

INSPECTION REPORT

FOXYARDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tipton, West Midlands

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103788

Headteacher: Mrs S O'Gorman

Reporting inspector: Mr M F Bucktin
15484

Dates of inspection: 22nd - 25th April 2002

Inspection number: 244518

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Foxyards Road Tipton Dudley
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr F Haffner
Date of previous inspection:	October 20 th - 23 rd 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr M Bucktin 15484	Registered inspector	Science, history, physical education (PE)	What sort of school is it? How high are standards - the school's results and achievements? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Mr M O'Malley 19436	Lay inspector		How high are standards – pupils' attitudes, values and personal development? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr P Rayers 17851	Team inspector	Mathematics, art and design, design and technology, equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs P Claxton 12954	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT), geography, religious education (RE), the Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs P McGraw 21142	Team inspector	English, music, special educational needs (SEN)	How well does the school care for its pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Foxyards Primary School is in Tipton, ten miles to the north-west of the city of Birmingham and serves an area of average economic circumstances. There are 342 pupils on roll including 58 who attend the nursery on a part-time basis, broadly the same as at the time of the previous inspection and the school remains bigger than most other primary schools. Virtually all pupils are of white UK heritage. Most live close to the school but a significant minority, around one third, come from the neighbouring borough of Sandwell. When they start school aged five, pupils' attainment is around that normally expected of pupils of that age.

Around ten per cent of pupils are eligible for a free school meal, which is below the national average. Ten per cent of pupils are also on the school's register of special educational needs, again below the national average but an increase since the time of the previous inspection. The majority of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. In the last two years, two teachers have left the school with two being appointed to take their places. The headteacher has been in post for two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Foxyards is a fast improving school providing a sound standard of education and satisfactory value for money. The rate of improvement in overall results of seven year olds and 11 year olds is better than most other schools and pupils achieve results that are close to the national average and the average achieved by similar schools. However, the results achieved by higher attaining pupils are not yet high enough.

The school is well-led and managed by the headteacher, senior staff and governors. Over the last two years they have successfully concentrated on improving pupils' learning and their attitudes to school, which are very good. Most teachers are clear and confident in what they do, particularly in the Year 5/6 classes where the quality of teaching is very good. Teaching in Year 3/4 is of inconsistent quality.

The curriculum is well-planned and meets the needs of most pupils. The school has effective arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic progress and ensures that all pupils are included in its activities.

What the school does well

- The headteacher, senior staff and governors provide strong leadership.
- The oldest pupils achieve better than expected standards in history, art and design and, especially, in music.
- The quality of teaching in Years 5/6 is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and they form excellent relationships.
- Speaking and listening skills are very well developed.

What could be improved

- The consistency of teaching in the Year 3/4 classes.
- The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning within their subjects.
- The standards achieved by the oldest pupils in English and information and communication technology
- The progress of higher attaining pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement has been satisfactory since the previous inspection in October 1997 and the school is well placed to improve further. Although the results of 11 year olds are below average, they have improved at a faster rate than in most other schools and the school recently gained a DfES award in recognition of this improvement. However, not enough pupils attain higher than expected standards. Teaching continues to be satisfactory overall. Although the proportion of satisfactory or better teaching has gone down, the proportions of teaching that are good, very good and excellent have improved significantly.

The school has been successful in raising standards in design and technology; they are now satisfactory. Similarly, the role of the governing body has been well developed and there are now satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress. Although the role of subject co-ordinators is better defined, they still do not fully contribute to the management of the school.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in the National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	D	D	D	D	well above A average above B average below average C well below D average E
Mathematics	E	C	D	D	
Science	D	B	B	B	

Pupils make good progress through the nursery reception classes and, when they start school, pupils' attainment matches that normally expected. They make satisfactory progress through Years 1 and 2 and in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, seven year olds achieved results that were in line with the national average in mathematics. They were below average in reading but above average in writing. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests, 11 year olds achieved results that were below average in English and mathematics, but above average in science. These results were in line with the average achieved by these pupils as seven year olds in 1997 in English and mathematics and well above average in science, so progress in Years 3 - 6 is at least satisfactory.

The trend in results is impressive. Since 1997, results for both seven and 11 year olds have improved at a much better rate than nationally. The targets in English and mathematics for 11 year olds have been exceeded in each of the last two years and the work being done by the oldest pupils suggests the school is in line to do the same this year. However, the standards being attained by the oldest pupils in English in particular and by higher attaining pupils generally still require some improvement.

As a result of improved procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress, the school is setting more ambitious targets. The work seen in lessons suggests that this is

well-founded. More pupils in Year 5 are working to expected standards and beyond. The same is true in some Year 3/4 classes but unsatisfactory teaching is slowing the progress of a significant minority of pupils.

Pupils across the school make good progress in history, art and design and especially music and the attainment of the oldest pupils is better than expected. Attainment in design and technology, geography, physical education and religious education is average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils do not make sufficient progress in ICT and the standards attained by 11 year olds are below average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very Good. Pupils have very positive attitudes and are keen to learn. They enjoy the opportunities provided by the school and take part enthusiastically.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are tolerant of each other, are involved in the daily routines of the school and gain in confidence and outlook as they get older. Relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils talk confidently about their work and enjoy explaining what they are doing. They become immersed in the content of lessons and try their best to succeed. Only rarely do teachers need to remind pupils about their behaviour and virtually all classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils take on greater responsibility as they get older. Many help with the routines of the school and adopt mature attitudes such as the "buddy" system, which emphasises pupils' responsibilities to each other at breaks and lunchtimes. The school also has a pupils' council through which pupils can express their views about the school. Attendance was below the national average but has improved and is now satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 - 2	Years 3 - 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good

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

The teaching of seven to 11 year olds is good because teaching is very good in Years 5/6. The teaching in Years 3/4 is not up to the same quality because one in five lessons has weaknesses.

Teachers have a good understanding of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and teach these key skills well. In these and other lessons, plans are clear, the objectives for the lesson made known to the pupils and linked to other areas of learning through "mind maps." Teachers match activities to the abilities of the pupils. They quickly settle and

become involved in the work set. They are keen to gain new knowledge and work at a good pace. In the very best lessons, teachers give a strong emphasis to practical tasks with pupils applying skills as well as gaining knowledge. In these lessons all pupils, including higher attaining pupils, make good progress because they are able to work independently and understand what they need to do to improve. In most other lessons, pupils make appropriate progress but not all pupils capable of higher than expected standards progress as well as they could.

Just over ten per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory or poor. This is because a minority of teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge to ensure that the lessons enable pupils to make progress. So, whilst pupils are interested and involved, they do not increase their understanding sufficiently.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met and the strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are good. The school provides an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Clear improvements have been made since the previous inspection. Pupils' needs are correctly identified and pupils are effectively included within the work of the class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Social and moral development is very good; spiritual and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school takes care to ensure the safety and well-being of its pupils. Educational and personal support is good and procedures for monitoring academic performance and personal development are effective.

The school has developed good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and has recently re-planned the way it teaches all other subjects. As a result, the curriculum is broad and balanced. However, not all applications of ICT are taught to sufficient depth.

The school is a safe place for pupils although the policy for health and safety is not routinely monitored. Pupils receive good support through individual targets which are explained to them and their parents at termly meetings with their teachers. Monitoring of academic performance has improved since the previous inspection. The school has a good partnership with parents. The community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning and relationships with other schools in the area are very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and senior staff have led recent developments in a determined way, concentrating on improving the quality of pupils' learning through a number of useful initiatives. Subject co-ordinators do not make a full contribution to the management of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The work of the governing body has improved significantly since the last inspection.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Key improvements have been made since the last inspection and the school has a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has made wise choices in how its resources are used.

The headteacher and senior staff provide very determined leadership and are a strong team. Subject co-ordinators now make a better contribution than they did at the time of the previous inspection but still need to be more involved in monitoring work in the classroom. The governing body know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and hold it to account well. There are better procedures for evaluating the work of the school and the school improvement plan contains clear priorities although its targets are not easily measurable.

The school is well-staffed and has a good range of teaching resources. Recent extensions to the building mean the school has good accommodation although mobile classrooms in the playground restrict the space for outdoor physical education lessons and pupils' play. The school has made a number of wise choices in using its available resources and applies the principles of best value well.

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 like school and behave well. • The teaching is good, the school expects pupils to work hard and they make good progress. • The school works closely with parents. They are comfortable in approaching the school, are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. • The school is well-led and managed. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. • There is an interesting range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although not a significant concern, a small number of parents are not happy about the amount of work pupils are required to do at home.

The inspection team supports the positive views of parents; they have every right to be pleased with the work of the school. In particular, the range of activities outside lessons is especially good. With regard to homework, the inspection team finds that the school's approach to homework is appropriate.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

The Foundation Stage (children in the nursery and reception classes)

1. Children begin in the nursery with a range of skills that are generally below those normally found in three year olds. Apart from creative development and speaking skills where they make unsatisfactory progress, they make good progress and begin the reception classes with a range of skills similar to that generally found. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children reach the early learning goals for all areas of learning except creative development. Their progress in personal, social and emotional development is very good; in mathematical development it is good. Progress in knowledge and understanding of the world, language and literacy and physical development is satisfactory. In creative development it is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early, receive appropriate support and make satisfactory progress. Higher attaining pupils are also identified early but are less well supported and make unsatisfactory progress.

Key Stage 1 (pupils from five to seven)

Recent trends

2. Since 1997, improvements in writing and mathematics have been impressive. In writing, results have moved from around the national average to above it and are well above the average achieved by schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal. In mathematics, results have moved from well below the national average to being in line with the national average and that of similar schools. Reading results have not improved at the same rate. However, the 2001 results were just below the national average but have still improved at a faster rate than most other schools have managed over the same period. Last year's results in science were above the national average.

Key Stage 2 (pupils from seven to 11)

Recent trends

3. In mathematics and science, the school has managed to improve pupils' results by almost three times the rate that other schools have managed in the period since 1997. In science, the 2001 results were above the national average and that of similar schools. Despite the significant improvement in mathematics, 2001 results were below the national average and that of similar schools. In English, the school's rate of improvement is better than most other schools but last year's results are below the national average and that of similar schools. The school has been successful in improving the attainment of boys in English, mathematics and science and they now achieve much better results than they did three years ago. A key feature of the school's current results is that relatively fewer pupils attain at higher than expected levels and this has the effect of bringing down the school's overall performance. This was a key issue in the last inspection and the school accepts that it has still got much work to do to improve matters.

The current seven and 11 year olds

4. Standards of literacy are improving but the standards reached by 11 year olds are currently below average. Most pupils' standards of speaking and listening are very good and they make very good progress. Most listen well to the teacher and other pupils. They speak confidently, answer questions including good levels of detail and explain clearly what they are doing. Older pupils speak confidently in larger groups and on more formal occasions. Seven year olds attain satisfactory standards in reading. They can build unfamiliar words using their letter sounds and gain an appropriate understanding of what they have read. However, many lack fluency when reading aloud. The same is true of 11 year olds, nor are they able to talk confidently about books and authors they have read and express preferences. Consequently, standards of reading are below average and the progress made by 11 year olds is unsatisfactory. A similar pattern exists in writing. Standards of seven year olds are average and they make satisfactory progress in being able to write for an audience in sentences separated by full stops and capital letters. However, a significant minority do not form or join letters correctly. Around a third of 11 year olds do not reach expected standards in writing and their progress is unsatisfactory.
5. Standards in numeracy are average overall and most pupils are making satisfactory rates of progress. Seven year olds are developing a good understanding of number and confidently use mental calculation strategies to solve problems. Less able pupils can describe the properties of two and three dimensional shapes. However, they are not yet solving problems using money or measuring weight and distance accurately. Higher attaining pupils are using simple fractions and can apply them to problems. They can add and subtract numbers using written methods with three digits and explain reflective symmetry. Nearly three out of four pupils aged 11 are working at expected standards and one in four reach better than expected standards. This is an improvement on last year's results. Most can multiply and divide whole numbers by 10,100 and 1000 and higher attaining pupils can undertake this process with decimals. They can use and interpret co-ordinates and calculate perimeter and area of simple shapes. Higher attaining pupils can use simple formulae involving more than one operation and can apply their mathematics to real situations. Progress is improving as pupils move from Year 3 to Year 6. For example, four out of every five pupils in Year 5 are working at expected standards with one in four working at higher than expected standards.
6. In science, seven year olds make good progress in acquiring both skills and knowledge and almost all reach expected standards. They observe closely using appropriate equipment and can identify the conditions required for seeds to grow and the best place to keep them. Pupils continue to make good progress and the vast majority of 11 year olds are working at the expected level with around a third at the higher level. In particular, pupils are confident in carrying out tests, knowing what is required for a fair test, selecting suitable equipment and making careful observations, which are recorded neatly.
7. Seven year olds reach average standards in ICT but 11 year olds' standards are below average because they do not use the full range of ICT applications. Most pupils make good progress, particularly in Years 5/6 and reach better than expected standards in art and design, history and, especially, music. In all other subjects, pupils make satisfactory progress and the standards attained by seven and 11 year olds are in line with those expected.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory and occasionally good progress. Progress is best when teachers match work closely to pupils' individual targets and monitor how well they succeed in meeting these. Learning assistants support pupils in the classroom and help them to share in class activities and make progress in their individual work. Progress is unsatisfactory when individual education plans do not give enough detail for teachers to plan sufficiently small steps or when work is not matched to each pupil's needs.
9. Higher attaining pupils between the ages of five and seven make satisfactory progress. They benefit from the recently introduced ability groups in literacy and numeracy, where teachers provide challenging work to meet their needs. They develop better reading and writing skills at an early age and this enables them to make progress in other subjects. For example, pupils' written work in science in Year 2 indicates that they can identify features which make testing fair and record their observations clearly in charts.
10. The progress of higher attaining pupils by the age of 11 is unsatisfactory. This is because in some subjects there is little difference between the work which teachers expect from pupils of different abilities. However, the introduction of ability sets in literacy and numeracy has provided a clearer focus for teaching and learning. This, together with some very good teaching in Years 5/6 is helping standards improve but much still remains to be done to secure consistent progress across the school in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils enjoy learning and have very good attitudes to school. They behave very well in lessons and around the school; their personal development is very good and there are excellent relationships between pupils and staff. The high standards noted at the last inspection have been maintained and improved further.
12. Pupils are very keen to come to school and many take part in activities outside class such as netball, football, choir and drama. They are willing to learn and respond very well to good teaching. Pupils are very interested and fully involved in their lessons. For example, in a study of seaside places, Year 1/2 pupils were keen to contribute ideas on what they would find at the seaside. They were excited as they pretended to "go on holiday" and they were enthralled by the teacher's computer presentation of a journey through Southport.
13. Pupils listen attentively and get on with the tasks set. They are eager to ask and answer questions. Pupils work hard and are keen to improve. For example, Year 5 pupils composed and recorded their own group arrangements for "Bonfire's Burning". They worked very hard, especially at the end of a long, warm day, ensuring their recordings were to a high standard.
14. Pupils behave very well in lessons and this makes for a calm learning atmosphere. They behave very well in the dining room and playground. Pupils know what standard of behaviour is expected and respond well. There is little bullying, sexism or racism. Pupils are friendly and polite. They take good care of equipment, such as in mathematics and working on the computers. They handle books with care and tidy away neatly and quickly at the end of lessons.
15. Relationships are excellent. Pupils respect one another's views, co-operate and share ideas. For example, even the youngest pupils work well together, listening to each other's views or taking turns as they play in the "farmer's kitchen" or on the

computer. Pupils are well mannered and considerate; they respect the teachers and are keen to please.

16. Pupils' personal development is very good. They grow in confidence in response to the praise and encouragement they receive. They settle to group work quickly and many work well with little direct supervision. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and they are very aware of their impact on others. In a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils had clear ideas about "what friends have in common" and "how friendships can break up." When asked to name the best three things about the school, the pupils on the council thoughtfully replied, "The pupils, the staff, and the respect everyone has for each other". They went on to explain that the school theme "I can do it" gives everyone the confidence to have a go and try things out. No one is afraid of making mistakes.
17. Pupils respect differences. Pupils in Year 3/ 4 happily shared their experiences and feelings during the assembly on "Why I am special". Year 6 pupils, studying history, were horrified to read a 1950's notice, "No coloureds need apply".
18. Pupils think through problems for themselves as part of their investigations in mathematics, science, and information technology. Pupils take responsibility for their own learning through group work, homework, and research.
19. The older pupils help responsibly with the daily routines such as preparing for assemblies, helping in the library, and putting up displays. Younger pupils take responsibility as class monitors and checking each other's work. The pupils in the nursery develop independence by clearing away after activities, serving juice and snacks, and putting on their coats. The school council collect views through "circle time" and give all pupils an opportunity to have some say in what happens at school. Currently they are discussing ideas for the outdoor environment project and rewards for keeping class rules.
20. Attendance is satisfactory. It has improved since the previous inspection. Recorded attendance last year was below average because it did not include attendance at educational activities off-site. The adjusted figure is in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence last year was less than the national average although absence due to holidays during term time is high. A few pupils arrive late to school, but registration and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. In the school as a whole, eight per cent of teaching is excellent, 17 per cent is very good, 39 per cent is good, 25 per cent is satisfactory, eight per cent is unsatisfactory and three per cent is poor. Teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and for pupils aged five to seven. The teaching of seven to 11 year olds is good. This is because teaching in Years 5/6 is very good and compensates for a higher proportion of unsatisfactory and poor teaching than elsewhere.
22. The school has undertaken recent training, led by the Effective Learning Co-ordinator, in how pupils learn best. As a result, there is now a greater proportion of teaching that is good, very good or excellent than at the time of the previous inspection. Most lessons include many aspects covered in the training. For example, teachers make extensive use of "mind maps". This helps pupils to set their learning in a wide context and helps teachers to assess what pupils already know and so plan more effectively. The school has invested in a "Water is Cool" project to promote a healthy lifestyle and ensure that pupils sustain their concentration in

lessons by taking regular sips of water. Pupils respond to this sensibly and feel it allows them to concentrate for longer periods.

23. Teaching of three to five-year-olds in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory. In personal, social and emotional development it is very good and speaking and listening skills are taught well. Teachers and their support staff have high expectations of children and establish a calm working atmosphere. This enables children to make excellent relationships, listen attentively and have the confidence to speak up. The teaching of mathematical development is also good and the adults often include number work in daily routines. Knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and other aspects of language and literacy are taught satisfactorily. Creative development is taught unsatisfactorily because the children are given few opportunities to develop their own ideas.
24. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The basic skills of numeracy and literacy are taught well and are steadily improving pupils' standards in English and mathematics. Teachers write detailed lesson plans that contain clear objectives, which are shared with pupils before each lesson. As a result, pupils are clear about what they are to learn and generally work hard, maintaining interest and concentration. In other lessons, teaching methods are effective and enable pupils to make at least satisfactory progress. For example, practical work in science is a strong feature of the lessons and pupils enjoy the opportunity to carry out tests and to use equipment such as magnifying glasses. Effective teaching methods also enable teachers to manage pupils well. All teachers have established excellent relationships with their classes and have discussed classroom rules and expectations. As a result pupils rarely need reminding about their behaviour and work at a good pace, being keen to complete their work and please their teachers. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and enables them to ask appropriate questions and hold pupils' attention. However, not all teachers are as confident when teaching ICT. Teachers use time and resources effectively, lessons proceed at a brisk pace and teaching materials are readily available when required. Classroom assistants make a satisfactory contribution, they work well with the teachers except when the interplay between them takes over from pupils' learning.
25. The teaching of seven to 11 year olds is good. This is particularly the case in Years 5/6 where the vast majority of teaching is good and half is very good or excellent. These lessons are characterised by very good subject knowledge resulting in well planned and confidently taught lessons that challenge and inspire pupils. This enables them to achieve high standards, most especially in history, art and design and music. Teachers are adept at managing behaviour and have high expectations. All classrooms are calm orderly places where pupils work in a concentrated and productive way, and teachers make good use of time. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught confidently. Teachers are well-versed in the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and pupils' standards in mathematics are becoming closer to those typically expected, although this has not quite been achieved yet in English. Homework is regularly set and is making a positive contribution to pupils' progress in English and mathematics. In Years 3/4, teaching is more inconsistent. There are examples of very good teaching, for example a lesson for higher attaining Year 3 pupils was very well taught and enabled pupils to produce some imaginative beginnings to an adventure story. Other lessons in literacy and mathematics are taught to a reasonable standard. However, weaknesses in teaching occur when lessons are not taught confidently. Pupils are given activities which do not engage their interest and their attitudes and behaviour, normally such a positive feature, deteriorate.

26. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and occasionally good. Where teaching is effective, pupils are challenged and supported in order to meet their very specific individual targets. Consequently they make sound and sometimes, good progress, especially when they are involved in monitoring their own performance. For example, the progress of a girl in meeting her behaviour targets is carefully tracked and the pupil is proud of her success. However, for pupils with learning difficulties, individual education plan targets are not sufficiently sharp for the outcomes to be easily measurable when pupils' progress is reviewed.
27. Throughout the school, pupils are taught according to ability by placing them in sets for literacy and numeracy. These generally raise teachers' expectations. Their plans indicate that recent work is sufficiently challenging, more especially in numeracy. Teachers ask more challenging questions and provide interesting work, which is well-matched to pupils' needs. For older pupils, this challenge is not always evident in other subjects, for example, in information and communication technology, geography and religious education. Groups of higher attaining pupils, called "Foxtrotters," have been set up for pupils from the age of seven. In these lessons, teachers challenge pupils to think and learn for themselves and they are beginning to improve the progress of these pupils.

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

28. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is satisfactory for pupils aged five to 11 and meets statutory requirements for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. All pupils have satisfactory access to the whole curriculum. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop the full range of ICT skills.
29. In the Foundation Stage there are very good opportunities to extend children's personal, social and emotional development and good opportunities to develop mathematical and speaking and listening skills and understanding. Children's creative development is unsatisfactory and is an area for improvement.
30. The curriculum for pupils aged five to 11 reflects the school's priorities for improving standards in English and mathematics. The National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies are being implemented effectively and are making a good contribution to raising standards in English and mathematics. The strategy of teaching older pupils in ability groups for English and mathematics is beginning to improve standards.
31. Curricular planning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall but does not sufficiently take into account the incremental learning steps children need to make on the way to attaining the Early Learning goals. This means that planning does not always meet the needs of all children. Curricular planning for pupils aged five to 11 is good. It is used to identify key learning objectives for groups and individual pupils. The curriculum is based on a recently introduced two year cycle planned to meet the needs of mixed age-group classes. This is currently being monitored and evaluated by the senior leadership team. The school uses national guidance to provide teachers with a good basis from which to plan lessons. This is most effective in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Planning in the other subjects, such as ICT and geography, does not consistently identify learning objectives for pupils at different stages of learning. Consequently, the activities planned for higher attaining pupils in these subjects often lack challenge and pace and do not promote their learning effectively. The school makes good use of teachers' expertise when

planning the whole school curriculum. This is proving particularly successful in raising the attainment of older pupils in English and mathematics. The school uses its classroom assistants to provide sound support for pupils' learning and include all pupils in its provision.

32. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PHSE), including sex education and drugs awareness is good. This is mainly provided through the science curriculum, PHSE lessons and the religious education curriculum. All classes have timetabled lessons for personal and social education and these include such activities as "circle time." These provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss issues and to express their feelings and views. They help pupils to develop respect for others' opinions.
33. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The strategy of setting by ability for literacy and numeracy enables teachers to plan to meet most pupils' needs. Sound support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs allows them to be integrated into class lessons and work at a suitable pace alongside their classmates. Individual education plans set targets which address the needs of individual pupils aptly but these are not always monitored and updated well enough to provide good basis for planning the next stage of learning. Regular meetings enable teachers to raise quickly concerns about pupils who are not making sufficient progress. This information is followed up promptly. Pupils have good access to all curricular and extra-curricular activities.
34. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social and moral development. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is good. This promotes high standards of personal development. The school is a happy, caring community where pupils feel valued and supported. This has a very good effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour.
35. Pupils' spiritual development is well supported through assemblies, links with the church and religious education. Teachers promote pupils' sense of wonder in good lessons across the curriculum including art, music and English. A very good example was in a Year 5/6 class when the teacher shared her own experiences and read a poem which helped pupils explore the theme of "Everyone is Special." Teachers encourage pupils to think about the important things in life. Regular worship in assemblies provides good opportunities for pupils to reflect on and discuss the wonder of life and to think about the needs of others. During, assemblies pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good and a lighted candle adds a sense of special occasion to the proceedings.
36. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' moral and social behaviour. They involve pupils in deciding school and class rules to make the school a safe and supportive place to be. The pupils in the school council, who are elected by their peers, play a major role in this area. In nearly all classes, pupils make sensible suggestions for day-to-day behaviour which centres on respect for other pupils' feelings and individuality. These values are very evident throughout the school and permeate all that it does. This is a notable achievement considering that a significant minority of pupils start the nursery with below average social and personal development. Adults set a good example by treating pupils with consideration and courtesy. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong because teachers consistently reinforce these aspects. There is a strong emphasis on pupils doing their best and this is promoted through rewards for academic and personal achievement. Teachers encourage pupils to co-operate by planning paired and group activities. For instance, in music pupils work together to produce good quality choral and instrumental

accompaniments. Pupils to do jobs around the school and in class such as putting away equipment, setting up for assembly and being a “buddy” to other pupils needing support. These opportunities make a very good contribution to pupils’ moral and social development.

37. The school provides good opportunities for pupils’ cultural development. It is aware that the most pupils are white in an area of cultural and ethnic diversity. It takes great care to ensure that pupils learn about and respect the customs, faith and beliefs of others in society as well as learning about their own culture. Visits, assemblies and subjects such as history, geography, music, art and design and religious education help pupils learn about different celebrations and cultures. For example, the in-depth work older pupils have carried out in geography, using the Internet for research, has given them a good understanding of life and customs on the island of St. Lucia. In religious education, pupils learn about festivals in different faiths such as Diwali and Hanukkah. Attractive displays celebrate the art and artefacts of communities across the world. Pupils have explored ancient cultures through visitors and workshops planned to develop their understanding of life in Victorian and Viking times.
38. Pupils experience an excellent range of activities outside lessons through visits and school clubs. The visits include RAF Cosford, canals, museums and farms. The range of schools clubs, both within and after school hours is well beyond that which is generally found. They include choir, brass and recorder tuition, physical activities such as netball, rounders, cricket and athletics as well as art and story activities. Older pupils have the opportunity to have a residential experience. These opportunities make an excellent contribution to pupils’ academic and social development.
39. The community makes a very good contribution to pupils’ learning. Links with the wider community through research on the Internet are firmly established and older pupils are in contact with a writer in Korea. The pupils have supported needy children in Belarus by collecting and sending resources. The choir takes part in local music festivals and the school encourages the local community into the school to share in celebrations and festivals. Local community figures such as the police officer and the education welfare officer visit to offer support and advice. The school has very good links with partner institutions. The majority of the pupils transfer to the local high school and in order to make the transfer smoother, the two schools have set up a good bridging project which takes place over three weeks in June. This familiarises the pupils with their new teachers and the expectations of their new school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school cares well for its pupils, and there is good provision for their support and guidance. The staff know the pupils very well, and provide a caring atmosphere that contributes greatly towards pupils’ learning. There is good additional support from outside agencies. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils’ attainment and progress, an improvement since the last inspection which is helping to raise pupils’ standards of attainment.
41. There are good arrangements for child protection, but staff have not been trained recently. There are satisfactory procedures for health and safety and staff make sure that pupils learn safely. There is good first aid coverage and staff know pupils with medical conditions. Safety hazards are remedied but the premises are not checked systematically and procedures are not audited.

42. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Unexplained absence is rigorously followed up with telephone calls and letters. Teachers and office staff note patterns of poor attendance and absence is monitored through weekly meetings. The Education Social Worker effectively follows up poor attendance and punctuality. Pupils with good attendance receive certificates. But staff do not do enough to improve moderately poor attendance and promote the importance of good attendance.
43. There are very effective measures to monitor and promote good behaviour. The majority of staff expect high standards and reinforce good behaviour by consistently recognising and encouraging it. The guidelines for behaviour emphasise a positive approach and all staff have been trained. The school works very well to maintain high standards of behaviour at break time. Staggered lunchtimes reduce the number of pupils on the playground. There is games equipment and lunchtime clubs to keep pupils occupied constructively. Parents are well informed and support the behaviour policy. There are good systems for monitoring unsatisfactory behaviour. There is little bullying or racism and the school is very effective at promoting good relationships.
44. The school monitors and promotes pupils' personal development very well through lessons in personal and social education, "circle time", clear communication, and effective links with parents. These help staff note developments and identify concerns. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are promoted through excellent relationships and every aspect of school life.
45. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress are good. This area was identified as a weakness in the previous report. Since then, and especially in the last two years, there has been a substantial improvement in assessment procedures and the use the school makes of the information gained from these. Teachers accurately assess children's attainment and stage of development on entry to school. The nursery places emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills. Consequently, most pupils start in Year 1 with positive attitudes towards learning.
46. The system of continuing assessment in English and mathematics is good. Teachers make notes on plans to show how well pupils have achieved or if they are having difficulties. This information is used to plan the future lessons in order to make the best use of resources and adult support. The school is aware that there is not the same level of recording in some other subjects, particularly in information and communication technology, geography and religious education. The introduction of ability sets in English and mathematics enables teachers to plan specific tasks to meet pupils' needs. There are now more opportunities for pupils to become involved in self- assessment. Pupils agree individual targets with their teachers and refer to them when they check their own work. One pupil wrote that his target was to develop his writing in science lessons. Later he noted, "I am making progress when I write accounts." Pupils regularly use their Progress Books to complete pieces of work. This allows teachers and pupils to look at previous work and decide if there is improvement.
47. The assessment co-ordinator and senior staff track each pupil's progress closely through analysing the results of standardised tests. Teachers use these and their regular assessments particularly well to decide where extra support is needed. This approach has helped to improve procedures for setting targets and the school is now setting higher targets.

48. The school provides satisfactory support for pupils with special educational needs, mainly through helping them within the class. Where individual education plans focus on small steps to be achieved, pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. In plans where there are broader targets, teachers find it more difficult to meet pupils' needs, support is not as effective and they make slow progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Parents are pleased with the school. In particular they think teaching is effective and the school expects their children to work hard. They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. The inspection confirms parents' positive views. A small number of parents have a concern about homework but the inspection team finds the approach to homework to be appropriate.
50. The school has built a good partnership with parents that is having a positive effect on learning. The information provided for parents is good. There are regular newsletters. The prospectus and Governors' Annual Report provide a good summary of what is going on in school. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress; the end of year reports are good and parents meet regularly with the teachers to discuss their children's progress. Teachers discuss literacy and numeracy targets with parents and the pupils take home certificates, stickers and awards noting achievements. The teachers are readily accessible and the school is quick to involve parents if there are problems.
51. The contribution of parents to their children's learning is good. The school works closely with parents who are encouraged to raise concerns and keep the school informed about their children. The school regularly consults with parents and responds to their concerns. The arrangements for keeping parents informed on what is taught are good. There are curriculum evenings, meetings to explain about national tests, and termly letters explaining what the pupils are learning. Homework is set regularly. There are satisfactory arrangements for introducing parents and children to the nursery and reception class. Many parents support their children at class assemblies, school productions and events such as sports day and harvest celebration. They encourage their children to take part in activities outside school such as netball, football, drama, and ICT. The Fund Raising Organisation Group works hard and a few parents help in school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and is in a strong position to continue these improvements. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by the senior staff and governors of the school. They have identified the right priorities for development and taken appropriate action. For example, the work undertaken to gain a greater understanding of how pupils learn best and to implement positive behaviour strategies has helped create a very positive learning environment and there is a greater proportion of teaching that is good or better than in the previous inspection. Both pupils and staff are happy to come to school and want to do their best. There are good systems of consultation and communication, ensuring that all members of the school community are well informed, feel valued and are very committed to achieving the school's aims.
53. The school improvement plan effectively identifies actions and resources needed to address both short and long-term priorities. Whilst the implementation of actions is regularly monitored, many targets are not specific enough to be measured. This

hinders senior staff and governors in accurately identifying good practice and planning any future developments.

54. Roles and responsibilities within the management structure are clearly defined and senior staff play a significant role in driving forward improvements. This position is a significant improvement from the last inspection. The appointment of an effective learning co-ordinator to work alongside the headteacher and deputy headteacher in supporting and challenging staff has enabled many to develop further their skills and some to seek extra responsibility within the school. The school has good procedures for the induction of new staff and the support given is well-targeted and regularly reviewed. For example, the newly qualified teacher has made a good start to her career. The weaknesses in the provision for pupils with special educational needs in the previous report have been remedied and is now satisfactory. The special needs co-ordinator regularly communicates with the senior management team and staff about pupils on the register of special educational needs and individual education plans are amended if necessary.
55. There is a systematic programme to monitor and evaluate the school's performance. Clear guidance is provided to ensure issues are linked to actions and there is a timetable for monitoring linked to the school priorities. For instance, the new format for curriculum planning will be evaluated in January next year. Subject co-ordinators make a direct contribution to the school improvement plan by providing the headteacher with an annual summary report of actions and achievements prior to a meeting to decide future developments and consider financial implications. The deputy headteacher and effective learning co-ordinator use non-teaching time well to monitor attainment and teaching and provide information for weekly senior management meetings. There is effective communication concerning these meetings to ensure any issues are quickly identified and dealt with. Time is also provided for co-ordinators to monitor their areas of responsibility. This mainly takes the form of reviewing teachers' planning, sampling pupils' work and auditing resources. This has enabled them to improve curriculum provision in most areas. These are considerable improvements from the previous inspection. However, subject co-ordinators do not identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching because they do not have opportunities to monitor classroom work. Performance Management has been well implemented and is a very effective tool for improvement. Staff and governors are well-informed about the process and have developed skills necessary to support colleagues and further raise the quality of teaching.
56. The governing body satisfactorily fulfils its statutory duties and effectively accounts for the performance of the school. Governors are strong supporters of the school and have high expectations of both its short and long term future. There is a well-organised system of committees and governors are well-informed of the school's progress and of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors play an active part in school improvement planning and school target setting. With the headteacher, they decide the school's key priorities and link these to their responsibilities for setting and monitoring the budget. They have actively lobbied the local education authority to replace the temporary classrooms, while focusing resources in the short term, to improving the learning environment within them.
57. Overall financial planning is good. The school applies the principles of best value well. They undertake a detailed analysis of the pupils' test results and compare them with other schools both locally and nationally. The headteacher, staff and governors, regularly review spending decisions and consult parents about their opinions. The recently produced information sheets provided to support parents in helping their

children when doing their mathematics homework came in a direct response to these consultations. Procedures are followed to ensure the best value from purchases of outside services. Resources for subject and areas of learning are good and staff are actively involved in purchasing decisions. Grants for specific purposes, such as the New Opportunities Fund have been used well. The school has also been successful in attracting extra funding from organisations such as the Community Development Fund and Urban Regeneration to enhance further the learning environment.

58. The school makes good use of its resources. There has been a major investment in curriculum resources which have a positive impact on pupils' learning in both classrooms and specialist areas such as the library and information and communication technology suite. The accommodation is well-kept and the pupils appreciate how much has been done to make their school bright, attractive and cheerful. The nursery has a very good suite of rooms that enables the staff to work with small groups of children effectively. However, temporary classrooms do restrict outdoor play space. The funding for development of ICT has been spent appropriately and this has improved provision. The school makes satisfactory use of ICT, both in teaching, working with parents and for efficient routine administration.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (1) Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching in Years 3/4.
(Paragraphs 21, 25, 73, 97 & 117)
- (2) Extend the role of subject co-ordinators to include greater responsibility for evaluating teaching.
(Paragraphs 55, 75, 80, 84, 88, 92, 98, 114 & 123)
- (3) Improve the standards attained by 11 year old pupils in English and ICT.
(Paragraphs 3, 4, 7, 68, 70, 71, 104 & 105)
- (4) Enable higher attaining pupils to make consistently better progress.
(Paragraphs 3, 9, 10)

Issues 2, 3 and 4 are included in the school's own improvement plan

59. In addition to these Key Issues, the governors may wish to include the following minor issues in their action plan
- Identify measurable targets in the school improvement plan, subject coordinators action plans and individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs
 - Make better arrangements for the implementation of the health and safety policy by systematically inspecting the premises and auditing the procedures laid out in the policy

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	11	25	16	5	2	0
Percentage	8	17	39	25	8	3	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 one percentage point.

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)	29	313
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9	42

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	22	23	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	22	22
	Girls	18	20	19
	Total	37	42	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (84)	93 (93)	91 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	22	22
	Girls	19	19	21
	Total	39	41	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (87)	91 (80)	96 (80)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	25	27	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	25
	Girls	20	21	26
	Total	36	37	51
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	69 (71)	71 (78)	98 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	18	25
	Girls	21	21	27
	Total	38	39	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (71)	75 (76)	100 (93)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	12
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	10

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)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	372

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	1	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	2001/02
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	£
Total income	720120
Total expenditure	759085
Expenditure per pupil	2220
Balance brought forward from previous year	38965
Balance carried forward to next year	0

**Qualified teachers and support staff:
nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
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	342
Number of questionnaires returned	94

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	22	9	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	36	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	34	3	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	31	16	1	2
The teaching is good.	66	32	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	30	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	15	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	23	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	59	34	6	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	54	40	2	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	35	0	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	34	9	1	4

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

60. Children spend between four and five terms part-time in the nursery and then transfer to the reception classes, the oldest in September and youngest in January. Children begin the nursery with a range of skills below that generally found, particularly in the speaking and listening and personal, social and emotional aspects. On entry to the reception classes, most children have developed a range of skills similar to those typically found with the exception of creative development and speaking. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning except creative development. Children make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development. Good progress is made in mathematical development. They make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Progress in creative development is unsatisfactory. Children with special educational make sound progress because their needs are identified early and they receive additional support. Higher attaining children are identified but are not supported well enough and make unsatisfactory progress
61. The management of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The co-ordinator implements a wide range of assessment but these are not used well enough to plan what children will learn. The planning of the curriculum does not sufficiently take into account the stages of learning known as "Stepping Stones." As a result, teaching does not always meet the learning needs of individual children. The co-ordinator has forged good relationships with parents. The quality of teaching in personal, social and emotional development is very good. The teaching of speaking and listening and mathematical development is good. It is satisfactory for knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and communication, language and literacy. Teaching in creative development is unsatisfactory.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. The school places considerable importance on developing children's social skills and attitudes to learning. The nursery teacher and nursery nurse work closely together to raise children's self esteem and confidence. They encourage children to share and co-operate with each other and staff and have a strong sense of community. They establish a calm working atmosphere which encourages children to concentrate and apply themselves to the tasks. Staff in nursery and reception have high expectations of children's behaviour and provide good support to a small number of children who find it difficult to listen or share. A good relationship between the children and staff encourages children to explore their feelings and the effect their behaviour has on others. A good example of this was in nursery during "circle" time when children talked about what was special to them about their home. Staff encourage children to support each other. For instance, children take it in turns to give out the drinks and snacks each day and all children help to put equipment away whilst listening to music. Teachers' emphasis on this area of learning makes a significant contribution to children's readiness to learn on entry to Year1.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Most of the children make good progress in developing speaking and listening skills. They listen attentively to instructions and discussions. Staff encourage children to

express their ideas and listen carefully to instructions. In the nursery, a small number of children find it difficult to sustain their attention for more than a few minutes and disrupt the learning of others. Teachers do not plan well enough to meet their needs. Children enjoy listening to stories and respond well to teachers' questions. Most children in reception are beginning to read simple text independently. They can read short common words using initial sounds and illustrations to help them. Good quality teaching in reading helps to guide children through the text and makes an important contribution to the progress made. Most children can identify a satisfactory range of single letter sounds and blends of letters such as *st* and *pr* at the beginning of words. However, most do not have enough knowledge of putting sounds together to go beyond that. Children's writing is developing satisfactorily. For example, children in a reception class making books based on their jungle theme could make plausible attempts at spellings, such as *elfent* for elephant and *tiga* for tiger. In nursery there are not enough planned opportunities to help children develop early writing skills and much relies on children's individual preferences when choosing independent activities. Work in reception is well planned to meet the needs of individual children.

Mathematical development

64. Children make good progress in this area of learning. In the nursery, staff take every opportunity to include number work in daily routines. For instance, when calling the register, the teacher encourages the children to count the number present. Most can count on to twenty and a few can count on beyond this. Staff provide a good range of activities but adults sometimes miss opportunities to extend children's learning. Where staff support groups and individuals by asking them challenging questions, progress is far better. The initial oral work is more suited to the needs of higher attaining children and does not always meet the needs of the others. In reception, teachers ensure children are clear about what they are learning and how it links to previous work. They introduce lessons effectively and use questions well to remind children of previous learning. Teachers make good use of mathematical language and encourage children to use the correct words. Staff help children to make good progress with lively activities and demonstrations. For example, children in one class were helped to understand the process of doubling of numbers by the teacher using figures from Noah's Ark. Most children could understand that double means the same as two of the same number. Higher attaining children could tell that double four is eight and use dominoes to show that double seven is fourteen by counting on. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and most can count up to ten and can add one more to numbers below. They find it more difficult to take away.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. Staff plan a good range of activities, events and visits linked to the topic themes to support learning. As a result, children develop a sound sense of place and time. In the nursery, children learn about seasonal changes and their senses. They learn how farm animals grow and feed and how they are looked after. For example, they could talk about their experiences from a farm visit and explain how baby animals fed from their mother. In both nursery and reception, children confidently use the simpler aspects of ICT to support their learning. They use the computer mouse and arrow keys to move objects around the screen and select icons to move. For example, two children in the nursery successfully used the arrow keys to guide Pingu the Penguin through a series of openings. In reception, children join with the nursery to visit a farm, Dudley Zoo and a nursery rhyme wonderland in Telford. They explore the wider community through visitors such as firemen, road safety officers, a dentist and police officers. In addition, there are events such as magic shows, puppet theatre and circus

performers. During the multi-cultural week, when adults dress in national costume, children begin to learn about the diversity of beliefs and customs of world-wide communities. Children take part in the nativity play at Ash End House Farm where real animals are included in the production. This helps children understand the setting of Christ's birth.

Physical development

66. Nursery children make satisfactory progress but it was not possible to see any physical development lessons in reception so no judgement is made on their progress. In the nursery lessons, children are managed effectively. Instructions are clear and children know exactly what they are expected to do. Most children respond well but a few get over-excited and lose concentration. When this happens the teacher quickly establishes control and reminds the children about safe behaviour. Children are developing satisfactory skills in controlling their movements and understanding how to vary the quality and speed of movement. For instance, in one lesson most children could walk, skip, run and jump either with light or heavy movements and worked well with a partner sliding bean bags backwards and forwards. A small minority can throw and catch small equipment such as bean bags. Children change their shoes for physical work but do not change into suitable clothing for indoor exercise and become very hot and uncomfortable. There is a good-sized outdoor area. Wheeled vehicles are provided to develop children's sense of direction and control. However, it lacks any large frame of apparatus to encourage children's confidence, strength and understanding of safe behaviour. All the children co-operate in putting equipment carefully away.

Creative development

67. In the nursery, activities offer little opportunity for children to develop their own ideas. The teacher and nursery nurse allow the children very few independent choices. For example, children making a pig face based on the farm animal theme were given all the pieces to assemble to replicate the teacher's. The children cut around the circle line already drawn for them and stuck the pieces together. Where children were offered free choice activities, adults did not ask questions to encourage discussion or to move the learning on. Only children who were chosen to paint developed their sense of creativity by blending colours and brush strokes on the paper. In reception, children made masks of jungle animals. All had the same basic shape provided and a learning support assistant instructed them where and how to put on the whiskers. Children have the opportunity to listen to and make music. For example, in the nursery most children are able to follow the beat of a piece of music by playing along with untuned instruments.

ENGLISH

68. By the age of seven pupils reach average standards and make satisfactory progress. The standards reached by 11 year olds are below average. This is because too few pupils reach the higher than expected level and they do not make enough progress. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and is good in Years 3 to 6. The National Literacy Strategy has been well implemented. Pupils read and write confidently, can explain their work and say what they are expected to learn. High attaining pupils can use their writing skills to write accounts in history and in science to present information in charts. The majority of pupils with special educational needs make sound progress but for a minority their targets are not sufficiently sharp for teachers to plan work matched to their needs.

69. Seven and 11 year olds', standards of attainment in speaking and listening are very good and most pupils make very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because learning assistants, who help them to take a confident part in discussion, support them. Teachers plan lots of opportunities for talk. Everyone's opinion is valued and there is a clear sense of mutual respect between teachers and pupils. Opportunities to work in ability groups enable pupils to share their knowledge and learn from others who are working at a similar level. In a role play lesson in a high ability set in Year 6, pupils enacted a scene from Beauty and the Beast. The teacher asked some pupils to portray mood through facial expression and others had to find words to describe these feelings. Pupils suggested that they "looked despairingly", and their "smile was comforting and reassuring."
70. Pupils' standards of attainment in reading are average by the age of seven but they do not achieve expected standards by the age of 11. A similar pattern exists in writing. Teachers of five to seven year olds develop skills in guided reading groups and helping pupils to build up words. This encourages pupils to read for pleasure. However, a significant minority of pupils use only this method to read unfamiliar words and this affects their fluency when reading aloud. Pupils enjoy reading books from the new scheme and read with understanding. They are developing their alphabetical skills and can explain how to use an information book. The more able can talk about the book's layout and use the contents and index pages to locate information. In the high ability set in Year 1, pupils were asked to find the answer to the question, "What time of the year does the whale have her babies?" The answer they needed was inferred in the text but not given. They quickly decided that if the water was warming up it must be spring. In Year 6 the majority of pupils do not read as fluently as they should, nor can they talk confidently about authors or books they prefer.
71. By the age of seven, pupils use writing to appeal to an audience, for example a letter to the vicar or an account of a visit to a wildlife centre. Teachers' plan regular handwriting sessions but a significant majority of pupils do not form their letters properly and this prevents them from joining letters correctly. Pupils use spelling books effectively to practise common word patterns and to follow rules such as adding "ful" to words like "care" to make careful. In Year 3/4, pupils write for a broad range of purposes including giving instructions, evaluating a new toy and writing a play script. Teachers and pupils set writing targets which are reviewed regularly. Pupils find this really helpful. As one said, "They help me to concentrate on things I need to improve. When I finish my writing I check to see if I've met my target." One pupil's target in November was to use capital letters and full stops consistently; evidence in her book now indicates that she accurately uses a broad range of punctuation. About a third of pupils in the current Year 6 write at below average levels. However, as a result of good teaching, standards of writing are improving and the majority of pupils in Year 5 are on track to achieve expected levels at Year 6 and higher attaining pupils write confidently in a variety of styles to engage the interest of different audiences. For example pupils running an advertising campaign had to suggest how the wording of a television, radio and magazine advert would differ.
72. Teachers display pupils' writing around the classroom and sometimes refer to this in the lesson. They encourage pupils to read their work to the class. Writing in other subjects makes a strong contribution to the work in literacy in particular, work in history. Teachers show that neat work is valued and this encourages pupils to try their best.

73. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for pupils aged five to seven and good for pupils aged seven to 11. In the best lessons, teachers clearly outline what should be achieved. They carefully match stimulating activities to pupils' needs and effectively balance their use of demonstration, individual and group work. Teachers plan carefully for five to seven year olds but they give too much emphasis to whole class work during the literacy hour. This reduces the time spent teaching a particular skill to a group and does not allow sufficient time for pupils to practise and succeed. There are also fewer opportunities to consolidate their learning at the end of the lesson. Teaching in Years 5/6 is brisk and pupils make better progress than in Years 3/4. Teachers plan interesting and challenging activities, they encourage pupils to work in pairs and groups and they manage the literacy hour very effectively. Pupils are very aware of the progress they make in the lesson. In Years 3/4, not all teachers manage pupils well and they do not use the literacy hour flexibly in order to give priority to teaching pupils in ability groups. The school has set up targeted groups of high attaining pupils, called "Foxtrotters." These groups are withdrawn from class once a week for sharply focused English teaching to develop their understanding further. Pupils enjoy the sessions even though they say, "the work is hard" and they are starting to improve the progress of these pupils.
74. Teachers question pupils well to see what they have learned. They use this information to make notes on their plans and amend these if necessary. Teachers keep records of pupils' progress in all areas of English. They very carefully set targets for pupils to reach and discuss these with the pupils and parents. This ensures pupils know what they have to do to improve and that parents support them with their schoolwork. The school's library, recently integrated with the computer suite to form an information centre, enables pupils to find information from a range of high quality books and make use of the bank of computers. Teachers show pupils how to use the computer to find information and to draft, save and print work. Most older pupils are confident to do this, as one pupil said, "It saves time when you make a mistake." Pupils enjoy their lessons and their regular homework. They are well motivated and very well behaved because teachers make the work interesting.
75. The literacy team have worked effectively with the senior management team to re-organise pupils into ability sets for literacy. In service training has enabled staff to accurately assess pupils' writing and this has made the school's target setting process much sharper. The team has a clear view of standards and how the school can help pupils improve. They monitor teachers' plans and examine work in books but do not observe teachers in their classes. As a result, they do not have a clear view of teaching strengths and areas for development and so cannot provide support or offer training to develop teachers' skills.

MATHEMATICS

76. Seven year olds reach average standards and make satisfactory progress. This is slightly better than last year and continues the trend of improvement. They are developing a good understanding of number and confidently use mental calculation strategies to solve problems. Less able pupils can identify two and three dimensional shapes and describe their properties. They are not yet solving problems using money or measuring weight and distance accurately. Higher attaining pupils are using simple fractions and can apply them to problems. They are able to add and subtract numbers using written methods with three digits and explain reflective symmetry.
77. Eleven year olds reach average standards and make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement on last year's results. Most can multiply and divide whole numbers

by 10,100 and 1000 and higher attaining pupils can do this with decimals. They can use and interpret co-ordinates and calculate perimeter and area of simple shapes. Higher attaining pupils can use simple formulae involving more than one operation and can apply their mathematics to real situations, for instance when explaining why carpets are measured in area rather than perimeter. Less able pupils are not yet able to extract appropriate information from written problems to make accurate calculations. Support given to pupils with special educational needs ensures that they make satisfactory progress, although there are no references to mathematical targets in individual education plans.

78. Although there are a few examples of unsatisfactory teaching, the quality of teaching and learning in most lessons is good and in Years 5/6 it is very good. Teachers plan thoroughly for their lessons, making good use of the national framework. The daily three-part lesson has been well implemented and all staff confidently give an appropriate emphasis to oral and mental calculations. In Year 5/6, teachers' work is particularly well matched to the needs of their pupils in the ability groupings. The lessons finish well with teachers carefully reviewing with pupils what they have learned and how they can use this to achieve the targets in the next lesson. This ensures learning builds effectively on what pupils know and they make good progress. Most teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and are sure about what it is they want pupils to learn in their lessons and share this with them. These lessons are then generally brisk as pupils are clear about what it is they have to do. Most teachers ask challenging questions and encourage pupils to tackle unfamiliar tasks. Teachers regularly assess what pupils can do but do not always use this information to plan future work. However, there are many opportunities for pupils to explain how they arrive at their answers and then try them out in a variety of practical problems. For instance when working out which would give us the highest total, halving £1,000,000 or cumulatively each day for 14 days.
79. Pupils work together well in pairs or small groups and have good attitudes towards mathematics. They share resources and discuss ideas, listening carefully to what each other has to say. During this time, most teachers skilfully work with groups and ask questions to find out how they are learning, rectifying any misunderstandings or extending the challenge. Teachers make good use of resources to support pupils' understanding, as for example in a Year 5 lesson where the teacher used the computer to apply and reinforce the concept of adding by two and three digit numbers. There was visible excitement as the pupils successfully tackled new and challenging work. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, a lack of subject knowledge prevents teachers from questioning and challenging pupils. In some cases, teachers' expectations are focused too much on pupils' behaviour rather than on their learning. In a Year 1 lesson the interplay between the teacher and the learning assistant confused pupils and hindered their progress.
80. The co-ordinator has led the subject well since taking over three years ago. She has very good subject knowledge and her own teaching is excellent. This expertise is used to support colleagues both in and beyond the school. She used an audit of mathematics undertaken with an external consultant to lead a series of well-focused training sessions to improve teachers' knowledge of mathematics and planning of the National Numeracy Strategy. There is also effective monitoring of planning but the co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

SCIENCE

81. Most seven year olds reach average standards and around a quarter reach the higher level. Pupils make good progress in acquiring both skills and knowledge.

They observe closely using appropriate equipment. For example, in a Year 1/2 class, pupils used magnifying glasses to look at the structure of a variety of seeds and were able to identify the various parts. They also planted the seeds and could say that they need water, warmth and light for them to grow. They went on to put them in suitable containers and place them where these conditions applied.

82. Eleven year olds' standards are higher than seven year olds because pupils make good progress in Years 3 -6; most reach average standards and a third reach the higher level. Pupils in Year 3/4 know what is required for fair test, observe carefully and record their results in simple charts. For example, they tested various rocks for permeability and ensured that the amount of water dropped on each rock was the same. They also selected a syringe rather than a dropper as it had a scale so that the amount of water could be exactly the same. Higher attaining Year 4 pupils, testing rocks for density, quickly recognised that moulding plasticine to the approximate shape of the rock and estimating if it was lighter or heavier than the rock was not exact enough to produce reliable results. They went on to plan a better test for the next lesson. In Years 5/6, pupils know that repeating tests produces more reliable results and that inconsistent patterns of results require further investigation. So, when testing how far a vehicle would travel when propelled down an incline, pupils studied their results and started to draw conclusions from the data about the optimum angle of incline. They drew charts and graphs accurately and could read off the intermediate points.
83. The teaching of five to seven year olds is satisfactory; for seven to 11 year olds it is good. Teachers successfully plan and teach lessons that enable pupils to gain knowledge and develop essential skills of scientific enquiry. This creates great interest and enthusiasm among pupils who concentrate hard, behave well and clearly enjoy the practical side of science. Lessons have clear objectives and teachers use "mind maps" to check what pupils already know and to give them an overview of what they are learning. Consequently, pupils are clear about what they have to do and can explain their work well. For example, Year 6 pupils can say that units of measurement need to be the same and that their recording in the previous lesson was not clear enough and the teacher wanted this aspect improved. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well. In a Year 5/6 lesson, the teacher asked higher attaining pupils to measure the angle of incline using a large protractor rather than simply count the amount of books taken to raise the platform. Pupils go on to write accounts of their work in a clear and direct style. Research and reference skills are well developed. For example, a Year 1/2 teacher had gathered a wide range of reference books and required pupils to use a simple Internet search engine to extend their knowledge of seeds and germination.
84. Leadership and management of science is satisfactory. The policy has been reviewed and updated and useful guidance has been provided for teachers together with a comprehensive range of well-organised resources. The science curriculum makes good use of national planning guidance and ensures that the programme of study for science is thoroughly covered. Whilst the co-ordinator monitors pupils' work and teachers' planning, her role does not extend to monitoring teaching. However, the school has recently commissioned an external consultant to review the way scientific enquiry is taught. This provided a number of recommendations. The school acted on these and ensures that this aspect of science is well-taught. This is a key improvement since the previous inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

85. There was very little teaching of art and design seen during the inspection but a range of evidence shows that the school has maintained above average attainment and good progress for both seven and 11 year olds.
86. Above average standards are evident in drawing, painting and printing. Year 6 pupils are particularly good at designing and printing repeated patterns on textiles. Pupils also make comments about their own work and compare it with others. Year 2 pupils noticed that their drawings of plants looked, "Quite good" but that, "if we added more detail it would make them look real." It would be better, they thought, if they had made their drawings larger in the first place so they could add things like veins into the leaves. Older pupils had a good knowledge of other artists' work and could explain how they were trying to achieve the translucent effect by using tissue paper and opaque glue when developing pictures in the style of Paul Klee. They were less certain when discussing the elements of composition in their own and artists' pictures. Eleven year old pupils produce good pieces of work when using a variety of materials and techniques in collage pictures. For instance, they created a seascape using thick paint applied with a palette knife and added textures using sand, card and textiles. Five to seven year olds make slow progress in collage work because they only use crushed paper rather than other media. The work by seven and 11 year old pupils in three dimensional work and developing techniques of sculpture is satisfactory. They have made clay pinch pots and built models and masks using card and paper sculpture techniques. This is rather a restricted range of experiences and prevents sculpture from being as well developed as other art and design skills.
87. The quality of teaching is good. There are teachers who have good subject knowledge in most aspects of art and design and they support other colleagues. Teachers are enthusiastic about art and design and this successfully transfers to pupils who enjoy all aspects of the subject. Although guidance on how to use sketchbooks has recently been circulated to improve consistency, some staff focus too much on completing small pictures rather than using sketchbooks to develop pupils' drawing skills and testing out ideas using paint and printing techniques. Even so the teaching of drawing, painting and printing skills in all aspects of art and design is good. There are a good range of resources that teachers use well to give pupils opportunities to experiment and make choices. Staff are building resources such as photographs of local industrial sculptures for pupils to draw, discuss and then visit. Although teachers assess pupils' work regularly, this information is often not recorded and used to plan future learning. The school is aware of this and is making improvements.
88. The new co-ordinator has just taken over. She has good subject knowledge and is managing the subject satisfactorily. Although the previous co-ordinator monitored planning, there has been no monitoring of teaching. The portfolios of good work and the "Foxyards Gallery" are a good resource for teachers and an opportunity to celebrate pupils' achievements. The school arranges visits to art galleries, such as the Barber Trust to give pupils direct experiences of crafts.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

89. No lessons were seen during the inspection, however other evidence shows that the attainment of pupils aged seven and 11 is in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress. Eleven year olds' designing and making skills are good, although their evaluation skills are satisfactory. This is a considerable improvement from the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory

90. Pupils aged seven can design and make stick puppets. They considered the best materials for their puppets carefully. "I chose this bright material because a princess would wear something like this," said one. As part of the process, they made up a playlet, using their puppets and then evaluated the success of their models. A significant minority of pupils did not complete this important process due to a lack of time and the need to fill in an evaluation sheet that was far too difficult for them. A Year 2 class works collaboratively with pupils from Years 5/6. This benefited all age groups, as younger pupils felt they had learned a lot from the older pupils. They in return, felt that the younger pupils had lots of good ideas and it helped them to think carefully about each stage of the process, so that they could explain it better.
91. Pupils aged 11 investigated shop fronts within a local shopping precinct. Although they identify the ones they like, they did not consider how effective they were from the shopkeepers' point of view. Using a box prepared by the teachers, the pupils planned in some detail what they would add to their miniature shop fronts. Their decisions about the materials, colours, moving parts (safety doorways for example) and the skills in joining, cutting and decorating were well-informed and researched. The quality of the making is good with attention given to scale and quality. Pupils evaluation skills are satisfactory using the prepared sheets but these are limited and many pupils do not give sufficient consideration to what worked, why and how they would improve their designs.
92. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic about design and technology, has good subject knowledge and uses this to support colleagues well. There is a good range of resources that are used well. The co-ordinator is currently working with colleagues to develop a better process for assessing pupils' design and technology skills. There is effective and regular monitoring of planning and resources but as yet, no opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching.

GEOGRAPHY

93. The standards attained by seven and 11-year-old pupils are in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress.
94. Seven year olds develop a sound sense of place and draw simple maps of the locality. They can identify the difference in physical features in contrasting localities. For example, seven year olds can point out features which are typical in a seaside town such as gift shops and a promenade. They use the computer well to access pictures of localities to discuss in small groups. In independent tasks they use their learning to present the information in different ways. For example, Year 1/2 pupils designed seaside postcards using their knowledge of typical features. Pupils use their literacy skills well, for instance when they wrote about their visit to RAF Cosford as part of their study of types of transport.
95. Pupils aged seven to 11 make satisfactory progress overall. The rate of progress for pupils in Years 3/4 is slow but improves significantly in Years 5/6. Year 3/4 pupils learn about symbols on maps, energy saving, how fossils form and how to draw plan views of buildings. However, a significant minority are unclear as to the purpose of their work. For example, pupils identifying symbols on maps were unsure why they were used. One group of higher attaining pupils could only suggest that they saved space on the map. The temporary classrooms do not have access to ICT and this restricts those pupils' independent use of resources such as the Internet.

96. Most pupils in Years 5/6 can find locations using a globe. They know maps have different scales and can talk about the temperature in different parts of the world. Pupils interviewed talked animatedly about their research of St. Lucia, including searching the Internet as well as books and maps. They have a very good understanding of the climate, culture, history and physical features of the island as well as understanding the impact of the tourist trade on the island's environment and eco-system. They present their findings in well-designed computer slide shows and written commentaries. They know some of the effects human activity has on their local landscape and communities, for instance, through their study and visit to the Coseley bypass.
97. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers' lesson planning does not consistently take into account the learning needs of different groups of pupils. Where teaching is good, lively activities are planned for different ability groups and teachers take into account the different ways in which pupils learn, for example, through visual, written and physical stimulus. In these lessons, pupils are clear about what they have to learn and the purpose of it. Management of pupils is good and a very good relationship between pupils and teachers supports the positive attitudes to learning. Teachers use skilful questioning to check and extend pupils' learning and use their natural curiosity to set them challenging tasks. The extensive research into St Lucia carried out by Year 5/6 pupils is a good example. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, activities are not motivating or purposeful. Teachers do not challenge higher attaining pupils and as a result their learning is slowed. Where the pace and expectations are low, pupils' attitude and behaviour deteriorates. For instance, in a lesson on map reading, Year 3/4 pupils quickly became bored. This led to silly behaviour, which the teacher struggled to contain. Teachers have recently started to identify opportunities for assessing pupils within their planning. This is not yet consistently used across the school to inform further planning for groups and individuals.
98. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and has carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work. She is aware the assessment of pupils' geographical skills needs further development and lessons need to be observed to ascertain the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

HISTORY

99. Very few lessons were observed during the inspection. However, from other inspection evidence, the attainment of seven year olds is average and 11 year olds attain better than expected standards.
100. Five to seven year old pupils make satisfactory progress. They can place events and objects in chronological order, for example in ordering things that fly from kites to modern jet planes. They were able explain in graphic detail the life and times of Florence Nightingale and the hospital conditions at the time of the Crimean War. They can identify the similarities and differences between modern motor transport and that of earlier times.
101. Seven to 11 year olds make good progress. They develop their skills of historical enquiry and interpretation to go with their knowledge and understanding of events and people in the past. In a study of Britain in the 1950's, Year 5/6 pupils can identify key events such as the coronation and link it with the recent death of the Queen Mother. They can identify primary and secondary sources (even recognising that the inspector was a primary source!). They pick up balance and bias in reports from the time and note when sources provided limited information. They can make

deductions about family life in the 1950's, noting key differences such as more formal dress and table settings at meal times.

102. In the one lesson observed, a Year 5/6 lesson, teaching was excellent. The teacher's subject knowledge, very precise planning, challenging activities matched to pupils' abilities and excellent organisation of resources (including research on the Internet) ensured that pupils' learning was significantly extended. They worked with intense interest and were fascinated by the source materials, expressing some shock at how black immigrants were treated in the 1950's. They had carried out additional research by questioning grandparents and gave very good oral presentations of their findings.
103. Leadership and management of history is in a period of transition. The previous co-ordinator recently left and there are satisfactory interim arrangements in place. The recent curriculum review has provided better organisation of the curriculum and the revised two-year programme ensures that the National Curriculum programme of study is effectively covered. Although the teaching of history is not a school priority, pupils' attainment has not suffered.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

104. Seven year olds' standards of attainment are average and they make satisfactory progress. Eleven year olds make unsatisfactory progress and reach below average standards. These differences are mainly due to the lack of opportunity for older pupils to experience the full range of the subject. For example, there is a need for more control and monitoring work. The use of the computer suite for teaching ICT skills to the whole class has significantly improved the progress pupils make in word processing and data handling.
105. By the time they are seven, most pupils are familiar with word processing techniques such as opening files, inserting and deleting text and saving and printing their work. They improve the presentation of their work by adding graphics downloaded from the Internet and pictures they create using paint programmes. Most pupils can enter information into grids and understand how to search a simple database. However, a significant minority do not understand the purpose of the learning. The majority of 11 year olds are competent in word processing and combining graphics and text. They use data programmes to create spreadsheets and know how to question the information. For example, in a science lesson Year 5 pupils used a spreadsheet to create graphs and identify trends in their test results. Pupils use the Internet extensively for research, for example, in history when exploring Britain in the 1950's and in geography to learn about the Island of St Lucia. However, the software available frequently limits the level they can achieve in their work. Older pupils have very limited experience of using Email for information and communication purposes. They lack sufficient experience and competence in control, modelling and monitoring and have not had regular opportunity to use digital photography or scanning to enhance their work with imported text or pictures. The resources for these aspects are unsatisfactory.
106. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching is best when teachers are confident in their own expertise, give clear instructions and respond quickly when pupils encounter problems. Introductions to these lessons ensure that pupils know what skills they are expected to learn and how they can be used within other subjects to improve their work. Pupils are well managed by teachers and support staff. In a minority of lessons, the purpose of the learning is not clear and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to discuss and analyse their work. Pupils often have to wait

for long periods of time whilst the teacher supports others experiencing difficulty and this leads to time being wasted and pupils growing frustrated and restless. There are satisfactory links between ICT and other subjects which give pupils opportunities to develop their understanding of the potential of ICT as well as their expertise. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. More able pupils are not challenged enough and often carry out tasks which repeat skills they have already acquired. This most often occurs when teachers' own knowledge and expertise is unsatisfactory.

107. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator is aware of the need to improve further teachers' expertise and confidence and is supporting the staff well through the in-service course recently started. Assessment of pupils' progress is in the early stages of development and is not used consistently across the school to identify what pupils need to do to improve. The subject is well resourced for computers. As well as the computer suite, the majority of classes have several computers which pupils can access independently when working in other subjects. However, this is not the case for Year 3/4 pupils in the temporary classrooms. There is a need to develop both hardware and software resources to ensure older pupils cover all aspects of the subject in enough detail.

MUSIC

108. Music is a strength of the school. The attainment of seven year olds matches that nationally and by the age of 11 standards are well above those expected. This is due to the very effective co-ordination of the subject throughout the school. Standards of singing and playing are high because of enthusiastic and very good specialist teaching. The school's aims and values are reflected very well in the subject because pupils are taught to work together well, to take care of instruments and produce work of high quality. This is good progress since the previous inspection.
109. Pupils really enjoy music. Throughout the school they sing tunefully both in the classroom and in assemblies. Teachers make sure that songs have a good sense of melody and rhythm so that pupils are keen to practise and perform well. In a Year 5/6 lesson, pupils rehearsed and sang a polished performance of "Bonfire's Burning" in unison and in four parts.
110. Similarly, pupils compose short pieces of music using a variety of instruments, with enthusiasm and a sense of fun. From an early age pupils can clap rhythms and count beats. They select instruments to represent sounds and understand how different moods and effects can be created. Pupils confidently hold their part when others are playing a different rhythm. They are encouraged to use correct musical vocabulary and in Year 1/2 they can talk about pitch. By Year 5 they explore a range of drones, melodic and rhythmic ostinatos and record their composition in the form of a graphic score. They interpret notation to perform significant parts and can explain their own contribution, for example leading or providing rhythmic support.
111. Pupil and teacher relationships are excellent. Teachers make lessons interesting and fun and pupils want to play a full part. This is confirmed by the numbers of pupils attending extra curricular musical activities.
112. Both choir and instrument tuition lessons are well attended. The choir performs regularly at the church and Town Hall and the school recently won the Dudley Schools' Choir competition. The brass ensemble meets on Thursday lunchtime. The teacher, from Dudley Music Services, meets all pupils for individual tuition and gives homework activities to develop their skills. Consequently pupils can confidently play

catchy tunes such as, "Super Trouper." At the end of a piece, which included solo parts, there was well-deserved spontaneous applause from others in the group.

113. For pupils between the ages of five and seven, teaching is satisfactory. The co-ordinator supports teachers because she believes they should make music fun for their class. Teachers respond positively and very effective relationships are built while music is taught. Teaching for seven to 11 year olds is good and often very good. This is because the co-ordinator has high expectations of what pupils can achieve and a strong influence on music teaching. Planning is very clear, practical activities are used to explore a range of sounds and to develop pupils' skills. Groups of high attaining pupils are catered for within the class, teachers expect them to achieve a good standard and to demonstrate to other groups. The co-ordinator has recently set up a group of talented musicians, although anyone can join the group if they are learning to play a musical instrument. Pupils use cassette players to record their compositions so that they can evaluate their performance and say how it could be improved. Older pupils complete self assessment forms which ask them how well they perform individually and contribute to group work. Most teachers make good use of assessment opportunities and tell pupils how well they have done and what they need to do next. However, a minority of teachers do not possess these skills. The co-ordinator has developed a portfolio of good examples to support these teachers. The majority of teachers are beginning to record assessments but this practice is not yet consistent.
114. Strong leadership by the co-ordinator has enabled the school to develop and strengthen its musical prowess over the past four years and everyone is justly proud of what the school has achieved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. No lessons were observed involving five to seven year old pupils. However, from observations of seven to eleven year olds and a scrutiny of the school's records for swimming, pupils aged 11 attain expected standards in swimming and games activities
116. Seven to nine year olds make good progress in swimming. School records show that most nine year olds can swim at least 25 metres unaided using recognised strokes and develop appropriate personal survival and water safety skills. They do not make the same progress in developing games skills. They do not strike a small ball with much certainty and even in a modified version of rounders, their understanding of fielding and returning the ball is weak. Progress improves markedly for nine to 11 year olds. They can pass accurately using chest, bounce and overhead passes. They have a satisfactory understanding of team play, such as movement off the ball, receiving a pass and marking opponents. However, their shooting skills are not accurate.
117. Teaching is satisfactory overall but varies from good to poor. All lessons are appropriately structured with a warm up activity extending into skill practices and concluding with a cool-down. However, a lack of subject knowledge meant that in a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils were asked to play a modified version of rounders even though they needed much more practice to improve their batting and fielding skills. This led to frequent disputes as pupils became frustrated by their lack of success. Teaching is better in Year 5/6. Lessons are well organised and teachers make well-timed coaching points which enable pupils to improve the position of their hands or feet when passing and receiving a large ball. The level of activity is kept high and pupils enjoy lively physical exercise.

118. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has done much to develop the subject. The policy is supplemented by a lot of useful guidance and a very comprehensive scheme of work means the school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their physical skills. This is supported by a very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities involving visiting coaches from local sporting organisations and professional clubs such as West Bromwich Albion FC and Birmingham Bullets Basketball Club. The co-ordinator has also monitored teachers' plans and has worked alongside other teachers. However, the monitoring role is not fully developed and has not identified weaknesses in teaching as there are no opportunities to watch other teachers work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119. Seven and 11 year olds reach standards that are in line with expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attainment, make satisfactory progress because teachers plan well from the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school effectively links personal and social and religious education with assemblies. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers plan opportunities to think about the beauty of the world, the importance of life and the uniqueness of individuals. The very good standard of assemblies makes a significant contribution to pupils' understanding and progress.
120. Pupils aged five to seven make satisfactory progress. They know about festivals and customs in different faiths such as the Bar Mitzvah in Judaism. They can talk about what happens at Christmas and Easter. Pupils have studied stories from the Bible including Noah and the Good Samaritan and these are linked with the whole school theme of *Everyone is Special*. Pupils are confident in sharing their thoughts and ideas in discussions sessions. A good example of this was when Year 1/2 pupils sat in a circle on carpet and shared their thoughts about what is special to them in their lives.
121. Pupils aged seven to 11 make sound progress overall. Progress is slower in Year 3/4 but accelerates in Year 5/6. The younger pupils have had the opportunity to take part in whole class discussions on themes such as, "My gifts" and, "What is special to me." These pupils have completed very little work in religious education books or folders and what has been undertaken is often on poor quality worksheets and is untidy. Older pupils learn about Christian beliefs and symbols, such as the Trinity. They learn about the symbols and beliefs of other faiths. For example, most Year 5/6 pupils, learning about the Five Pillars of Islam, could name some of the differences and similarities between Islam and Christianity and talk confidently about the meaning of Ramadan. Higher attaining pupils can describe the meaning of the Five Pillars accurately. They use ICT well in the subject for research on the Internet.
122. Most teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan from the Locally Agreed Syllabus to give balanced learning opportunities. Where teaching is good, teachers use questioning effectively to challenge pupils' thinking. They have high expectations of response and behaviour. In these lessons it is clear that pupils' answers are valued and respected. There is an ethos of discovery and wonder. In a very good Year 1/2 lesson on what is special, the teacher began by sharing his own special box of simple treasures and talked quietly of what they meant to him. This evoked a real sense of wonder and awe, with the pupils audibly drawing breath when a new object appeared from the box. All teachers stress the importance of respecting the beliefs of others and this develops pupils' understanding and attitudes well. Teachers

question pupils to find out what they know but they do not collect enough information to be sure of what pupils know and understand. This means they are not building on what pupils can do. Most teachers use resources effectively, including ICT and the library.

123. The co-ordinator has monitored planning and looked at examples of pupils' work to make judgement about the standards they achieve. She has collected examples of work from all the five to seven year old pupils to see what has and has not been achieved. The co-ordinator is aware that she needs to be more active in monitoring and supporting the teaching and learning for seven to 11-year-old pupils. Resources for the subject are good and include good quality artefacts for pupils to handle.