year 2 group of pupils who sat the national tests last year was below average in attainment when they entered Year 1 to start the National Curriculum. The area is one of mixed social and economic conditions, reflecting the population of Great Barr and neighbouring Perry Barr, North Birmingham. There are pupils with English as an additional language (26.5 per cent), some of whom are at the earliest stages of language acquisition, which is very high in comparison with all schools nationally. The main languages spoken at home by parents, include Panjabi, Gudjurathi, Urdu and Bengali. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average (16.6 per cent). The school is a multi-cultural and diverse environment. The level of mobility (pupils joining or leaving the school), at 22 per cent, is high and new arrivals are often pupils with special educational needs. There are 54 pupils (24.1 per cent) with special educational needs; this figure is broadly in line with the national average. The school has recently moved into its current building and this relocation took longer than anticipated. At the end of Year 2 most pupils join the adjacent junior school. There were three supply teachers in the school during the week of the inspection as a result of staff illness and internal promotion. The headteacher retired the week before the inspection and an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher led the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Perry Beeches is an improving school with many good features. The improvements have not yet fully impacted in the national test results, which are particularly affected by the high level of pupil mobility. Pupils made satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science in the lessons observed, despite standards being below average by age seven. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. However in some classes, particularly in Reception, teaching and learning are good. Leadership and management are satisfactory. As a result, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- In some classes teaching and learning were good in English, mathematics and science in the lessons observed.
- The teaching is consistently good or better in the Reception class enabling children to make a good start to their education.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, especially their social development, which is very good.
- Most pupils have very good attitudes to work and behaviour is very good.
- There are very good relationships between the different groups of pupils in the school and mutual respect is a strong feature of the school's work.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, especially in reading, and in mathematics and science are too low.
- The standards achieved by more able pupils are too low.
- The attendance of some pupils is unsatisfactory.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' learning in order to plan the next lesson with enough challenge.
- Subject co-ordinators are insufficiently involved in evaluating and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- Governors' effectiveness in evaluating the work of the school in relation to the standards pupils achieve in English, mathematics and science.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since its inspection in September 1997. The staff have worked very hard since that time to address the key issues and weaknesses successfully. Teaching is now consistently satisfactory and is much improved from that inspection when 20 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. Schemes of work are now more detailed. Procedures for pupils' special educational needs are now well established. This has led to the good improvement in teaching and learning overall and as a result standards are rising. Good progress has also been made in developing the roles and responsibilities of the senior management team although it is too early to judge the full impact on pupils' learning. Governors' roles have improved but there is still more rigour required to evaluate the work of the school effectively. The school's capacity to continue to improve further is good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 |
| reading | E | D | E | E |
| writing | E* | C | D | E |
| mathematics | E* | D | E | E* |

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Children make sound progress in the Reception classes particularly in personal and social development, because of satisfactory and often good teaching. Most are working towards the nationally expected standards at the end of the Reception Year. Inspection findings show sound progress overall by pupils in Years 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science but attainment is

below average and there are weaknesses in investigation and enquiry skills in science and mathematics. Standards and progress in all other subjects are average.

Results in the 2001 national tests for pupils aged seven were well below average in reading and below average in writing. When compared to similar schools nationally, reading and writing are below average. Year 2 standards have risen in writing since the last inspection reflecting the emphasis the school has placed upon raising standards overall. However, standards in writing and reading are still not high enough especially for more able pupils. This is against a background of a high percentage of pupils with English as an additional language and significant movement of pupils in and out of the school from Reception class to Year 2.

In mathematics, seven-year-olds made sound progress and learned well in the lessons observed. They start Year 1 with standards that are below average. By the age of seven, the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 2 is below average but nevertheless shows steady achievement. Not enough pupils achieve the higher Level 3 and this depresses the overall statistic. As a result of a high number of pupils with special educational needs and a high number of pupils entering the school whose attainments are well below average, the school's overall attainment in the national tests is in the lowest five per cent nationally. More able pupils do not make the progress they should.

In science, by the time they are seven, inspection findings show pupils achieve standards that are below the levels expected nationally in all areas of the subject. Teachers' assessments in 2001 also show standards below national averages. Many achieved the expected Level 2 standard in the national tests, but relatively few achieved above expected standards. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the 2001 cohort was high. More able pupils do not make the progress they should.

All pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make steady progress and those with special educational needs make good progress.

Over the last five years, the overall trend of improvement in comparison to all schools is below the national average. However inspection findings, including judgements on the work produced by pupils, show that standards are beginning to rise more noticeably.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They enjoy coming to school and are courteous and friendly. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour in most lessons and around the school is very good. There have been no exclusions this year. |
| Personal development and relationships | There are very good relationships between the many different races and religious backgrounds represented among the pupils. |
| Attendance | Attendance is unsatisfactory. This is largely due to some parents |

| | |
|--|--|
| | taking their children on extended holidays. Too many pupils are late for school. |
|--|--|

Pupils enjoy their learning, they make steady progress and as a result standards are rising.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Reception | Years 1 – 2 |
|------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Quality of teaching | Good | Satisfactory |

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

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall.

Strengths

- Teachers' high expectations lead to good learning in literacy and numeracy.
- Well-prepared lessons and materials keep pupils focused on the task so they learn at a good rate.
- Good use of support staff, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning, especially for those with special educational needs.
- Good pace and challenge motivate pupils with special educational needs to work with enthusiasm.
- Clear strategies for managing pupils' behaviour.

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient questioning of more able pupils to extend and challenge their thinking.
- Too little time spent at the end of the lesson reviewing and evaluating pupils' learning in order to plan for the next stage of learning.

The quality of teaching in the Reception classes is good. As a result, many of the early obstacles to the children's learning are overcome and they become curious and confident learners. However, their attainment in language and mathematical skills is still below the expected level by the end of their Reception Year because they start from a low base,

Teaching and learning across the school for pupils in Year 1 and 2 are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. During the week of the inspection there were three supply teachers in the school who did not know the pupils' learning needs well enough for progress to be consistent.

All pupils, whatever their background and culture, are valued and included well in school life. This is a result of many teachers being very adept at making sure they teach their lessons effectively and that all pupils learn well. Literacy and numeracy are well taught across the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The curriculum is satisfactory overall. There is a range of interesting and stimulating learning opportunities. There are good links with the local community, which enhance pupils' learning effectively. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good provision, together with good quality teaching, enables pupils to make good progress. Pupils are fully included in the life of the school. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Progress of most pupils who are new arrivals and at the initial stages of English language acquisition is satisfactory. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Provision for personal development is good. All cultures in the school are recognised and valued. Social development is very good. Moral and spiritual development are good and cultural development is satisfactory. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | There are sound procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and health and safety. The school successfully promotes mutual respect amongst all of its pupils. The assessment of pupils' work to plan for the next stage of learning is a weakness. |
| How well the school works in partnership with parents | The parents have positive views of the school overall. The information parents receive is good. Parents are sufficiently involved in the life of the school and their children's own learning. |

Pupils learning opportunities are satisfactory and all pupils are included in the life of the school and they make good progress in self-esteem and confidence.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Leadership and management are satisfactory. Lines of communication are clear and the new senior management team is now focused on raising standards. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governors now recognise the strengths and weaknesses of the school and understand the need to improve their procedures for monitoring its work, which at the moment is a weakness. |

| Aspect (continued) | Comment (continued) |
|--|---|
| The school's evaluation of its performance | The school has satisfactory expertise in analysing data to provide information about the progress pupils make and to set realistic targets to improve standards in English and mathematics. The role of other subject co-ordinators is under developed. |
| The strategic use of resources | Overall, the budget is used well. Accommodation and resources across the school are satisfactory overall. |

The school ensures value for money on purchases but does not yet compare itself to other similar schools. The governors have not evaluated the school's work, particularly the standards pupils achieve and this is unsatisfactory.

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 children enjoy coming to school. • Children are safe and most pupils respect each other. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. |

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. It judges the range of after-school clubs to be satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Children make sound progress in the Reception classes particularly in personal and social development, because of good teaching and most are working towards the nationally expected levels by the end of the Reception Year.
- 2 Inspection findings show sound progress overall by pupils aged six to seven in English, mathematics and science but attainment is below average.
- 3 The school's overall performance in English is below average. On the basis of the 2001 national tests; standards were well below average in reading and below average in writing. Compared with similar schools performance in both reading and writing was well below average. The findings of the inspection are that, despite some improvement to bring performance closer to what is expected nationally, reading and writing are still below average. The match of work to ability for more able pupils is a weakness. One of the reasons for the improvements in standards seen in this inspection is the quality of teaching, much of which is good and sometimes very good. Pupils make satisfactory progress, including those who have special educational needs and English as an additional language.
- 4 In the 2001 mathematics national tests for pupil's aged seven, results were well below the national average. Compared with results achieved by schools from similar backgrounds, their performance was also well below average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was below the national average. Standards at the end of Year 2 in the lessons observed in mathematics are below the national average but are an improvement when compared to the 2001 test results. However, more able pupils do not make the progress they should and progress for all pupils is limited by insufficient investigative and enquiry work. Contributory factors include the large percentage of pupils with special educational needs in this year group, high pupil mobility and to some extent the re-location of the school and past inconsistency in the quality of teaching.
- 5 Attainment in science by the time pupils are seven is slightly below the national average and in comparison with similar schools is well below. This differs from the previous inspection, which reported standards close to the national average. However, since 1998 the trend has been slightly upwards, peaking in 2000 when 91 per cent of pupils reached the expected level or above. Progress for more able pupils is unsatisfactory and investigative work is a current weakness.
- 6 Standards in all other subjects including information and communication technology is that expected nationally and most pupils make at least satisfactory progress.

- 7 However, many higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently, due mainly to an assessment system lacking sharp checks to ensure that appropriate work is set to meet their needs and this is unsatisfactory.
- 8 Inspection findings show that standards are below average in the current Year 2 classes. Factors, which have contributed to these low results over four years, include:
- weaknesses in the quality of teaching in the past;
 - high percentages of pupil mobility causing disruption to learning;
 - a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language;
 - inappropriate work set for higher attaining pupils.
- 9 The picture is now more positive. The quality of teaching has greatly improved and the numeracy and literacy strategies are having a sound effect on achievement, as is the school's strategy for targeting groups of pupils in order to raise standards further. However, the school still has a large proportion of pupils who move in and out of the school. In the older year groups, some pupils do not have enough time to make sufficient progress from a low starting point to match the performance of more established pupils in the class.
- 10 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Those from other cultures and beliefs and pupils with English as an additional language make steady progress in lessons and over time. This is because of teaching that engenders positive attitudes and gives most pupils a better level of challenge in their work, particularly the average and lower attaining pupils. New arrivals to the school make satisfactory progress. The school is successful in tracking and evaluating the progress pupils make.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 11 Pupils' attitudes to learning have improved since the last inspection and are very good throughout the school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good overall. The school has a warm, caring and positive ethos, enhanced by the very good quality of relationships leading to some good learning in lessons. Almost all pupils know what is expected of them and respond well to the encouragement and praise given to them.
- 12 Pupils are very enthusiastic about their school and they apply themselves to learning as a result. They enjoy their lessons. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that their child liked school. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work, and take pride in having their work on display both in the classroom and around the school. Pupils settle quickly to work in most lessons and concentrate well. They try hard to complete the set work. In the reception classes the children already show very positive attitudes and learn skills of independence, based on the very good relationships with adults in the classroom. These attitudes and relationships continue throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs share the positive attitudes that pervade the school. There is a 'before and after school club' situated in the junior school which is currently registered to take thirty-two pupils. This is effectively run and which further improves pupils' social skills.

- 13 Parents are very happy with behaviour in the school and all but one of those who answered the questionnaire said so. There is an expectation of high standards and the observed behaviour reflects this. The high quality of behaviour contributes to the progress pupils make. In the dining hall behaviour is good or very good, and behaviour on the corridors was observed to be generally very good. All pupils know what is expected of them in the classroom and play well together during breaks. They are very polite and generally confident and articulate with adults. There are no exclusions. All pupils whatever their culture or beliefs are well included in the life of the school.
- 14 There are many opportunities for all pupils to take part in all activities relating to personal development and relationships. Opportunities for pupils to use initiative and undertake responsibility are good. Pupils are able to work well on their own during class work and do their best to complete the set tasks. In reception, pupils are given opportunities to close the lesson by taking over the teacher's role, and being leaders or "back-up" at the rear when the class leaves the room. There is also a leader for the day to allocate jobs. They also learn to take responsibility for the library by recording the borrowing of their own books and their return. Pupils are keen to help in the classroom by distributing work and tidying at the end of lessons. The school is developing strategies to increase responsibility in the classroom, especially in Year 2.
- 15 The school is successful in fostering the good personal development of pupils. The reception classes settle quickly and are encouraged to grow in self-confidence. They learn to co-operate with others and become familiar with the daily routines of school life. They learn to listen with respect to the views of others. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to work together in pairs and small groups. They concentrate well and help each other. Occasional acts of kindness were observed. They are happy to share books and equipment. Pupils are given the opportunity to help others, for example by raising money for charity.
- 16 Relationships in the school are now very good and there has been good progress since the last inspection. Instances of bullying are infrequent. Pupils are well supported by staff and all reported incidents and concerns are taken very seriously. There is an obvious mutual respect shown between the staff and pupils.
- 17 Attendance is unsatisfactory and below the national average at 92.7 per cent. Unauthorised absence is above the national average at 6.9 per cent. These figures do not show any improvement since the last inspection when the figures were in line with national averages. The school is aware that the figures are disappointing. Some parents continue to take holidays in term time often lasting longer than two weeks. Attendance is adversely affected from time to time by families who are living outside the schools catchment area.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 18 Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed.

- 19 The quality of teaching and learning in the Reception classes is good. However, many begin from such a low starting point their attainment in language and mathematical skills is still below the expected level by the end of their Reception Year.
- 20 Teaching and learning across the school for pupils aged six and seven are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. The teaching meets the needs of most of its pupils well and all cultures and beliefs including new arrivals are fully included in planning. However, many higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently, due mainly to an assessment system lacking sharp checks to ensure that appropriate work is set to meet their needs. During the week of the inspection there were three supply teachers in the school who did not know the pupils' learning needs well enough for progress to be consistent.
- 21 The overall quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory and in mathematics it is good which is a significant improvement from the inspection of 1997. Some teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and give much well directed support to pupils' learning. Lessons are well planned and structured according to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and clear learning intentions for each element of the lesson are stated. These are not always made known to pupils and too little time is spent at the end of the lesson to check pupils' understanding or evaluate their learning and does not inform the planning for the next lesson. This is unsatisfactory. Planning extension work for more able pupils and insufficient investigative and enquiry skills in mathematics is also a weakness.
- 22 The quality of teaching and learning in science is satisfactory overall with one out of four lessons seen being good. Consistent planning in paired year groups is helping teachers to set clear objectives for each lesson. When these are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and successes evaluated at the end, good learning and progress ensues. The best teaching and learning combines problem-solving discussions high expectations and good pace. In lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers' expectations are not sufficiently taxing, pace and learning slows and more able pupils are not always engaged in worthwhile activities and do not make the progress they should. Insufficient emphasis is given to practical investigation work.
- 23 Teachers support pupils with special educational needs well. The most effective learning takes place when non-teaching support is available using structured programmes. Planning shows clear learning objectives and individual education plans are realistic and achievable. Pupils respond positively when their contributions are valued and their self-esteem is high. Support staff are, overall, used effectively. School and cohort targets are realistic and reviewed and amended where appropriate to provide new challenges. Teaching and learning in other subjects including information and communication technology is satisfactory overall.

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

- 24 The curriculum is satisfactory overall with good features and meets statutory requirements. The curriculum is responsive to the needs of the different groups of pupils in the school and prepares them for living in a diverse society.

- 25 The quality and range of learning opportunities in the Reception classes are good. The curriculum in the Reception classes is planned to take account of all the required areas of learning for this age. A high priority is given to the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy and to personal, social and emotional development. All adults support children in making progress so that most children are working towards achieving expected levels in order to start the National Curriculum in Year 1.
- 26 The curriculum in the infant classes is satisfactory. It is broad, balanced and relevant. National Curriculum requirements are met along with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The curriculum has significantly improved since the inspection of 1997. Appropriate priority is given to the teaching of English, mathematics and science. The rising standards in these subjects indicate that the slightly above-average allocation of time has been used well.
- 27 Arrangements for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning in enquiry are under-emphasised in science. Also, the use and application of mathematical skills are still under-developed and not fully promoted by all staff. The computer suite represents enhanced provision for ICT and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is now better and the teaching of computer skills has given more learning opportunities for all pupils.
- 28 The arrangements for teaching literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory. Both national strategies have been largely successfully implemented and all staff have been trained. However, the full impact of the literacy strategy has yet to be seen in pupils' work and in national test results. Some opportunities have been provided for pupils to develop and extend their writing in other subjects of the curriculum such as science, history, geography and religious education. Planning for numeracy lessons is good. The structured approach to lessons, with more time given to mental arithmetic and the development of mathematical language, are important factors in the rising trends in the subject. Opportunities are also given for pupils to develop their numeracy skills in other subjects.
- 29 Policies and schemes of work are appropriate and are in place in many subjects. The school uses national guidance and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education as a basis for planning. Overall, teachers' planning of the work for their classes is good and has greatly improved since the inspection of 1997. All teachers organise their planning effectively and have particular regard for new arrivals to the school. However, the planning for higher attaining pupils in English, mathematics and science is a weakness, which has not been identified by subject co-ordinators. Learning intentions are clearly stated in teachers' short-term planning.
- 30 The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The emphasis is on early identification and intervention. All identified pupils receive additional support from the teaching assistants. The support is effective and the pupils make good progress. Pupils with statements of special educational need are given suitable support in line with the requirements of their statements. Individual educational plans are provided for pupils who are on the school's register of special educational needs. They are reviewed appropriately.

- 31 The curriculum is designed to enable pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to have equal access to learning opportunities and in this the school is successful. The school does well in making a clear distinction between pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. The school has a commitment to, and is successful in, achieving equal opportunities for all its pupils, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, background and attainment, in all its activities. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good.
- 32 There is a sound range of extra-curricular activities. These activities make a good contribution to the development of personal and social skills and contribute significantly to pupils' learning. There are sound links with the community to support and improve pupils' education. There are also many visitors to the school, and many representatives who work in the local community. Other community links, such as pupils singing carols, help to promote an understanding of citizenship.
- 33 Links with other schools and colleges are good. Sixth form students visit the school for work experience. There are also strong links with Wolverhampton University, secondary and primary schools.
- 34 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has developed since the last inspection and is now more positive and is good.
- 35 The school encourages spiritual development and provision for pupils is good. This results in pupils gaining an insight into their own values and beliefs. It enhances learning as they watch plants grow experiencing joy in the natural world. Religious beliefs are explored with opportunities to visit a temple, a synagogue and a Christian church during their time in school. Religious festivals are celebrated such as Diwali, the Hindu festival of light which signifies the triumph of good over evil, and Eid, the Muslim celebration at the end of Ramadan, together with this country's Saints' Days. There is also an assembly to celebrate the Chinese New Year. These are good opportunities to explore the values and beliefs of others and the way they impact on people's lives. Through them, pupils learn tolerance and understanding. The caring ethos in the school also promotes the appreciation of human feelings and emotions. The pupils gain confidence and are able to ask questions to expand their learning. Pupils are able to experience awe and wonder as they observe seeds develop in the classroom and express excitement at what might happen next. They start to learn the value of peace and harmony as soothing classical music is played during a Year 1 art and design lesson. "Our wonderful world" display in the corridor contains the words "The most beautiful thing in our world is the sunset. I love its shiny colours" and "I think God made all the beautiful things".
- 36 Provision for moral development is also good. The pupils are taught to distinguish between right and wrong as soon as they enter the school. Good behaviour is treated as very important. They are taught to act confidently and are given every encouragement to express their own views. There is no sign of racial tension and a mutual respect develops throughout their time in school. In a whole school assembly, the pupils heard the story of the prodigal

son, imaginatively given by the local minister, and considered anger, sorrow and forgiveness and the moral messages of Bible stories.

- 37 Social development within the school is very good. The school has fostered a sense of community with common values, which include everyone. The school promotes equality and encourages pupils to work and play together. Personal qualities develop, including self-respect and a respect for others. There are opportunities to take responsibility, and to be thoughtful and kind. As a result pupils show respect for living things and the environment.
- 38 Cultural provision is satisfactory. The pupils learn about their own and other cultures and their religions. There is an interesting display of masks from Mexico, Singapore and Africa in the reception area, alongside the designs created by Year 2. There is also a display of the current school uniform, which is in the traditional English style. Parents were invited into school to watch different cultural wedding celebrations with the children where they dressed up and decorated their clothes. Commonwealth Day was celebrated with an assembly and a large Commonwealth Games poster announces the forthcoming attraction to take place in Manchester. Although vegetarian meals are offered, the preparation of Halal is not possible in the new kitchen. The school goes to watch other school's theatrical performances and Year 1 are to visit a local special school to see performing arts. Music is also part of the school curriculum, and interesting examples of pupils' artwork decorate the walls.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 39 Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. However, the monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development together with personal support and guidance are good. Procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour are very good. The school takes effective steps to ensure that all pupils benefit from school. As a result, pupils feel safe and demonstrate good attitudes to learning and standards are rising.
- 40 The designated person for child protection has just retired. She had received regular training and procedures are in place. It is anticipated that the acting head teacher will take over this role and she hopes to undertake the necessary training as soon as this is practicable. However she has had some experience of dealing with these issues and is fully aware of the procedures to be followed.
- 41 Pupils are supported well and detailed class records are kept showing individual pupils' personal development, achievement and progress. These records move up the school with the pupil. There is also contact between the local education authority and the visiting teacher adviser who attends school twice each half term. The school is quick to take advantage of this service especially where there is evidence of a pupil showing symptoms of autism or communication difficulties.
- 42 Parents not advising the school of illness cause most of the unauthorised absence. There is no formal arrangement for contacting parents. The policy makes clear that prolonged periods of unnecessary absence may result in a school place no longer being available. There is however

good liaison with the education welfare officer who visits weekly. He knows the families well and home visits are undertaken where necessary. The school recognises that there are times when families give a priority to the celebration of religious festivals and they ensure parents and pupils are not stigmatised because of these.

- 43 There is a Positive Behaviour Policy, which is followed consistently throughout the school. The school is judged by the local education authority to be very good at implementing the strategies. The pupils respond well and are helped to make progress. The Golden Time reward scheme is effective. Those who fail to earn the reward are not allowed to take part and those who lose time are penalised for that period. This scheme is very effective.
- 44 The support for pupils with special educational needs is good and all statutory requirements are met. The level of care and support given by teaching and non-teaching staff is overall, good. Needs are identified early and outside agencies are used effectively.
- 45 Although, there are a variety of procedures to track pupil's progress over time, these are not evaluated effectively to inform teaching in order to rectify any weaknesses. The plenary is not used consistently to evaluate pupils' learning or to plan to remediate any weaknesses in the next lesson. Subject co-ordinators have not monitored this aspect in many subjects and this is a weakness. Individual education plans are effective and used well in teaching. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress includes the many different groups in the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 46 The replies to the parents' questionnaire, and discussions with parents during the inspection week, indicate that the parents have a very good opinion of the school and are well satisfied with what the school has to offer. A very high percentage of those who completed the questionnaire feel that their child is making good progress. An equally high percentage feel comfortable about approaching the school. Most parents enjoy working closely with the school and are consequently well informed. The school greatly values all the support provided by the parents.
- 47 There are effective school links with all parents. All children are brought to school and taken home at night by a parent or carer. Those parents spoken to say how well the school helps to promote good relationships between different ethnic groups. Parents particularly appreciate that teachers are approachable and willing to make time to talk with them. They also value the strong moral code that is promoted, the very good behaviour and the way in which their children are helped to become mature and responsible citizens. An appropriate home-school agreement is in place. The induction process into the school for all pupils, particularly new arrivals and their parents, works well. The transition at the end of Year 2 to the junior school situated along the corridor is effective.
- 48 The school does not have a parent-teacher association but does have a Parent Council. This group hopes to have a representative from each class, but the present number is five. This small group has a good impact and has successfully assisted the move to double the size of the playground, which was inadequate. It has also secured the erection of a necessary storage

shed, and benches in the playground. Parents are invited to special assemblies and class assemblies. These are well attended but parents experience difficulties in being accommodated because of the limited capacity of the new hall. Generally the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory.

- 49 The quality of information provided for parents is good and has improved since the last inspection. The prospectus is more informative and all updating information is provided on additional sheets to be included, as it becomes available. The Governors' Annual Report to parents gives sufficient information and parents are well represented as serving members on the governing body. The school is happy to clarify any difficulties with the curriculum. Meetings have been held to help parents understand the literacy and numeracy projects. Parents' meetings are very well attended and are not rushed. The only criticism from parents is the lack of complete privacy during these sessions. Generally the annual written reports to parents on their child's progress still do not give sufficient information on levels of achievement or targets for the following year except at the end of Year 2. Parents are invited to comment in writing and do so. There are regular newsletters three or four times a term and personal letters are sent by way of information whenever the need arises. There are informative booklets on the behaviour policy and homework policy, which have been well received.
- 50 The school is very appreciative of the voluntary help it receives in classroom support. A measure of this success is that the parents tend to qualify as classroom assistants and cease to be volunteers. The school relies on parents to give their children a clear understanding of what the school expects and to support them in their work. For example, the school hopes parents are able to assure their children have sufficient sleep, everything they need for school and are tidily dressed whenever possible. The home-school reading books are well used by parents and provide additional information on their child's progress. Generally parents make a satisfactory contribution to children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 51 Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The acting headteacher, who had been in post for only three days prior to the inspection, has a vision for the development of the school, which is shared by key staff in the school. The school has been successful in building a good team of hardworking and conscientious staff. The newly re-formed senior management team is clearly focused on raising standards further through the continued improvement in teaching and learning. The headteacher retired prior to the week of the inspection.
- 52 The acting headteacher and deputy headteacher work effectively together. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school as a result of effective monitoring of teaching and learning. The leadership and management is committed to all aspects of equality, relating to pupils' social, intellectual, spiritual and physical development. It is too early to judge the impact of the newly formed senior management team on pupils' learning but clear lines of communication are in place. The school's development plan, following full consultation with all staff and governors, is sound. The school has a satisfactory range of appropriate policies and procedures to guide its work. Day-to-day management is sound.

The role of subject co-ordinators is insufficiently focused on monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise standards further. There are effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the standards of all pupils including the range of different groups within the school.

- 53 The governors are aware of the need to improve their procedures for monitoring the work of the school with a clear emphasis on raising standards through a focus on evaluating the outcomes for pupils. Some members of the governing body are insufficiently aware of the standards pupils achieve, their comparison with similar schools and their overall performance nationally. Performance management has been successfully implemented.
- 54 Financial planning by the headteacher and governors is satisfactory. They have a sound overview of the school's finances and are well supported by the school administrative officer who keeps meticulous records. The administrative officers are very effective overall. The school makes good use of computerised financial systems and finances are kept in good order. However, the use of new technology for other administrative work is still being developed. There is a finance sub-committee of governors, which, in conjunction with the headteacher, carefully considers the budget each financial year. However, over the last two financial years the percentage of budget carried forward annually has been too high. The governors are aware of this and intend to use this surplus amount on priorities identified in their forward planning so that the position will be better balanced in the next financial year. There has been a good auditor's report recently and the few recommendations have been carried out successfully.
- 55 The co-ordination and management of special education needs is good. Funds for pupils with special educational needs and the classroom support staff for such pupils are used well. The support given to these pupils is good and is reflected in the good progress they make through the school. The co-ordinator maintains the register of pupils for special educational needs efficiently and plays an effective part in raising the awareness of staff by providing in-service training. She has a clear vision for the development of special educational needs within the school.
- 56 The school ensures value for money in respect of its financial administration and purchasing procedures, both for consumable materials and contracted suppliers. It is beginning to compare its performance with other schools, challenging its practice and making appropriate consultations to obtain the best value for money. Overall, the school has improved and gives satisfactory value for money.
- 57 Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall and used effectively. Substantial spending has improved the provision of books for literacy as well as ICT provision. Physical development for children in the Reception classes is restricted because of the lack of suitable outdoor provision.
- 58 Although satisfactory at present, staffing has been and continues to be a problem because of the difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers. Currently one teacher is on a temporary contract and one full-time post remains unfilled. There is a very strong emphasis on staff

training and support through a comprehensive programme of development. Staff mobility has meant that this is a constant priority. There is greater stability amongst the classroom assistants who contribute well to pupils' learning and do much to strengthen the sense of teamwork among the staff.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 59 In order to improve standards further, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:
- (1) raise standards across the school in English, especially reading, mathematics, and science, and for more able pupils by:
 - Planning more challenging work for higher attaining pupils through open-ended investigations in mathematics.
(See paragraphs: 3, 5, 6, 7, 20-22, 29, 88, 96, 105, 106, 109, 116, 118)
 - Providing more opportunities for pupils to conduct their own independent investigations in science so that they can extend their knowledge and understanding more effectively while testing out their ideas.
(See paragraphs: 5, 115, 118)
 - Improving standards of reading by providing pupils with more opportunities to explore their extended reading skills, reading for a broader range of purposes and applying what they have learnt in literacy lessons to other subjects of the curriculum.
(See paragraphs: 87, 88, 92, 93)
 - Providing more guidance to class teachers to identify clearly in their planning how they intend to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils.
(See paragraphs: 20-22)
 - (2) Improve attendance by:
 - Improving the procedures for monitoring attendance.
(See paragraph 17)
 - (3) Improve the quality of assessment so that it identifies weaknesses clearly, so that teachers might then take appropriate steps to remedy these.
(See paragraphs 21, 22, 45, 97, 107, 120, 128, 138, 144, 162, 169)
 - (4) Ensure that co-ordinators evaluate and monitor their subjects with rigour, address any weaknesses and set targets for improvement if necessary and evaluate the outcomes for pupils.
(See paragraphs: 29, 45, 52, 101, 112, 121, 128, 144, 162, 169)
 - (5) Ensure that governors develop a better overview of how to monitor and evaluate more rigorously the standards pupils achieve in English, mathematics and science.
(See paragraphs 45, 53)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 41 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 30 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 1 | 5 | 16 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 2 | 12 | 39 | 39 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | N/A | 249 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | N/A | 47 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 6 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0 | 54 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 41 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 34 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 19 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.5 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 7.6 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

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 2)

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 2001 | 38 | 41 | 79 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|--|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above | Boys | 25 | 31 | 29 |
| | Girls | 32 | 37 | 35 |
| | Total | 57 | 68 | 64 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | School | 72 (83) | 86 (96) | 81 (95) |
| | National | 84 (83) | 86 (84) | 91 (90) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above | Boys | 27 | 31 | 30 |
| | Girls | 36 | 34 | 38 |
| | Total | 63 | 65 | 68 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | School | 80(92) | 82 (92) | 86 (91) |
| | National | 85 (84) | 89 (88) | 89 (88) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 18 |
| Black – African heritage | 2 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 21 |
| Pakistani | 6 |
| Bangladeshi | 5 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 121 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 4 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 10 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 28.1 |
| Average class size | 28 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 10 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 342 |

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 | 0 | 0 |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0 | 0 |

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

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Financial year | 2000/1 |
|----------------|--------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 643,810 |
| Total expenditure | 689431 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2860 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 41625 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 27218 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 1 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 1 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 249 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 41 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 75 | 20 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 68 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 54 | 46 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 44 | 49 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 63 | 37 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 55 | 35 | 8 | 2 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 75 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 65 | 35 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 51 | 39 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 71 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 76 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 40 | 32 | 12 | 5 | 10 |

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

- 59 The provision overall is satisfactory with many good features. Children in the Reception Year are taught in three classes in an area purpose built for the early years. The provision is generally well resourced except for the outdoor area, which has limited equipment and is built on a slope. Although the space is specifically designed for the purpose of housing the Foundation Stage, its design imposes some limitations. There is a lack of storage space and the disabled toilet is used to house some of the larger items. Corridor space is used to store a considerable amount of the resources as well and as a result there is considerable congestion at times of general movement, such as breaks and lunchtime. The staff have designed systems to minimise these problems, but are very frustrated by the limitations they impose. For example, the doors are heavy and the handles are too high for children in the Foundation Stage to open them without adult help. Teachers voiced concern that the toilets are not visible from any of the classrooms. Children can shut the door and turn off the light leaving them in complete darkness, as there is neither natural light nor any emergency lighting.
- 60 Children in the reception classes are making at least satisfactory progress including the different groups in the school in all six areas of learning. By the end of the Reception class; as a result of good teaching most are on course to achieve the early learning goals for their age.
- 61 Curriculum planning supports the needs of different groups and all areas of learning, providing for a range of learning opportunities to meet the needs of all children. There is an improving trend in the teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. Satisfactory or better teaching and learning was observed in all lessons. Support staff are used to extremely good effect and make a very positive contribution to the children's learning.
- 62 There is a need to consider the length of morning sessions that are dedicated to literacy and numeracy. Evidence from lesson observations would suggest that the length of these is counter-productive. For example; in a 70 minute literacy session most productive learning was achieved in well-paced activities in the first 45 minutes. After that pupils showed clear signs of fatigue and a need for a change of focus to stimulate their interest.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 63 The organisation, planning and teaching provide a good framework for this area of learning; the children are achieving well and most are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning in personal, social and emotional development are good.
- 64 The quality of relationships within the Foundation Stage is good. The staff provide good role models for the children and actively seek opportunities to reinforce positive attitudes and behaviour. The children show respect for each other and adults in their classrooms. They sit well in a group on the carpet and listen and respond well to the teacher or classroom assistant

who is leading the activity. They are generally well behaved and co-operative. For example; when moving between other children to go to the front of the group children were naturally saying, "Excuse me" and thanking their peers for moving out of the way. There is a developing understanding of right and wrong and the children are able to talk about why some behaviour is unacceptable.

- 65 Routines are well established and help to ensure that the children feel secure and supported. They are encouraged to develop independence in selecting and carrying out activities. For example; they know how many children can play in the sand tray and the water play. Each week different children undertake clearly defined responsibilities within the classroom. They are making satisfactory progress.
- 66 The children are generally enthusiastic about their learning. They were keen to become involved in a "talk for writing" activity where they had to engage with a partner in role-playing the feelings of nursery rhyme characters who had pulled up *The Enormous Turnip*, in response to their big book activities.

Communication, language and literacy

- 67 The children's attainment on entry shows some relative strengths in this area of learning, particularly in speaking and listening. The majority of children's attainments are broadly in line with national expectations overall. A minority of children have less well-developed skills and lack confidence, using only simple phrases and sentences. Children are encouraged to talk about their experiences and are provided with good role models by the adults in the classrooms. Use of role-play contributes significantly to this area of learning and is modelled by teachers and classroom assistants. For example; a teacher and a classroom assistant modelled a conversation between Old Mother Hubbard and Humpty Dumpty, before the children engaged with the activity themselves.
- 68 Children have positive attitudes to stories and rhymes, but are still developing awareness of letter sounds and rhyme. They handle books well and are aware of the key features of books. Most can identify the title page and know the direction in which print is read. Many understand the roles of the author and the illustrator in the production of a book. Most children can join in shared reading of a familiar text and many are able to read common words on sight. They talk about what they have read and are able to recount what has happened in the story.
- 69 Most children are able to form recognisable letters and write their name. They are keen to make books both with an adult and independently. For example, children made zig zag books of the characters from *The Enormous Turnip* and used emergent writing to write the characters' names on each page.
- 70 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in this area of learning with evidence of some good practice and the needs of the different groups in the school are met. The provision encourages the children to think of themselves as authors, as well as readers, and provides opportunities to share their own books. Most children, including those with special

educational needs are making satisfactory progress and demonstrate confidence in all aspects of communication, language and literacy. They are on target to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Mathematical development

- 71 The children's attainment on entry shows some relative strengths in this area of learning, particularly in using and applying and shape and space. Children use mathematical language confidently. They are able to sequence numbers 1 – 10 and identify missing numbers from the sequence. A number line is effectively used to establish the practice of counting on.
- 72 Mathematical skills are taught through a variety of relevant activities. Checking how many children are absent by counting on from the number present to the number in the class as part of registration provided challenge for some more able children. 'How many ways can you fix five multi-link blocks together?' provided a good level of challenge, combining number and shape concepts. One child independently found seven different ways and following discussion was able to identify two more. Children use the concepts of size when describing objects.
- 73 Overall the teaching and learning in this area are good. Classroom assistants provide excellent support for the children as they experiment with new concepts and seek to establish others. Most children, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. They are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 74 A variety of activities are planned to encourage the children to explore and extend their awareness in this area of learning. The activities are designed to build on and extend their own experiences. For example, a visit to a flower shop led to a role play area, observational drawings of flowers and the construction of bouquets. Children greeted the teacher and each other in Spanish at the beginning of registration.
- 75 Involvement with an allotment locally has underpinned activities associated with growing their own plants. Beans, sunflowers and other seasonal plants are growing in the classrooms alongside plants that have particular attributes such as texture and scent. One of the children expressed amazement on discovering how much growth a bean had made since she last looked at it and was excited to anticipate how much more it might grow in another week. The children have mapped the route they take to the allotment and are able to talk about the journey.
- 76 When using ICT the children can use the mouse accurately to move shapes on screen for a purpose. For example; they sort objects according to their initial letter. They are beginning to use the vocabulary of ICT and many can identify the mouse, keyboard and monitor. They understand that there are processes that need to be followed when using a computer. For example, one child knew that it was wrong to just turn off the computer, but that there was a sequence of actions that should be followed to do this properly. Most children were able to

manage the *MyWorld* alphabet screens so that they left the software ready for the next child to use.

- 77 Children are able to handle scissors and glue and make some decisions about the appropriateness of materials for construction. They use a variety of equipment in the water tray and dry sand to experiment with pouring, moulding and filling. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress in developing these skills.
- 78 The quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory in this area. Adults provide appropriate support, but sometimes opportunities are missed to extend children's thinking and reasoning skills. The attainment of the children indicates that they are on track to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Physical development

- 79 Children enter the school with expected levels of attainment in physical development. They are learning to move confidently using both fine and gross motor skills. They follow instructions and try to emulate demonstrations. They work with beanbags to establish good practice in catching and throwing and some are beginning to master the basics of skipping. They are learning to move carefully and safely around the classroom and school.
- 80 The provision for their physical development is limited in the outdoor environment. The climbing frame is more suited to nursery children and provides insufficient challenge for children at the end of the Reception Year. Activities on tricycles are tightly controlled because of the danger of losing control on the slope.
- 81 The children experience a range of activities to develop their manipulative skills; they write, paint, draw and construct. Adults in the room enabled children to work independently by appropriate intervention and as a result they were appropriately challenged to develop both physical skills and thinking skills.
- 82 The children make a positive start to the development of physical skills. The good teaching supports their development and the lack of outdoor challenge does not inhibit the children's potential to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Creative development

- 83 Teaching and provision for this area of learning are satisfactory, allowing the children to experience a range of activities that are supporting their achievement of the early learning goals.
- 84 Children are given time to explore and experiment with ideas, materials and activities. For example; a display demonstrated how they had used a variety of materials for weaving. Children participate eagerly in singing action songs and rhymes. They clap to a rhythm and are fascinated by rhyming words. They are encouraged to try to imagine how characters from their reading are feeling and frequently use these ideas for role-play. The sand tray was used for the creation of a 'dinosaur world' using models, shells, pebbles and twigs.

- 85 The resources for this area are generally satisfactory, although the range of materials from other cultures is limited. Children are encouraged to be curious and to test their ideas. No evidence was seen of the use of dance or music to extend children's experiences or develop their imagination.
- 86 The end of the Foundation Stage weaves creative development into all aspects of the children's experiences, ensuring that they are likely to achieve the early learning goals.

ENGLISH

- 87 The school's overall performance in English is below average. On the basis of the 2001 national tests; standards were well below average in reading and below average in writing. Compared with similar schools performance in both reading and writing was well below average. The findings of the inspection are that, despite some improvement to bring performance closer to what is expected nationally, reading and writing are still below average. One of the reasons for the improvements in standards seen in this inspection is the quality of teaching, much of which is good and sometimes very good.
- 88 Pupils make satisfactory progress, including those who have special educational needs and English as an additional language. There are minor differences only between the achievement of girls compared with boys. However, there were comparatively few pupils who achieve the higher Level 3 in the national test.
- 89 Performance trends since 1997 have been erratic, with poor test results, particularly in 1999 and 2001. From observations in this inspection, including scrutiny of pupils' work, standards are now improving. However, standards in English have not improved since the last inspection, when attainment was judged to be broadly in line with the national average. Standards in speaking and listening have been maintained.
- 90 In Year 1 pupils are **reading** familiar texts aloud with some expression. They are able to read, on sight, familiar words. They collect and use new words to extend the meaning of their own writing and they are using adjectives to enhance their stories.
- 91 By Year 2, most pupils understand how to use the contents and index sections of information books. They are familiar with and use glossaries and dictionaries to locate words by initial letter. They understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and are able to use research skills to seek information. They are beginning to write their own information texts.
- 92 In listening to pupils' reading, inspectors judged that most pupils are able to read the chosen texts with accuracy, though often with some hesitation and lack of confidence. Most are enthusiastic about reading and show, through their recall of events and prediction of the next part of the story that they understand what they are reading. However, there are pupils in Year 2 who read reluctantly and lack confidence; they read rarely at home and show little

enthusiasm for reading for pleasure. The school has identified this as a weakness and the co-ordinator has plans to raise the profile of reading across the school.

- 93 Pupils' writing seen during the scrutiny of work confirmed that standards of writing are still below average, though there is clear evidence of satisfactory progress over time. Constructive written comments and reward stickers often accompany teachers' marking. Standards of presentation and handwriting are below average. There were some examples seen of **writing** being used and fostered in other areas of the curriculum. The use of extended writing in other subjects has not yet made a significant contribution to pupils' development of writing skills and is an area for development. The successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is ensuring that pupils' literacy is now well taught and as a result standards are rising.
- 94 In the last inspection it was judged that pupils' attainment was in line with national expectation and that progress was sound. This inspection indicates there has been a substantial mobility of pupils in and out of the school. The school has gathered information to show that many of the pupils moving away have been more able, compared with the intake, which has contained many pupils with special educational needs. In this context the progress of pupils, overall, is satisfactory.
- 95 The teaching of English is good overall throughout the school. Inspectors saw lessons that were all at least satisfactory, and mainly good, with a few examples of very good teaching and one example of excellence. This is markedly different from the last inspection, where a third of lessons indicated unsatisfactory teaching.
- 96 The good teaching and learning are characterised by teachers' good subject knowledge. This has given them a good structure for their lesson planning and has encouraged them to provide appropriate learning opportunities for the range of abilities in each class. Teachers' planning, therefore, is good, except in its provision for the needs of more able pupils as it focuses on the middle range of pupils and lacks sufficient challenge.
- 97 Teachers' expectation in relation to the behaviour and attitude of their pupils is very good, whereas expectation in terms of work output and presentation is modest. Assessment opportunities are shown in teachers' planning, though the use of ongoing assessment is unsatisfactory as it does not identify what pupils have learnt and so can not be used to remedy weaknesses in pupils' learning, in order to raise standards furthered.
- 98 A particular strength of teaching in English is the management of pupils' behaviour. In all lessons observed, behaviour was good and where potential incidents of poor behaviour occurred, they were dealt with firmly and sensitively.
- 99 The teaching caters well for the needs of the different groups of most of the pupils and those with special educational needs. Support, through the use of classroom assistants, is very good.

- 100 Resources are satisfactory for the teaching of literacy in classrooms, with a good range of texts in 'big book' form, and a plentiful supply of textbooks and reading scheme books for pupils. The range, quality and quantity of books in the school library are inadequate. The library accommodation is poor in that it has insufficient space and shelving. It is situated some distance from teaching areas, restricting its use, and access is poor through a narrow corridor. The area designated for the library, shared with the computer suite, is uninviting and presents an unsatisfactory environment for work with whole classes or groups of pupils. The school has identified this as an area for improvement.
- 101 The management of the English curriculum is satisfactory in most aspects. Teachers have been well supported by the English co-ordinator, who has provided training and advice. Monitoring of planning is regularly carried out and advice is offered where necessary. The monitoring of teaching by the co-ordinator is unsatisfactory. There is no regular allocation of time for monitoring and little has taken place in the recent past.

MATHEMATICS

- 102 Standards at the end of Year 2 in the lessons observed are below the national average but are an improvement when compared to the 2001 test results.
- 103 In the 2001 national tests for pupil's aged seven, results were well below the national average. Compared with results achieved by schools from similar backgrounds, their performance was also well below average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was below the national average. There was no significant difference between the results of boys and girls.
- 104 The picture is now more positive. The quality of teaching, now good, has greatly improved. The numeracy strategy is having a sound effect on achievement. However, the school still has a large proportion of pupils who move in and out of the school. In the older year groups, some pupils do not have enough time to make sufficient progress from a low starting point to match the performance of more established pupils in the class.
- 105 The majority of boys and girls, including pupils with special educational needs, and English as additional language, make steady progress in lessons and over time. This is because of teaching that engenders positive attitudes and gives most pupils a sound level of challenge in their work, particularly the average and lower attaining pupils. However, higher attaining pupils in the infant classes are not always challenged sufficiently. Individual targets to raise standards have been introduced for all pupils but it is too early to judge the impact of these targets on standards.
- 106 Pupils' progress over time is satisfactory. By the age of seven, pupils can count to 100 and identify odd and even numbers. Pupils write numbers correctly and order digits accurately. They understand the concept of doubling numbers and can count in twos and tens. Most pupils are developing a good knowledge of the two, three and five time's multiplication tables. Most pupils understand addition and subtraction. Higher attaining pupils have a clear understanding of dividing shapes into halves. Their knowledge of shape and space is developing appropriately with pupils' confidently recognising two and three-dimensional

shapes. Lower attaining pupils have some difficulty in recording shapes and some of their properties. In measuring activities, most pupils use standard and non-standard units of measure.

- 107 The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory which is a significant improvement from the inspection of 1997. Some teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and give much well directed support to all pupils. Lessons are well planned and structured according to the National Numeracy Strategy and clear learning intentions for each element of the lesson are stated. These are not always made known to pupils. All teachers make good use of mental activities at the beginning of lessons. These introductions to lessons are generally lively and teachers' explanations are clear.
- 108 In the good lessons seen, teaching was lively and enthusiastic and pupils were well engaged. Pupils were involved through discussion, questioning and practical activities. For example, in Year 1, resources were well chosen, such as whiteboards for recording answers and "arrow cards" to show place value of digits in tens and units. These activities followed a brisk mental session where the pupils applied maximum effort. As the teaching in these lessons was of a good quality, pupils responded well to the tasks and made good progress.
- 109 Weaknesses in a few lessons include too much over-directed teaching and tasks set are not consistently challenging for the higher attaining pupils and too little emphasis is given to investigation and enquiry skills. This is a weakness.
- 110 Management of pupils is satisfactory overall. Most pupils enjoy their work and settle to their written and practical tasks with enthusiasm. However, in two lessons observed a few boys showed inappropriate behaviour by calling out and distracting other children in the classroom. Support staff are deployed well. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs well. They talk to pupils quietly, explaining what the class teacher is saying, and as a result pupils maintain their interest and their achievement is good. All work is marked consistently. Evaluative comments are sometimes included with the marking. Homework is set regularly.
- 111 All teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy to promote learning and plan their lessons effectively. All teachers have been well trained in the requirements of the numeracy strategy. The school's strategy for teaching numeracy skills across the curriculum is sound.
- 112 There has been good improvement in the management of mathematics since the last inspection and the subject is now well managed. Monitoring of planning is used well to gather information about standards and the effectiveness of development in the subject but there is insufficient monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.
- 113 Resources have improved. They are adequate and used well in most lessons to enhance pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

114 Attainment in science by the time pupils are seven is slightly below the national average and in comparison with similar schools is well below. Contributory factors include the large percentage of pupils with special educational needs in this year group, high pupil mobility and to some extent re-location of the school and past inconsistency in the quality of teaching. This differs from the previous inspection, which reported standards close to the national average. However, since 1998 the trend has been slightly upwards, peaking in 2000 when 91 per cent of pupils reached the expected level or above.

Strengths of the subject include:

- Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- Pupils' attainment in life processes and living things is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall.
- The co-ordinator is an enthusiastic and energetic leader who is aware of the strengths and areas for development, and manages the subject satisfactorily overall.

Areas for development:

- The use of assessment to plan for the next stage of pupils' learning, especially the higher-attainers.

115 The school recognises the need to raise standards especially in investigative work, and is determined to do so. Since the appointment of the current co-ordinator a good start has been made. A thorough analysis of strengths and areas for development has now enabled the school to attach more importance to the role of investigation in science. Inspection findings suggest an improving picture, with standards already almost in line with national expectations in some Year 1 and 2 classes. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls or different groups of pupils.

116 Pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, achieve satisfactorily in lessons and over time, as a result of the overall satisfactory teaching, good attitudes and a willingness to learn. However, many higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently, due mainly to an assessment system lacking rigour to ensure that appropriate work is set to meet their needs.

117 By the end of Year 2 average and higher-attaining pupils possess satisfactory scientific knowledge and specific vocabulary. For example, all pupils, including some of those with special educational needs, understand that force can be used to push, pull and turn, and that sound sources create vibrations. They know about healthy foods, the promotion of growth and generation of energy, that electricity 'flows' through wires and can be a source of danger. This was exemplified well with a group of Year 2 pupils in discussion with an inspector. Higher-attainers have a good understanding of reversible and irreversible change through boiling eggs and baking bread. They are beginning to understand the need for fair testing, as observed in a Year 1 lesson where pupils successfully used toy trucks and weighted pulleys to determine the effect of force on speed and distance. Nearly all pupils know the difference between living, dead and 'never alive' objects, and explain accurately the conditions necessary to sustain life and growth, as noted during an analysis of work. In Year 1 pupils know that light comes from a variety of sources including the sun, that taking exercise and eating the 'correct' food help humans to keep healthy, and they can name external parts of the body. In their study of materials they learn that reflective clothing is an important safety aspect

of dress while playing or walking in built-up areas. Whilst pupils' knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things is good, their use of scientific enquiry requires further development.

- 118 Pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, continue to make satisfactory progress as they get older. Learning is enhanced when pupils are set appropriate challenges and are encouraged to think scientifically, as was observed in a Year 2 lesson when they had to figure out which items in a given set were required to construct a simple electrical circuit. During this session average and lower-attaining pupils displayed great perseverance due to the energetic input of their teacher and the demanding work. Learning is less successful when tasks, although initially challenging, are allowed to become too repetitive, especially for higher-attainers whose thinking is not extended, as noted in a Year 1 lesson on forces. Although these older pupils acquire an appropriate knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and processes, their use for investigative purposes is still often under-developed.
- 119 In the best lessons pupils are required routinely to discuss their methods and justify their answers. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class had to explain in detail why the introduction of extra bulbs to a simple electrical circuit causes the light to become duller. The great majority of pupils enjoy lessons, particularly when the activity is practical. For instance, in a Year 1 lesson many explained eagerly and precisely why the toy trucks increased in speed as weights were added to the pulleys during an experiment on forces. This positive attitude enhances learning and, combined with overall satisfactory teaching, enables pupils to develop a flexible array of mental strategies to cope with experimental challenges. During set tasks, pupils persevere and sustain their concentration. They are particularly supportive in group work as noted in a Year 2 lesson on labelling the parts of an electrical circuit diagram.
- 120 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with one out of four lessons seen judged to be good. This is an appreciable improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was unsatisfactory. Consistent planning in paired year groups is helping teachers to set clear objectives for each lesson. When these are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and successes evaluated at the end, good progress ensues. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils knew that they had to learn how an electrical circuit works, and at the end were able to discuss reasons for breaking or increasing the electrical flow in the circuit. Some teachers assess pupils' responses well and target supplementary questions to expand their thinking, seen to good effect in some lessons, which moved pupils' learning on. The best teaching combines problem-solving, discussions and explanation, high expectations and good pace. One Year 2 class reflected this. In lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers' expectations are not sufficiently taxing, pace becomes slow and pupils are not always engaged in worthwhile activities. Assessment of day-to-day work is satisfactory overall. Marking is inconsistent and does not always help pupils to understand how they can improve. The management of the small number of less interested pupils is effective. Teachers are unfailingly polite but firm, and do not tolerate unacceptable behaviour that might impact on the learning of others.

121 Since her appointment, the conscientious and enthusiastic co-ordinator has raised the profile of science throughout the school and manages the subject satisfactorily overall. Much work has taken place to improve planning, assessment and resources in the subject. Due to the hard work of the co-ordinator, subject provision is improving steadily. In conjunction with other staff members, she has compiled a detailed policy and scheme of work. Teachers' medium-term and short-term plans of the work they are doing, which contain precise learning objectives, are monitored by her on a regular basis. Although the assessment procedure is appropriate, its use to plan for the next stage of pupils' learning is unsatisfactory. It is planned to re-establish the co-ordinator's monitoring of teaching and learning which was terminated in 2000 due to the school's re-location and the co-ordinator's one year secondment to Birmingham University. The co-ordinator analyses pupils' work on a regular basis and is available to support colleagues at all times. These strategies, together with appropriate in-service training, are helping to raise the quality of teaching and learning. Resources are adequate, maintained well and are easily accessible to teachers.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122 Art and design and design and technology are taught together, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Standards in both art and design and design and technology are average and attainment by age seven is in line with what would be expected nationally. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and there is no evidence of differences in the rate of pupils' progress in terms of their gender or ethnicity. Pupils who have special educational needs or have English as an additional language make at least satisfactory progress. It was observed that some pupils who have learning difficulties in other subjects make good progress in these practical areas of the curriculum. Similarly, because of the open-ended nature of the tasks set, some more able pupils are able to make accelerated progress. The previous inspection report indicates a lack of clarity of learning objectives for each of the subjects. This is no longer the case. There is now a structured approach, which ensures that the requirements of both subjects are met.

123 Evidence for judgements about art and design and design and technology are based upon observation of only two lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, particularly as displayed in classrooms and corridors, and discussions with the subject co-ordinator and pupils.

124 Pupils enjoy their work and have produced some interesting pictures, using a variety of media - paint, crayon, pastels etc. They have learned about mixing colour and were able to explain how to make a number of secondary colours from primary colours. They have been able to explore and develop their ideas, for example when they linked their creative writing about *The Scary Castle* to imaginative paintings. They have explored working with clay and have made masks and created coil and thumb pots. Displays around the school illustrate good quality work in collage, decoupage and weaving. Pupils have particularly enjoyed creating their own paintings in the style of well known artists.

125 By age seven, pupils have an appropriate appreciation of art and design and design and technology. They talk about and evaluate their own work and that of others. They have an

understanding of colour and pattern and are beginning to use appropriate vocabulary, like foreground, background, dark, light, shade, tint and perspective.

- 126 Pupils use tools skilfully and safely. In a design and technology project, run in conjunction with a local College, pupils learned how to use a variety of tools, equipment and materials; and were given first-hand experience in designing and making products such as a bookrack. They learned how to measure, cut, and assemble the materials safely.
- 127 The teaching seen was at least satisfactory and in one lesson good teaching was seen. This shows an improvement over the judgements of teaching in the last inspection. Teachers have a clear understanding of the national programmes of study and they plan their work well, based upon schemes of work that have been developed by the subject co-ordinator. The management of pupils' behaviour is very good, and this is reflected in the way that pupils work well with good concentration and a positive attitude. The co-operation and collaborative work observed indicates a positive contribution to pupils' social and moral development.
- 128 The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic about her work. She has provided sound leadership for her colleagues, and her monitoring work includes scrutiny of teachers' planning and of the displays around the school. As yet, the monitoring has not included observation of teaching and there is no formal process for assessment of pupils' progress or attainment. This is a weakness.
- 129 Resources overall are good, with a wide range of materials, media and tools available in classrooms. Accommodation is satisfactory and all teaching areas are equipped with sinks and water.

GEOGRAPHY

- 130 Very few lessons in geography were timetabled during the inspection. From the limited evidence available, standards for pupils by the age of seven are typical.
- Strengths
- Good links with numeracy and science.
 - Improvement in curriculum leadership and management since last inspection.
 - Good use of the local environment.
- Areas for improvement
- The monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum.
- 131 From the evidence available, a judgement cannot be made on the quality of teaching but a scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and talking to pupils and an analysis of teachers' planning indicates that standards and achievement is average.
- 132 The curriculum planning files are well organised and informative, providing good support for teaching and non-teaching staff.

- 133 Since the previous inspection there has been an improvement in whole school planning, Curriculum guidelines for teachers, based on national recommendations, are now in place and used effectively. The school now has a more detailed and informative geography curriculum policy. However, as before, no teaching in geography was observed.
- 134 From discussion with pupils in Year 2, it is evident that they have an understanding of maps and atlases. For example, one pupil commented, "When I looked at my atlas it showed me which part of the world I was looking at". Pupils understood the meaning of north, south, east and west and could explain grid referencing and how to use a map. They spoke with a wonderful enthusiasm about their 'Treasure Hunt Map'. For example, one pupil commented, "We had to land our ship where it was safe and had to draw treasure and graveyards and had to hide the treasure."
- 135 The learning of the local environment is enhanced by class visits to the school allotment. A classroom display showed the younger pupils' journey to the allotment. Pupils grow vegetables and flowers. This support pupils' learning in science. Pupils in Year 1 visit Sandwell Valley, they draw basic maps of the trail and label for example, garden, pond and trees.
- 136 A scrutiny of the pupils' current work indicates that there is inconsistent coverage of geography. Overall, there was limited evidence in books and there was no evidence of planning to meet all the different needs of pupils. However, in Year 2 pupils are beginning to develop mapping skills and an understanding and knowledge of physical features.
- 137 The geography co-ordinator is a skilled and confident practitioner. She has provided members of staff with planning guidance and has made improvements in the teacher and pupil resources.
- 138 She has monitored the teaching of the subject; however, there is a need to further develop this role in order to improve standards through setting targets for teachers. She recognises the need for further training, especially with regard to assessment of pupils' attainment in geography.

HISTORY

- 139 From the limited evidence available, standards for pupils age seven are average. Since the previous inspection there has been an improvement in whole school planning, assessment opportunities, curriculum resources and monitoring. Curriculum guidelines, based on national recommendations are now in place. From the evidence available, curriculum planning files are well organised and informative.

Strengths

- Good links with ICT.
- Improvement in curriculum leadership and management since last inspection.

Areas for improvement

- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

- 140 A scrutiny of pupils' current work indicates that standards are average. Pupils compare the clothes of Victorian children to those of their own. They are beginning to develop a knowledge of chronology. They have learnt about Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys. They have a knowledge and understanding of a family tree. Pupils make satisfactory progress.
- 141 The school makes good use of computers to support pupils' learning in history. For example, in an ICT lesson pupils in Year 2 were using computers to learn about Queen Victoria. The pupils were able to talk about the information they had found when entering the Public Record Office website. They used photos to find out about Queen Victoria. One pupil correctly stated, "the lady in white couldn't be Queen Victoria because she wore black after her husband died."
- 142 The learning of history is enhanced for by visits made to the Black Country Museum and Dudley College. In addition to this, a war veteran visits the school annually. These experiences, along with the use of photos and artefacts, contribute to making history come alive.
- 143 From discussion with pupils in Year 2, it is clear that they have an understanding of the past and present. For example one pupil stated that history means, 'Things that happen a long time ago; in the past. I know what's going to happen next, it's the future'. They spoke with confidence and enthusiasm about Victorian toys and clothes and how they differ from the present. The pupils make information booklets about Victorian toys. The good displays in classrooms support pupils' learning in history.
- 144 The history co-ordinator is a skilled and confident practitioner. She has provided members of staff with planning guidance and has made improvements in the resources for teachers and pupils. She recognises the need for further training, especially with regard to assessment of pupils' attainment in history. A good start has been made in developing a school portfolio of pupils' work. She has a good vision for the teaching and learning in history, but has not yet monitored the quality of teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 145 Standards are average overall. Since the last inspection, when the standards in ICT were judged to be unsatisfactory, there have been substantial improvements throughout the school. The new building provides an ICT suite with 15 networked computers. All classrooms have a networked computer and all pupils now have timetabled access to the ICT suite once a week. Teachers are able to book other times in the ICT suite when appropriate to support pupils' learning in other subjects. As a result of the increased access to this technology, pupils' attainment has improved since the last report.

Strengths

- The quality and quantity of resources are good.
- The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and hardworking.

Areas for improvement

- The scheme of work does not yet fully cover the national programme of work for ICT.

- 146 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is unsatisfactory where teaching is left to a classroom support assistant. The quality of work seen was average.
- 147 By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to edit and amend text on a word processor. For example, pupils were able to re-order a set of instructions using cut and paste techniques. Pupils working independently during 'Golden Time' were able to highlight text prior to changing font size and colour. They made appropriate choices about the appearance of their work and produced a list of activities they had undertaken during the day. Pupils use *MyWorld* as a modelling tool and are able to represent both real and imaginary situations in this way.
- 148 No evidence was seen of the use of databases, information retrieval from a CD-Rom or control activities, although resources are available for all these activities. In one Year 2 lesson, the Internet was used as an information source. Most pupils were able to log on to their user area and access the Internet. They entered an Internet address, with which they had been provided, and some pupils understood the need for accuracy. They navigated the website with assistance to access the resources. They used the text and photograph to answer questions such as "Why do you think the people in the photograph look unhappy?" When asked how many pupils had followed up previous investigations into Victorian toys, using the Internet at home, approximately 75 per cent of the class indicated that they had. No account is taken of the prior experience of these pupils, nor is any attempt made to compensate for other pupils' lack of access to ICT resources outside the school.
- 149 In a Year 1 lesson in the ICT suite, less able pupils were not adequately supported in a word processing task through the use of wordbanks or speech facilities, which were available within the software. The pupils' progress was limited by the requirement to share a computer, in spite of the fact that there were sufficient resources for each pupil to work on their own computer. High achievers were not challenged and some disruptive behaviour ensued.
- 150 Pupils are generally enthusiastic about their involvement with ICT, both in the ICT suite and in their classrooms. Where supported by satisfactory teaching, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and they make satisfactory progress.
- 151 The leadership by the ICT co-ordinator is good. She has developed a scheme of work based on a published scheme, and is planning to define the ICT learning objectives more relevant to the needs of the different groups of pupils in the school.

MUSIC

- 152 Pupils in the present Year 2 reach standards that are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Pupils make sound progress as a result of satisfactory teaching. There has been improvement since the last report, particularly with reference to resources.

Strengths

- Singing throughout the school.
- Pupils' confidence and willingness to perform publicly.

- Use of expertise from outside the school to widen pupils' musical experiences.

Areas for development

- Teachers' confidence and competence to consistently teach the subject effectively.
- Opportunities for the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in music.

- 153 Although few lessons were observed during the inspection, there was evidence of singing, listening and composition. The range of tuned percussion has been increased since the last inspection.
- 154 Pupils perform and are actively involved in creating music. Year 2 pupils were able to demonstrate understanding of the way in which music can create effects through the use of percussion instruments to portray different phases of a storm. Year 1 pupils experimented with rhythm using a range of instruments to represent different modes of transport. Sound cross-curricular links are made between musical activities and whole school topics. Pupils sing with confidence and enthusiasm in a variety of situations.
- 155 Pupils record their music in a variety of formats such as 'high/low scoring', which was displayed in the music room. All Year 1 pupils are provided with tuition on the recorder. In Year 2 this is continued as an extra-curricular activity through differentiated lunchtime groups. A peripatetic violin teacher works with ten Year 1 pupils each week. High school pupils have been brought into the school to exemplify the use of a range of instruments, including digital technology. As a result of this a Year 1 composition on spring was created using computer technology.
- 156 The music co-ordinator has developed a scheme of work designed to assist the non-specialist teachers of music. However, some of the teaching seen lacked confidence and subject knowledge.
- 157 Pupils are given frequent opportunities to perform through assemblies, Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Mothers' Day celebrations, in which the whole school is involved. At the end of each year Year 2, pupils perform in a Leavers' Concert, which enhances pupils learning further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 158 Seven-year-olds achieve standards that are typical of pupils nationally and these have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language, make sound progress across the school. Development since the last inspection is satisfactory.
- 159 By the age of seven, pupils develop a good range of movements, and sequence them as they move around the hall. They build on the skills of travelling around the hall and using apparatus in different ways from those that they learned in Reception. Pupils successfully balance on three points and listen carefully as their partner evaluates their performance. Pupils challenge themselves and try very hard to move slowly or quickly, as requested by the teacher. Higher attaining pupils hold their balanced positions well.

- 160 Teaching and learning are satisfactory across the school. The curriculum is appropriate and includes all the elements of the National Curriculum. Teachers' levels of expertise and expectations of what pupils should do are satisfactory, and lessons are well planned. Teachers place sound emphasis on the use of space and make good use of pupils' evaluations of each others' work. Pupils learn effectively and gain new ideas in this way. Teachers demonstrate the required movements well, using higher attaining pupils or themselves to inspire pupils. In Year 1 the teacher gave good demonstrations of how to pass the ball accurately and in a controlled way to a partner. They make good teaching points and pupils learn what to do. Good demonstrations have a positive impact on the quality of pupils' work. Teachers make effective use of praise to motivate pupils, especially those with less confidence, and inspire them to extend their concentration further and so learn well.
- 161 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are often good. Most enjoy lessons and derive much pleasure from taking part. The majority of pupils are interested in what they do and try hard to carry out the teachers' instructions. For example, in a warm-up in Year 1, pupils followed a series of instructions well, remembering to change movements as they travelled around the school hall.
- 162 The subject is co-ordinated well and the school's programme of extra-curricular activities is sound. All of these activities raise the standards of pupils' work, for example the tennis coaching and is very well attended by pupils. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The storage of equipment in the school hall is unsatisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 163 By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. This is a similar judgement to that in the last inspection. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
- Strengths of the subject:
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced through religious education lessons.
 - The resources are good.
 - Religious education is managed satisfactorily overall by the co-ordinator, whose subject knowledge is extensive.
- 164 Pupils achieve satisfactorily, due mostly to their good attitudes and appropriate use of lesson resources and themes by teachers. The work done, both written and oral, supports adequately the school's literacy programme. Pupils are developing a good factual basis for the topics, which they have studied. They not only learn about religious education but also from it. Many are beginning to relate events and teachings to their own lives. For example, during one assembly pupils were able to compare everyday happenings about sorrow and

forgiveness with the biblical story of the rich farmer's young son. Higher and many average-attaining pupils are aware of the significance of some religious symbols and articles, such as the lectern, cross, prayer mats and the Star of David. They are developing an understanding about the beliefs in different faiths, including celebrations such as Diwali, Ramadan, Passover and Christmas. Through these studies, they are acquiring a good awareness of their own self and the importance of respect for others.

- 165 Pupils in Year 1 know that Hindus worship at a temple, that their sacred book is called the Bhagavad Gita and that their gods include Ganesh and Vishnu. They relate accurately the main events of biblical stories such as Jonah and the Whale, the Annunciation and the Prodigal Son. Many are becoming aware that these stories often contain a message, very often about how to live good lives, as exemplified in a Year 1 lesson about Esther and the King of Babylon.
- 166 By the end of Year 2, pupils have knowledge about the key ideas and beliefs that define different religions, and how they are linked to cultural traditions. For example, they are beginning to understand the significance of Passover for Jews, Diwali for Hindus and Easter for Christians. They learn about feelings such as kindness, honesty and jealousy when they study and recount events such as the Last Supper or Joseph's betrayal by his brothers. They know about the biblical account of creation and have completed a topic on 'our wonderful world' incorporating art and design, craft and literacy. Some of their observations included such statements as 'I think the most beautiful thing in our world is the sunset.'
- 167 Visits to places of worship enhance pupils' learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have visited a synagogue and temple respectively. Following these visits, pupils explore the importance of food, clothing and prayer as rituals and symbolism during worship. The majority has a clear understanding of the types and use of objects and rooms inside a Christian church such as vestry, altar, pew, cross and font.
- 168 Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory, with half of the small number of lessons observed being good. Further evidence is based on discussions with pupils, teachers and the subject co-ordinator as well as an analysis of pupils' work. Teachers make good use of the school's scheme of work, which is based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus. They begin lessons well, usually creating an appropriate calm and spiritual atmosphere through, for example, the use of music or a lighted candle. This was well illustrated in a Year 2 lesson where pupils discussed the traditions and customs of different faiths, for example Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In this lesson pupils maintained interest and were eager to explain why some Christians wear crosses and Muslims turn towards Mecca while praying. Lesson plans contain clear learning objectives. Learning is usually managed well, creating opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and spiritual awareness. Teachers handle discussions with sensitivity, as observed in a Year 1 lesson where some pupils acted out the story of Esther from the Old Testament. Pupils respond by listening carefully and showing respect for the views of others, which can be attributed to teachers' thoughtful choice of stories. As a consequence pupils are developing a good awareness of moral issues and why people act as they do.

169 The leadership by the co-ordinator is good and her subject knowledge is extensive. Religious education therefore commands a high profile within the curriculum. She supports colleagues well, thus raising their confidence in teaching the subject. Her action plan recognises the weaknesses and she plans to develop the subject further including a review of the assessment arrangements and implement regular monitoring of teaching and learning. She has built up a good range of resources which are used well by teachers.