

INSPECTION REPORT

LADYPOOL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sparkbrook, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103265

Headteacher: Mr Alan D Tumber

Reporting inspector: Mrs Christine A Field
9479

Dates of inspection: 20th-24th January 2003

Inspection number: 246277

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior and Infant

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Stratford Road
Sparkbrook
Birmingham

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Father John Herve

Date of previous inspection: November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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14214	Mrs J Smith	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15414	Mr D R Carrington	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
1189	Mrs S Brown	Team inspector	English Music Provision for children in the Foundation Stage	
30144	Mr E Hastings	Team Inspector	Provision for pupils with special educational needs Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	
23866	Mr S Hall	Team Inspector	Art and design Design and technology Physical education	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Sparkbrook, an area of high-density housing and much disadvantage, two miles south of Birmingham city centre. Pupils who attend the school live locally in a multicultural community and come mainly from social housing. Most pupils are from Asian backgrounds including Pakistani and Bangladeshi with some from Indian, White and African heritages too. Around 86 per cent of pupils receive additional help to learn to speak English as an additional language; just over a quarter are at a very early stage of English acquisition. Urdu and Punjabi are the main spoken with others speaking either Bengali, Pushto, Miripuri, Arabic or Somali. A significant number of pupils have interruptions to their learning, often because of extended holidays overseas. There are 408 pupils on roll aged between five and eleven years. The school also provides for 65 children who attend its nursery full-time. Despite good progress in the nursery, children's attainment on entry to Year 1 is well below average. Nearly two thirds of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is very high when compared to other primary schools. Around a quarter of pupils have special educational needs that cover a range of difficulties. Six pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Overall, the proportion of pupils in school with special educational needs is slightly above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Ladypool primary school is an effective and improving school. Leadership is good and standards are rising. Pupils achieve well from their very low starting point because of effective teaching. The strong staff team are committed to promoting a happy learning environment for children from many different backgrounds. Very good relationships ensure good racial harmony. The school's strong emphasis on citizenship is promoting tolerant and respectful attitudes that governors and parents view very positively. The school spends much more than average on educating pupils but due to the good quality of education provided gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in art and design across the school.
- Teaching is good overall and both boys and girls, irrespective of ethnicity, make very good progress in art and design and good progress in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and history.
- Pupils show good attitudes to their studies and achieve well.
- There is a good range of learning opportunities with very good provision made for pupils' personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects that is assisting them in becoming responsible members of society.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The procedures in place for ensuring pupils' welfare, including those for encouraging improved attendance are very good. The school is a racially harmonious community and free from tension.
- Leadership is ensuring clear educational direction and the school's aims and values are being promoted consistently by a united staff team who are committed to improvement.

What could be improved

- Standards are not yet high enough
- The systems to enable managers to track the school's performance and teachers to chart pupils' progress in all subjects, could be sharper.
- The work of nursery and reception are not welded closely enough to provide an effective Foundation Stage.
- Attendance levels are below average and some parents are not giving their full support to improvement.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school had five key issues to address following its inspection in 1997. Good improvement has been made to raising standards, though these are still the main priority of the school due to the challenging nature of the intake. The curriculum has been strengthened and it is broad and balanced with good attention paid to widening pupils' horizons and preparing them well for the next stage of education. The re-organisation of the school day ensures that there is sufficient time given to most subjects and that lessons start on time. Lunchtime arrangements work well, though the dining hall is noisy due to poor acoustics and its use as a main thoroughfare. The role of subject leaders is still a focus for improvement, as is the enhancement of assessment practice to ensure that all pupils are given consistent challenge in their studies. The school is working hard to support better attendance and punctuality and this aspect has shown very good advancement due to the staff's hard work but there remains work to do. The school has the capacity to sustain a good rate of improvement in the future.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	D	E	B
Mathematics	E	D	E	C
Science	D	D	E	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

NB Similar schools are those with over 50 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals

Last year's SATs were not as good as the year before but this was not unexpected and targets were met. The trends over five years show that standards are rising at a brisk rate. The school's results in SATs are average overall when compared to those of similar schools nationally and are above those in Birmingham city. This is a positive feature and a tribute to the school successfully breaking down the barriers that some pupils have to learning.

Inspectors looked carefully to see if there was significant variation between girls' and boys' achievement and discovered this not to be the case. There was no difference found between the attainments of different ethnic groups. The progress made by pupils who speak English as an additional language is much the same as others due to the good support they receive. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, achieve well in relation to their capabilities because of the good quality support provided for them. Most pupils achieve appropriately to reach the standards of which they are capable, however the school could expect more from potentially higher attaining pupils. A significant proportion of pupils have many interruptions to their education and this affects adversely, the progress they make during their time at school. The progress being made by the youngest children in school is good in the nursery but no more than satisfactory in reception due to less effective teaching. The standards of older pupils' work seen both in lessons and in a sample of work shows at least sound progress across all subjects with peaks in English, mathematics, science, art and design, history and ICT. The standards in ICT have improved significantly from the unsatisfactory level reported in 1997; those being attained in mathematics are showing good improvement due to the school's well-focused attention. There is clear acceleration in the rate at which pupils' learn in Years 2 and 6 but a dip in Year 4. Progress in music is not as good as it could be because of shortcomings in the curriculum. The school does not track its pupils sufficiently rigorously in terms of attainment and progress. As a result, early signs of difficulties are not consistently spotted or dealt with. The school is setting realistic targets in Year 6 but they could be more challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to school, are keen and enthusiastic learners especially when engaged in practical activity.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The standards of behaviour are good in class, at break and lunchtime. The few exclusions last year were all justified.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships exist amongst pupils from different ethnic backgrounds who show tolerant and respectful attitudes to one another. Pupils' personal development is good
Attendance	The level of attendance is below average and some pupils are missing out on too much schooling due to extended holidays overseas.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall. It is better than when the school was last inspected with strengths in the teaching of basic skills, science, ICT, history and art and design. There was a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching observed during the week of inspection, where lessons did not enable pupils to

make sufficient progress. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is inconsistent which results in some children not sustaining the good gains made in nursery in the reception classes. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, good expectations on the whole, manage behaviour well and use support staff very successfully. These are key factors in helping pupils to make gains in their learning. From Year 1 onwards, all pupils, irrespective of their background or gender, share in this good teaching. However, some pupils of higher ability are not being given consistently good opportunities to reach their full capabilities. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the highly effective additional support given to them, and learn successfully as a result. Those learning English as an additional language are helped to become proficient in their command of English at a good pace. A significant proportion of pupils have interruptions to their education and this affects the progress they make during their time at school. Learning mentors are effective the work they do to help them catch up. Classrooms are productive and purposeful places of learning in which pupils work hard and show good levels of interest and independence. Relative shortcomings in lessons generally are the lack of precision in identifying exactly what different pupils need to learn and involving pupils in reviewing how well they are doing.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Pupils are given a wide range of good quality experiences that assist them in their growth as responsible young people. However, there is too little time given to music to enable pupils to make appropriate progress in the subject.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision enables pupils with special educational needs, including statements, to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils who learn English as additional language (EAL) are present in great number in all classes and they receive a good quality education. The next step is for the school to allocate responsibility for the management of EAL to bring greater cohesion.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, social and moral development is good and assists them in developing a good set of values and principles by which to live. Cultural development is well attended to and is helping pupils to prepare for life in an ethnically diverse and multi-culturally rich society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school places children at its centre and has very good procedures for taking care of them. There is extremely good work going on to improve attendance and the work of learning-mentors to support vulnerable children is a real asset. The tracking of progress and the use of assessment are two areas that need more work.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school is forging effective links with parents and sends home good quality information. However, a high proportion of parents do not give the support required to ensure that their children attend regularly.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides determined leadership and has motivated staff to good effort that is improving standards, teaching and learning. School priorities are the right ones to assist the raising of standards. There is clear educational direction and a strong sense of unity of purpose at all levels of management. Subject leaders have yet to develop fully their leadership and management roles.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is supportive, represents the community well and ensures that all legal requirements are met. They apply the principles of best value appropriately but with more confidence in budgetary matters than in curricular aspects.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The senior management team knows well the school's strengths and weaknesses but are not yet sufficiently involved in a rigorous analysis of data or yet embarked on a programme of tracking pupils' progress over time and targeting still better achievements.
The strategic use of resources	There is a good level of staffing, resources and accommodation. Specific grants, for example that for special educational needs, are used very effectively. The school receives a well above average amount of finance to provide education and gives sound value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Teaching is good and pupils make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • Extra-curricular activities.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views and that more homework could be set but feel that there is no basis for their concerns about extra-curricular activities as provision is similar to many other schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- Standards are rising and this is a positive feature and testament to the school successfully breaking down the barriers that some pupils have to learning
- The school's results in SATs compare well with those of similar schools across the country and in the locality
- Most pupils, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or ability make sound progress to reach the standards of which they are capable, however the school could expect more from potentially higher attaining pupils
- There is clear acceleration in the rate at which pupils' learn in Years 2 and 6 but a dip in Year 4
- The progress being made by the youngest children in school is good in the nursery but more satisfactory in reception due to the lack of cohesion between the two years and this needs attention
- The standards being attained in English, mathematics and science are below average by Year 6, but could be higher if more attention was paid to tracking and targeting pupils' learning from reception onwards
- The standards in ICT have improved from the unsatisfactory level reported in 1997, to average levels today
- The standards in art and design are above average and this reflects the very good progress pupils make year on year
- Respectable standards are achieved overall in other subjects except music where too little time is made available as pupils get older to ensure that they progress at a satisfactory rate
- It is clear that pupils' limited writing skills holds back their learning in some subjects such as history and geography.
- A small, but significant proportion of pupils have many interruptions to their education and despite the school's best efforts this adversely affects the progress they make during their time at school

1. The previous report in 1997 showed that standards were requiring improvement. A key issue identified the raising of standards in numeracy, writing, science, ICT across the school and music in the junior phase in particular. Since then the school has worked hard and with growing effectiveness, to raise academic standards. The schools performance in SATs is on an upward trend, though the raising of standards continues to be its number one priority. Over the last five years, there has been sound improvement in standards in English, science, religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. There has been very good improvement in ICT and unsatisfactory advancement in music. There are positive signs that at last music is on a forward roll, not least because of the enthusiasm and growing influence of the subject leader. Until two years ago, some good work in assessment was enabling a sharper focus on how well different pupils were achieving but this has lapsed as staff have moved on. There is currently insufficient use of a range of data to assist the accurate targeting of future achievements. The school has yet to develop fully a system to evaluate how well both girls and boys from different ethnic backgrounds are performing and to track those who speak English fluently and those who are learning English as an additional language. These are areas that the school is alert to and has prioritised them in its well-conceived school improvement plan.
2. The standards attained by eleven-year-old pupils in the 2002 SATs were below average in English, mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools the standards were above

average in English and average in mathematics and science. Girls performed less well in SATs than boys in school. Standards were not as good as the year before, although the school's trend in raising standards over 5 years is above average. The school's rate of improvement presents a positive picture. This is despite some pupils not making the full progress they could make due to lengthy absences from school. The school is performing well against similar schools in the city. The data provided shows that good value is being added to pupils' attainment, particularly those at the lower end of the ability spectrum. The data also shows that the proportion of pupils attaining at the higher levels is below average.

3. The standards attained by seven-year-old pupils in the 2002 SATs were well below average in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing. When compared to similar schools the standards were well above average in reading, above average in writing and below average in mathematics. Teachers assessed science as well below average overall. Pupils' performance in the 2002 SATs was much improved on 2001.
4. Findings from inspection show that the standards achieved in most subjects are respectable given the very low base from which many pupils start. Standards are well below average in English and history; below average in mathematics, science, religious education and geography; average in ICT, design and technology, music and physical education and above average in art and design by the end of Year 2. Standards are below average at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics, science, religious education, geography, history and music; average in ICT, design and technology and physical education and above average in art and design. Standards are below average in geography and history because pupils have limited language and literacy skills that hold back the level at which they record their knowledge and understanding in these subjects.
5. Children start school in the nursery with very limited skills and knowledge across the areas of learning. Most transfer to reception classes still well below the level expected in communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills, creative aspects and knowledge and understanding of the world even though they have made steady and often good progress. For many, the barrier they face in acquiring English language skills limits more speedy learning in other areas. These young children are very reliant on the early years team to give them lots of support and most learn slowly but surely with some acceleration in the first of two years in school because of the good provision made. Temporary and new staffing in reception classes is causing a temporary stalling in learning that is exacerbated by the school being without a Foundation Stage manager. Currently, there is limited opportunity for staff to share their expertise between nursery and reception and this requires attention so that the best practice is consistently promoted. By the time they start in Year 1, the majority of children will have made sound progress overall to achieve below average standards in personal and social development, physical and creative aspects, and well below average standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
6. Pupils of all ages achieve appropriately from a very low base to reach respectable standards even though they remain below the national average. Potentially higher attainers are not achieving to their full capabilities, for example in mathematics, and this is one group of pupils the school has yet to identify and ensure that work is of a consistent level of challenge. Inspectors could find no significant variation between the standards that boys and girls are achieving, or in their good enthusiasm for school. There is no significant difference between the achievements of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Boys and girls from Asian, Black and White backgrounds are represented in all ability groups and are given the same good equality of opportunity to succeed. Pupils new to school and who have very limited English language are

receiving appropriate support to help them settle into routines and feel secure whilst staff assess their particular needs. Although pupils achieve well in most of the subjects they study, the rate of progress dips in the middle of the junior phase and standards could be higher by Year 6. The pace of learning in lessons in Year 4, was not as brisk as elsewhere in school, and the work in books shows too much reliance on worksheets that is capping a potentially higher standard of work. This was noted in geography in particular. The rate at which pupils make progress in music declines as they get older. This is largely because too little time is allocated to ensure that skills are built systematically. There is very little time devoted to music in Year 6. There are signs that music is receiving better attention as the new subject leader exerts his influence. Pupils' writing skills are improving due to the school's effective improvement strategies; speaking skills however, are not sufficiently promoted across all subjects. Listening skills are sound but in some lessons, girls in particular are too passive and do not readily put themselves forward unless the teacher intervenes. This was noticeable in science investigations. Skills in the use and application of ICT are developing well. The ICT suite is now time-tabled more intensively to enable pupils ample time to develop skills and knowledge, and class based computers are put to generally sound use in fostering cross-curricular use of ICT. Pupils achieve high standards in art and design and this is a strength of the school.

7. The sampling of pupils' work shows that strengths in teaching basic skills ensure that most pupils make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills during their time at school and achieve well. Lesson observations show that throughout the school there has been positive impact on the achievements of pupils from the successful implementation of both the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. The school's setting arrangements which places pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 into ability groupings for mathematics are working well. The improved standards being achieved in Year 5 bode well for setting more demanding targets for SATs in 2004.
8. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, achieve well in relation to their capabilities because of the good quality support provided for them. A good proportion of these pupils achieve well from very low starting points, and contributed to the improved performance in the 2002 SATs. In the current Year 6, about one third of pupils have special educational needs, and many have made good progress over time. Nevertheless, overall standards are likely to be restricted by this proportion of pupils.
9. A small but significant proportion of pupils have many interruptions to their education and this affects the progress they make during their time at school. A number of pupils have lengthy periods away from school, some is for illness. A significant proportion of pupils go on extended holidays to Pakistan. For some, this impedes the progress they are making in their studies as they miss much work and are slow to catch up. Staff put in a great amount of effort to bring the pupils up to speed with what they have missed. In some instances, the pupils concerned become frustrated that they are behind others of the same age and some effective work done by the Learning mentors to ensure that pupils have good self-esteem and a positive mental outlook that can support their studies. In quite a few instances, parents do not give the school the support it needs to ensure that pupils attend regularly. The extent of absence has a negative impact on the school's performance in SATs.
10. There are 409 pupils from nursery age to Year 6 for whom English is an additional language (EAL); over a quarter of these are at an early stage of learning to speak English. Urdu and Punjabi are the main spoken languages, though the number speaking Bengali, Pushto, Mirpuri, Arabic and Somali is increasing. The school has substantially increased the number of bi- and multi-lingual staff so that English language needs of pupils can be supported by the use of

mother tongue when appropriate. This was seen to work very effectively in all classes. The strong emphasis given to this from 3-7 years is helping the younger pupils in school acquire good support that is helping build strong foundations for more accelerated English language acquisition as they get older. Pupils learning English as an additional language are spread across the ability groups in class and the mathematics sets in Years 2, 5 and 6. Some of these pupils also have assessed special educational needs and benefit from co-ordinated provision that the senco takes responsibility for, and works in their best interests. Pupils from across the ability range achieve best when class teachers and the specialist staff work in partnership to both plan and deliver appropriate work programmes. By the time they leave school, the majority of these pupils irrespective of gender or ability, are enabled to achieve well, and most make good progress against their prior attainment.

11. Since the appointment of the deputy headteacher last June there has been renewed impetus to assessment and how it can be used to assist pupils' achievements. A good start has been made in setting up a data-base and pupil-profile sheets that will assist managers in charting individual progress but staff have yet to take ownership of these. Annually the school agrees targets for Year 6 performance in the SATs and has now begun to set targets in other years that will assist pupils in maximising their achievements. Those agreed with the local education authority for 2003 in English and mathematics are realistic but have still to show a reasonable level of challenge too. Although there is no statutory requirement to set targets for science the school is missing the opportunity in not doing so. The inspection team judges that the school has good capacity to raise standards and has set the right priorities to assist it in reaching its goals. The award of the government's achievement award two years running for improvement in standards is an indicator of its growing effectiveness.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- Children in the nursery and reception classes enjoy coming to school and look forward to the activities that are provided
- Older pupils of all ages are enthusiastic about learning and have good attitudes to school
- Most of the pupils are well behaved and co-operative
- Pupils willingly accept responsibility; they mature into sensible and friendly young people
- Relationships between pupils and with teachers are very good
- Racial harmony is excellent; the school is exceptionally inclusive
- Overall attendance is below the national average and the number of unauthorised absences is high
- Too many parents book extended trips overseas during the school term; these absences have a significant impact upon the progress their children are able to make

12. The previous inspection found that, although pupils' behaviour was satisfactory, their attitudes deteriorated as they moved through the school. Over the intervening five years, the school has worked hard to bring about improvements and these efforts are now producing results. Most of the pupils behave well during lessons and they can also be relied upon to be sensible during break and lunchtime. Pupils of all ages say that they enjoy coming to school and they look forward to taking part in the wide range of activities provided. Relationships between pupils of all ages and cultural background are very good. Pupils and teachers also get along well and the result is a lively and very harmonious community. There were five fixed period exclusions over the most recent school year and these were fully justified; there have been no permanent exclusions. Despite considerable effort on the part of the school, overall attendance continues to be below the national average. This reflects the unsettled domestic circumstances of many of the pupils and the fact that a significant number of parents book extended trips overseas during the school term.

13. Almost all the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agree that their children like coming to school and that they are well taught. Parents' confidence is well placed. Children entering the nursery and reception classes enjoy being at school and their enthusiasm helps to create a lively and vibrant atmosphere. Older pupils enjoy their lessons and the various extra-curricular activities that are organised; the lunchtime club is particularly popular. By presenting lively and interesting lessons, teachers create a purposeful atmosphere that is very conducive to learning. For example, during an English lesson, pupils in Year 5 worked really hard when learning about words that sound the same but have different meanings and spellings. Using examples that often made the pupils laugh, their teacher's infectious enthusiasm spurred his pupils on to 'have a go'. The fast pace of his questioning and his deliberate errors made learning fun and encouraged his pupils to think quickly and to respond his questions quickly and accurately.
14. Pupils behave very well during assemblies and they are friendly and welcoming towards visitors. During lessons, most of the pupils of all ages, including those in nursery and reception, settle down quickly and do their best. During lessons, most of the pupils persevere with work they find difficult and readily offer help to each other. Some of the girls, however, are slow to speak up and tend to be more passive than the boys. Outside lessons, pupils can also be relied upon to behave responsibly and with consideration for each other. Lunchtimes are well organised and pupils eat quickly and with the minimum of fuss. Pupils say that although bullying does occasionally occur, once they inform a member of staff, the situation is quickly and effectively resolved.
15. Although the school does not specifically plan the way in which it promotes pupils' personal development, this forms an integral part of school life. Pupils' social development is good. Learning mentors provide very good personal support to particular pupils and help them to overcome a wide range of difficulties that may be impeding their ability to learn. Most of the pupils are able to play constructively with their classmates and to share their views and opinions. Older pupils visit an outdoor activity centre and have a go at sports such as canoeing and abseiling. These experiences help pupils to grow in confidence and to become much more aware of the opportunities available within the wider world.
16. As they get older, pupils are increasingly able to distinguish right from wrong and develop the ability to make reasoned and responsible moral decisions. Although some of the girls are shy and very reserved, both boys and girls relish the sense of achievement and pride they feel when they do a particularly good piece of work. For example, during the inspection, Year 5 pupils led an assembly based on a Hindu story that dealt with the various traits that make a good friend and the importance of listening to each other. They performed with tremendous confidence, spoke very clearly and with great conviction and humour. Over time, pupils form their own set of moral values and beliefs and increasingly appreciate how their actions impact upon others. Many of the pupils' families originate from Pakistan or Bangladesh and, as well as following their own traditions and religious conventions, they utterly accept and honour each other's. The school is characterised by a tremendous sense of mutual tolerance and respect. The school has a very successful policy for social and educational inclusion and race relations are very good.
17. Pupils with special needs respond very positively to the effective support they receive. They listen well and concentrate on their tasks. Most pupils find their work interesting and are motivated to learn. Their social and personal skills develop as they learn to take turns, share and listen to one another. Most pupils are well behaved and enjoy coming to school. In an English lesson in Year 1, the class teacher deliberately chose a boy with special educational needs to

take the major part in role-play. This had very tangible impact on promoting good self-esteem and is typical of the strong emphasis placed on this by all staff.

18. The school attaches great importance to regular attendance and a significant amount of time goes into stressing its importance to parents. Despite the considerable efforts of the office staff and the learning mentors, however, a substantial number of parents continue to book extended trips abroad during the school term and take their children out of school. This depresses the attendance figure for the whole school and has played a large part in keeping it below the national average. These extended absences seriously undermine and frustrate the support work that is put in by the teachers and the learning mentors. They work very hard to help many of these children in their studies and to meet their individual learning needs. Although teachers are willing to provide work to be completed during the time away, the school often receives very little notice. If the pupils are absent for more than six weeks, they are usually removed from the roll of the school. Their absences, however, have built up in the meantime. In addition, there is quite a lot of long-term illness and pupils miss large chunks of time as a result. The school serves an area within which the population is relatively mobile and it is commonplace for parents to move elsewhere without informing the school. Although there is very close liaison with the education social worker, it may take several weeks before the destination of individual pupils becomes known. In the meantime, however, their many absences have built up and reduce the overall average for the school. Punctuality has improved, as has lesson time keeping, and this encourages pupils to make the most of their time at school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection in 1997
- In the 103 lessons observed during this inspection teaching quality was of satisfactory or better quality in 95 per cent.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features in the Foundation Stage and good overall across the infant and junior stages.
- Effective teaching is enabling most pupils, irrespective of their background, gender or ability to achieve well in most subjects and by the end of school attain standards that compare well with similar schools
- There are particular strengths in the teaching of basic skills, ICT and art and design
- The generally good achievement of those pupils who learn English as an additional language owes much to the good quality of teaching they receive, where teachers make use of the pupils' home language to help them understand their work more easily
- A small but significant group of pupils do not learn as well as others due to the lengthy time they have away from school
- Assessment remains a key area for improvement, as does the need to analyse and use data to assist the progress individual pupils make, year on year

19. The school has given sound attention to improving teaching since its previous inspection. The quality of teaching and its impact on learning is better than it was then. Teaching today is good overall. However, assessment remains a key area for improvement, as does the need to analyse and use data to assist the progress individual pupils make, year on year. The teaching of music has improved but it is the weakest subject in school as far as progress is concerned due to insufficient curriculum time being allocated, particularly in Year 6. This is impeding the standards being attained and requires review. There were four unsatisfactory and one poor lesson observed where pupils failed to make sufficient progress. These were in reception, Year 3 and Year 4. The most consistently effective teaching was observed in nursery, Year 2 and Year 6. Here good teaching is accelerating the progress the pupils make and is helping them to

learn most successfully. The sample of pupils' work confirms the inspection judgements about the quality of teaching and learning observed in lessons.

20. The teaching of basic skills is good. Most teachers are using literacy and numeracy lessons to help pupils build up their skills at a good pace. There is useful focus given to speaking and listening in most subjects that is supporting pupils' use of English language, but it is slow going, as many pupils do not practice what they learn in school at home. Some teachers are more effective than others in insisting that pupils' use subject-specific vocabulary when answering questions and this is an aspect for improvement. Equally, in some lessons, for example in an outdoor play lesson in reception there was not enough interaction to promote purposeful talk about the experiences clearly being enjoyed. There is variable use of time targets to aid the pace of individual's learning when the teacher's attention is focused elsewhere. Most plenary sessions are used to reinforce the lesson objectives, but few take stock of what has been learnt by different pupils or look forward to enable pupils to identify what they need to do next to improve. These features are impeding potentially consistently high quality teaching and learning.
21. There has been very good progress made from the weak position reported by the previous inspection in supporting staff development so that ICT is used effectively to support pupils' studies across the curriculum. The teaching of mathematics is showing good improvement. This is due to the effective strategies that have been introduced following the relatively weak performance in 2002 SATs. For example, the mathematics sets have been refined and all teachers have been working on specific pupil progress targets as part of their performance management objectives. Refinement of the setting arrangements is still needed; for example, more focussed monitoring would enable the school to check up on how consistently the higher attaining pupils are challenged. Inspectors found this aspect to be better in some sets than others. Some consistently good teaching in art and design is resulting in good standards of work that the school rightly celebrates in the good quality displays about the building. Teaching and learning in art and design are strengths, and well supported by the expertise from staff at a local resource centre where pupils in Year 5 have worked in clay, for example, to link in with history work on the Romans.
22. As part of its self-review the school brought to inspectors' attention the under-achievement of girls in SATs as of particular concern. Inspectors examined both boys' and girls' responses in lessons carefully. It is clear that boys are far more forthcoming in responding to questions or in volunteering information themselves. Girls were often passive in the opening parts to lessons that typically begin with the teacher sharing information and then seeking pupils' responses. In the most effective lessons, the teacher targeted questions at particular pupils and in this way could match the question to elicit the level of understanding but also to ensure full participation of all. In the very best lessons, the teacher used questioning to both probe and deepen the pupils' thinking skills. Inspectors found no significant variation in the quality or standards of written work being produced by boys and girls.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is very good overall, and small group teaching is highly effective. Very well chosen activities are provided that match the specific and achievable targets on pupils' individual educational plans. Progress towards meeting these targets is carefully monitored and recorded regularly in readiness for the formal reviews carried out every term. When targets are achieved new ones are put in place to ensure pupils move onto the next steps in their learning. In most cases these will be in literacy or numeracy where regular assessments are carried out and recorded so that each individual pupil's progress can be tracked.

24. The teaching of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is well focussed and effective in helping these pupils achieve at the same rate as their class-mates. The school implements a positive employment policy to ensure that all community languages are represented on the staff. For example, the school has recently appointed English/Bengali speaking staff to provide bi-lingual support for nursery and infant-age pupils so that they can access the full curriculum and feel confident in learning to speak English. A significant proportion of pupils have many interruptions to their education, typically for extended holidays in Pakistan. The school keeps in good contact with families, often sets work for pupils to take with them and pays good attention to helping these pupils catch up on missed work when they return. Nevertheless, for around a dozen pupils the impact of missed schooling is considerable and is affecting how well they learn. This is the group that the learning mentors pay particular attention to in the good work they are doing.
25. Teaching is more effective in the infant and junior stages than in the Foundation Stage, though the children get off to a good start in the nursery. The Foundation Stage is currently without a manager. No one has oversight of the curriculum or is monitoring teaching and learning and this is giving rise to inconsistencies. The school is in the process of advertising the post. Additionally, one teacher is new in reception and the other temporarily covering for staff absence. Weaknesses in planning and organisation, together with a lack of attention to health and safety issues, are the prime reasons why teaching is sometimes unsatisfactory in reception. The good team work in the nursery and planned intervention are the major reasons why learning is more effective than in the reception classes.
26. Teaching across the school has more strengths than shortcomings. Classrooms are productive and purposeful learning environments. Very good relationships in lessons support the sheer enjoyment that teachers and pupils feel in working together successfully. Display is of good quality and pupils' work is given high status in the way that achievements are celebrated. Particularly positive features that are enabling pupils irrespective of their age, ability, ethnicity or gender, to show good levels of intellectual, physical and creative efforts, and achieve well include:
- Good teaching of basic skills
 - Clear explanations and shared expectations
 - Good management of behaviour.
 - Good use of support staff and resources
27. Aspects of teaching that are satisfactory but could stand improvements include:
- Tightening up lesson planning to ensure that all pupils, and particularly the highest attainers, have sufficiently demanding work that helps them make progress at a good pace
 - Extending the opportunities to probe and deepen both boys' and girls' speaking, listening and thinking skills through more specific targeting of teachers' questions
 - Setting targets to support pupils' learning and widening opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves
 - Sharpening up marking so that it recognises effort but also gives pointers for improvement
 - Insisting that homework is set consistently to support pupils' learning.
28. Virtually all parents responding to the questionnaire that inspectors issued are pleased with teaching. Three quarters of those who responded, agree that there are high expectations that

lead to pupils making good progress. A quarter disagree that homework is appropriate. Inspectors agree with all of the view expressed by parents.

29. The staff team show good determination to provide an even better education for all pupils; morale is high and there is a strong drive for making the necessary improvements.

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

- The overall curriculum is good with particular strengths in ICT and art and design; statutory requirements are met
- The provision of learning opportunities for pupils with special educational needs is diverse and highly effective
- Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are effective and are having a beneficial impact upon the standard of pupils' work
- Very good provision is made for pupils' personal and social development including good attention to their spiritual, moral, and cultural growth that is assisting them in becoming responsible members of society
- The range of extra curricular activities is good
- Links with the local community are good and are strengthened through the community education initiative; they are used well to support learning
- There are very good links with other primary and secondary schools and South Birmingham College
- The setting of pupils into similar ability groupings within mathematics is contributing to an improvement in the standards they are reaching
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the previous inspection and is now good overall
- Too little time is given to music as pupils get older and this limits the progress pupils are able to make

30. The school provides a broad and well-balanced curriculum that meets the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of all of its pupils; there are particular strengths in ICT and art and design. Almost all of the action points concerning the curriculum, identified in the previous inspection report, have now been tackled. There is, however, still too little time planned for music and this limits the opportunities available for pupils to practice and build upon previous experiences. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils who learn English as an additional language (EAL) are provided for well. Pupils can choose from a wide range of extra-curricular activities and learning mentors provide very good support for individuals who are experiencing particular difficulties. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), including sex and drug education, is very good.
31. The statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are met in all subjects, including religious education. The school has been successful in its implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies and this is reflected in improvements in the standard of pupils' work over recent years. With the exception of music, the amount of time allocated to each subject is appropriate and the length of the school week complies with national recommendations. The setting of pupils in some year groups in mathematics is contributing to an improvement in standards. Subject leaders undertake only a limited analysis of the areas of relative strength and weakness within their individual subject areas and this is the next step for advancement.
32. Pupils of all ages, abilities and cultural background enjoy equal access to the wide range of opportunities provided. Provision is especially strong for pupils with special educational needs and they enjoy access to the full curriculum. The school has identified particular individuals who have specific learning needs and they may be withdrawn from their class in order to be supported singly or in small groups. Although this is organised so as to cause minimal disruption

to their learning, nobody monitors the class work they miss as a result. This requires review. The school is involved in a range of initiatives to enhance its provision: for example, Excellence in Cities provides learning mentors to help support the learning environment and play leaders. The school is heavily involved in local consortium initiatives to help pupils overcome barriers to learning. For example, the school has just bought its own mini-bus to enable more visits aimed at widening pupils' horizons. Through the community education programme, learning mentors successfully meet the diverse needs of individual pupils who are experiencing particular difficulty or are in vulnerable situations. They provide very good support and make a significant contribution to pupils' academic and personal welfare.

33. Provision for extra-curricular education is good overall and especially good in art and design. Pupils say they enjoy these activities and look forward to going along. There are good links with the local Children's University and pupils can attend courses run on Saturday mornings. After their SATs in Year 6, pupils may also attend sessions, run by the University of the First Age; they provide a good range of activities, including investigations where pupils try to solve hypothetical murder mysteries. The learning mentors have recently set up the indoor lunchtime club and its principle aim is to support pupils who have difficulty coping with social situations. Although some pupils are referred for this reason, discretionary places are awarded to pupils from other classes who have done especially well; these tickets are very much sought after.
34. Provision for PSHCE is very good. The two co-ordinators work closely and they make a very good team. Statutory requirements for sex and drug education are met. A wide range of topics is covered, each at an appropriate stage in the pupils' development. They include units such as 'Living in a diverse world' and human rights. Provision for citizenship education is also very good. A wide range of people from the local community, such as the school nurse and members of the fire brigade, comes into school. They talk about their roles and responsibilities and help pupils to develop an awareness and understanding of how society works. The school also teaches pupils about why their school is organised as it is, and collaborates closely with the Birmingham education department's community education division. For example, Year 5 pupils undertake a four-week Citizenship Project that is geared towards helping them to work co-operatively and to make group decisions. Over the four weeks, pupils gradually grow in confidence and increase their awareness of how society works. For example, they learn about Birmingham as it was 1500 years ago and how it originally got its name from the Saxon language. Working in groups, pupils gain early experience of some of the personal skills they will need in later life, such as negotiation and compromise. Pupils also visit the Birmingham Council House and carry out a live formal debate and vote in the Chamber. This rich and varied provision prepares pupils very well for their life as independent and socially responsible adults.
35. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good. The provision made for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Although opportunities are not formally identified when teachers are planning their lessons, the school holds a clear set of common values and these permeate everyday school life. Learning mentors provide very good personal and academic support for particular individuals and help them to develop and to learn effectively. Procedures for promoting a sense of citizenship are very effective and contribute strongly to pupils' personal development.
36. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is effectively promoted through English, art and design, music and religious education. In Year 5, for example, pupils learn about mythical creatures and write about Pegasus and Griffin. Younger pupils in Year 3 learn about Christianity and write about where they imagine God lives and what He does. During the school day and during assembly, pupils are given regular

opportunities to reflect and are given opportunities to develop a sense of wonder. This work is reinforced effectively during lessons. For example during a mathematics lesson, pupils in Year 5 were working on the serial halving and doubling of numbers. They were astounded how quickly a small number reached a very large figure, with only a small number of calculations. The teacher then gripped their imagination by suggesting how rich they could become if they managed to do this with a sum of their own money. This suddenly made a mathematical calculation become very relevant and drew gasps of hopeful anticipation.

37. Provision for cultural development of pupils is good and is the lynch pin of the inclusive ethos of the school. Pupils continuously learn to appreciate their own cultural traditions as well as the richness of other cultures. Very good opportunities are made for pupils to experience the range of cultural influences through assemblies, art and music for example. During an assembly, that inspectors attended, Year 5 pupils acted out a traditional story from Pakistan. It centred upon the importance of friendship and how people should listen to and respect each other's ideas. Parents present spoke to the inspectors afterwards to say how much they had appreciated the way in which racial tolerance had been promoted.
38. Moral development is well promoted. The school has a very clear set of personal values that focus upon honesty and respect for others. The school rules are prominently displayed in each classroom and teachers constantly re-enforce the importance of respecting each other's beliefs and values. Especially noticeable is the consistent and sensitive way in which pupils are managed and their individualities addressed. Pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They are well aware of the system of rewards and sanctions and readily accept the school's code of values. Teachers are consistent in their expectations of behaviour and pupils understand exactly what is, and what is not, acceptable. Members of staff also provide very good examples of how to behave and always praise pupils if they have done particularly good work or have put in exceptional effort.
39. Pupils' social development is promoted very well. Pupils are encouraged to undertake various responsibilities within their classroom and a school council meets regularly. Pupils are regularly able to work together in lessons and older pupils in Years 5 and 6 help their younger schoolmates in Years 1 and 2 with their reading. All members of staff work hard to foster pupils' self confidence and teachers and pupils hold each other in mutually high regard. Pupils undertake a good range of visits to places of interest, such as outdoor activity centres and Lickey Hills. Pupils experience activities such as raft building and are encouraged to take responsibility for their own welfare and to use their initiative.
40. The school is a member of the Sparkbrook and Sparkhill Consortium and works closely with other primary and secondary schools. Members of staff share training days and this external contact brings numerous benefits to the school. Special needs co-ordinators liaise closely and they provide pupils with very good support when they transfer at the end of Year 6. In addition, learning mentors now meet with their counterparts at the receiving secondary schools and a wealth of personal and academic information is passed on. The school is fully aware of the pupils' diverse academic and personal needs and meets them well; it is in the process of updating its race awareness policy.
41. Through its links with Birmingham's community education programme, South Birmingham College runs a wide range of courses for parents. These are held on the school site and cater for every ability level. They equip parents with the confidence and technical skills they need to support their children at home, as well as enabling them to obtain their own formal qualifications, if they wish. These opportunities encourage parents to help their children at home and to

become more involved with their education. There are no links with any local businesses. This school is strongly committed to the training of new members of the profession and has very well forged links with initial teacher training centres.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- Pupils receive very good personal support and guidance and this helps them to develop as responsible citizens
- Child protection procedures are good
- Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good; the school tries hard to discourage parents from taking their children out of school for extended trips overseas but must continue its work here as success is slow going
- Procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are effective
- Procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are good
- Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are unsatisfactory and teachers do not make full use of assessment information when planning what pupils will do next. These are areas for improvement

42. All members of staff share a wholehearted and sincere commitment to pupils' welfare. They work closely as a team in order to ensure that the pupils are very well looked after during the school day. The strong staff team are committed to promoting a happy learning environment for pupils from many different backgrounds and the standard of personal support and guidance ensures that the time pupils spend at school is enjoyable. Children joining the nursery and reception classes are gradually and sensitively introduced to school routines and this helps them to settle in quickly. Procedures for assessing the standard of pupils' work and their academic progress are satisfactory. Teachers, however, do not make effective use of this information when planning what pupils will do next. All members of staff are familiar with child protection procedures and arrangements are good. Routine health and safety procedures are in place and they comply fully with current legislation and with local authority guidelines.
43. The previous inspection highlighted inconsistencies in the procedures used to monitor pupils' academic progress. Over the intervening five years, these issues have been addressed in part. Assessment in the nursery has good merit and is being used to help plan the children's next steps in learning. The school has, however, correctly identified inconsistent practice in the way in which teachers use assessment when planning the work that older pupils will undertake. Managers are aware that a whole-school system requires implementation that builds on identified best practice. An in-depth analysis of the results of the optional SATs undertaken at the end of Years 3 and 4 has been piloted and initial results bode well for the future. From this, targets have been set in English and mathematics and are being used to support individual achievements. It has also been possible to identify areas of particular strength and weakness in individual subjects; this information has enabled the new class teachers to match the work they set very closely to their pupils' needs. The wider involvement of subject leaders should enable this type of analysis to be extended across the school. It is also planned to extend the assessment system used in the nursery into reception and this will help to monitor children's progress in greater detail.
44. The assessment of the work of pupils with special educational needs is good. Their targets are regularly reviewed and their work is closely matched to their individual needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator (senco) carries out the necessary annual reviews of pupils with special educational needs. She is also responsible for writing the individual education plans for all pupils in collaboration with class teachers. Most of these will contain targets for literacy,

numeracy or behaviour. The senco meets regularly with staff to discuss progress, and to select suitable teaching techniques and resources to support pupils' learning. Currently the school is putting more support into Year 2 and Year 3. Help, advice and guidance are sought from a range of external and highly valued support agencies. But on occasions the school experiences difficulties in ensuring the appropriate agency allocates the school sufficient time to carry out urgent reviews. The school is keen to identify early any pupil who may have special needs, particularly for those who have transferred from other schools or areas. In the nursery there is an early focus on identifying special educational needs and extensive interviews held with parents to help establish any areas of need. Learning support assistants have had training to support assessment and in making observations, and consequently, they are very effective in their work. Pupils who have particular barriers to their learning and display emotional or behavioural needs are very well provided for. They receive one to one additional support from learning mentors in full consultation with the senco. A play worker is also employed to ensure that those pupils, who need it, receive well-structured play opportunities at lunchtime. The school is highly committed to all pupils, is fully inclusive in the education provided, and is very responsive to pupils' individual needs. This is a strength.

45. Although procedures for the monitoring of pupils' personal development are largely informal, they are effective. Relationships between pupils and members of staff are very good and teachers are sensitive to pupils' 'ups and downs'. This helps to ensure that any emerging personal or academic problems are identified and addressed at an early stage. Learning mentors work with individual pupils who are experiencing particular difficulty and they help to deal with any issues that are preventing them from learning. They support well those pupils who have irregular patterns of attendance. Their work is highly valued by staff, and they are an asset to the school.
46. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are effective. Learning mentors liaise closely with the behaviour and senco. This high standard of care and very good teamwork makes a significant contribution towards pupils' personal welfare and helps to put them in the right frame of mind for learning. Procedures for eliminating bullying and other oppressive behaviour are good. Such incidents are very rare and, if they occur, they are dealt with in a constructive manner that ensures that they do not recur. The school has a very successful policy of social and educational inclusion and racial harmony is very good. Pupils from all cultural backgrounds get along very well and related incidents are rare.
47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. The school constantly emphasises the importance of regular attendance and discourages parents from booking extended holidays during the term. A significant minority of parents, however, continues to do so and this inevitably means that their children miss out on large chunks of work that the rest of the class undertakes.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- Parents' views of the school are positive in almost every respect
- Parents are kept well informed about the work their child undertakes
- Links with parents are effective and are supported very well by the work of the home/school liaison worker and the learning mentors
- In conjunction with community education, parents are able to undertake a wide range of courses that help them to obtain experience and qualifications
- Some parents are dissatisfied with the arrangements for homework and feel there are too few extra-curricular activities

- A high proportion of parents take their children on holidays during the term and this impedes their academic progress

48. This school sees a close partnership with parents as fundamental to its work and is keen to involve them as much as possible. The school usefully translates information into the range of community languages when required and provides interpreters at meetings, as it did when inspectors met with parents to seek their views. Through the parent partnership and community education initiatives the school is participating in a number of schemes that are geared towards increasing contact between home and school. South Birmingham College provides a wide range of adult education courses on the school site and parents are able to obtain accredited qualifications. They have access to school facilities, such as the computer suite and, by gaining practical experience, should be in a better position to help their children with their work at home. Although parents have little involvement in the day-to-day life of the school, they are warming to this open and welcoming approach. Although only one seventh of the questionnaires were returned, analysis of parents' responses shows that their views of the school are positive. Almost all of the parents indicate that their children like coming to school and feel that the school is approachable. Very few parents attended the pre-inspection meeting, but analysis of their comments indicates that these parents too are pleased with many aspects of school life. Around one in four of the parents, however, expressed concerns about the following the amount of homework that is provided and the range of extra-curricular activities. Inspectors agree that more homework could be set, feel that there is no basis for their concerns about the extra-curricular programme and that provision is similar to many other schools.
49. The school is working very hard to strengthen links with parents. A multi-lingual home/school worker provides very good liaison and she undertakes home visits as and when they are necessary. She helps parents with their domestic problems and also organises a weekly 'Saheli' friendship group. Mothers are invited to come along to meet each other and chat. Although there are very few voluntary helpers during the school day, around three quarters of parents attend their child's consultation evening each term. Despite strenuous efforts on the part of the school, a significant number of parents undertake extended holidays abroad and remove their children for weeks or months at a time. These absences thwart much of the support work that the school puts in and is a source of great frustration to those involved. The school works hard to make up for this lost time, but these absences seriously disrupt the pupils' education and they miss large amounts of work. Few parents attended the excellent Year 5 assembly that was held during the week; there is no parents' association. The school is reluctant to allow pupils to take reading scheme books home, as many are not returned.
50. The school ensures that parents of pupils with special educational needs have full information, for example by sending them a copy of their child's individual education plan. They are invited to attend review meetings and to make a contribution. The school does not get a good turnout at these reviews but every effort is made to encourage their attendance, including the provision of interpreters if required. Pupils also have the opportunity to participate and their views are taken into account.
51. The quality of information provided is good and the school regularly provides interesting newsletters. The prospectus is a high quality document that the senior management team put together; it gives a very good flavour of the life of the school and expectations in this large multi-cultural school are well promoted. Such information helps to keep parents well informed about the work that their children will be undertaking and provide hints and tips as to how they can help at home. The nursery also supplies a very helpful booklet that provides comprehensive information about what the children will learn and what they will do once they start school.

Pupils' annual reports include information about what they can do, but do not include targets for improvement. Additionally, some of the comments are couched in language that many parents would not understand. This is an aspect for more consideration.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- The headteacher is working to bring improvement with determination and has created a staff team that is increasingly focusing on enhancing the quality of education and standards
- The school has the right priorities to bring sustained improvement
- Members of the recently established senior management team lead the work of staff in particular phases of the school well but have yet to play a significant role in monitoring and evaluating school performance
- Subject leaders do not have as much involvement in checking the strengths and shortcomings of their subjects as they should
- The governors are committed to the school and check that best value is delivered in financial aspects of the school's work, but less so with regard the curriculum and standards
- There are good resources, accommodation and staff levels to support pupils' education
- Finance is managed prudently and additional grants are used well to support learning
- The school gives sound value for money

52. When the school was inspected previously, leadership and management were identified as having some strengths. Specifically, the headteacher was giving sensitive support to all staff at a time of major change in school brought about by the death of the previous headteacher. He was giving good educational direction in his leadership and promoting a positive learning ethos. There were some areas for improvement, including a key issue focused on how the school identified strengths and weaknesses in its provision. The headteacher has maintained the qualities identified last time and continues to give a firm steer to the work of the school. He provides determined leadership and has motivated staff to good effort that is improving standards, teaching and learning.
53. The headteacher is keen to spread the work of managing the school across the staff whilst giving clear and well-focused direction to their work. He is largely successful in this work and has ensured that morale and shared commitment to improvement are both good. The school's aims and values are being promoted consistently and its priorities are the right ones to improve standards and progress. Pupils benefit from the hard work and shared outlook shown by the staff. The deputy headteacher, who is fairly new to the school, shows complementary skills in supporting the work of school improvement, and a good partnership is emerging between these two key managers.
54. The senior management team has not been long established but is firm in its work to improve what the school does. In the past there was a tradition of teachers sometimes following particular courses of action or devising their own procedures in isolation from other teachers. That these procedures and actions were good is a tribute to their individual skills and hard work. The senior management and other key managers are now more focused on developing effective systems of management that are independent of the people who implement them. The senior management team recognises that consistency in practice is the prime agent of improvement. As yet, the senior management team has had very little opportunity to monitor and evaluate the work of the school, indeed, their roles and responsibilities are not clear in stating that they are the guardians of standards and the quality of education.
55. Likewise, subject leaders do not have the overview of their subjects because they are not consistently checking and evaluating practice. Again, they are hard working as a group and most are influential in bringing advancement to their subjects. They provide good support to others by ensuring that policies and schemes are appropriate and understood by all staff. They also make

sure that resources are of good quality for their subjects and they offer valuable advice to help the work of curriculum development and planning.

56. The management of the provision for special educational needs is very good. The senco very effectively manages the work of the learning assistants, and ensures they are placed where they can target support to a high degree. She is responsible for staff training where it is linked to supporting pupils with special educational needs and the programme runs very efficiently. The senco leads by example, is an accomplished practitioner, and makes herself available to staff to discuss any issues to do with pupils' learning. Budget priorities for supporting pupils with special educational needs are rightly in the investment of suitably qualified and experienced teaching and support staff to meet their wide range of needs, and to provide good quality teaching resources. The school has established very good relationships with many outside agencies that provide a variety of effective support services to their pupils.
57. The management of the Foundation Stage is currently in the temporary hands of the senior management team whilst a new appointment is made. The school advertised the post before Christmas and aims for an appointment to be made in April. The school has good strengths in nursery and the team there are well-bonded and ensure that there is a cohesive approach to meeting the needs of a very diverse group of young children. The situation is not the same in reception where a new member of staff has just taken up post and works alongside a supply teacher who has not been long in school. Planning and organisation in reception and the deployment of support staff is weak. School managers are aware of the shortcomings and hope to be in a position to remedy this very soon.
58. The work of staff to support the learning and progress made by pupils who speak English as an additional language is effective. The school has invested wisely in a range of people who between them reflect the ethnic backgrounds of pupils and speak all languages. This approach is enabling pupils from different backgrounds who are at the early stages of learning English to feel safe and settled in the school as they can converse with someone in their mother tongue. Equally support staff are a valuable link with parents and carers. The arrangement of the provision results in plenty of opportunities for bi-lingual learning and there are sufficient resources, for example books, to aid the good learning opportunities being provided for these pupils. Learning mentors are a central strand of supporting pupils who have had lengthy absences to re-integrate into peer groups and catch up on their studies. The school is also allocated additional support from the local education authority via the grants in place to support pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. The teacher attached to the school was absent during the inspection due to illness and records show that this is a regular occurrence. The headteacher with support from the senco takes responsibility for the oversight of the provision. The school has planned to allocate more direct day-to-day management of this aspect of the school in the very near future.
59. Governors represent well the diverse community that centres on the school. They are interested and involved in its work and are proud of its successes. They check that finances are managed properly and that the school meets its statutory obligations. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the school's performance in the main areas of its work, though this is more advanced in some areas, such as finance, compared to others such as the curriculum and standards. As yet, governors do not use all of the available data to check school performance consistently and so, whilst the school follows the principles of best value soundly, it could do better than this.

60. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good overall improvement. As indicated above, monitoring and evaluation systems do not involve a sufficiently wide group of staff. At present, the headteacher has a good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses but there are gaps in such knowledge for other people. The school has developed sound performance management systems and new staff are given good support and generally take an appropriate role in the staff team from their early days in school. Thus, the school has a well-balanced fount of skill and expertise to develop the task of expanding and improving its work to monitor and evaluate what goes on in school.
61. There is secure control and management of finance, a task shared by the headteacher and the part-time finance officer. The budget is well planned, linked carefully to the school's priorities and checked regularly to ensure that the school pays its way efficiently. The large carry forward shown in the budget has been saved up with agreement of the local education authority to match the grant it has allocated that is now being spent on new toilets and staff room. The school is managing the on-going capital project very efficiently. Everyday financial administration is in the secure hands of the office staff. Grants and other income over and above the allotted budget are accounted for well. Such funds are spent well in the interests of the pupils for whom these additional amounts are intended. The good quality education enjoyed by pupils with special educational needs, for example, is an indicator of how effectively specific grant is used.
62. There are good levels of staffing, accommodation and resources. Work to enhance these things is a constant theme of the school development plan and efficient use is made of all forms of resources. In all, the school adds good value to pupils' education. Additionally, the school has the capacity to sustain a good rate of improvement in the future. However, since it costs a relatively large amount to educate each pupil, this adds up to sound value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In their work to further improve the quality of education at the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Press ahead with raising academic standards by:

- Ensuring that there is sufficient time allocated to music so that pupils can build on skills systematically;
- Providing guidance to teachers to support improvement in promoting pupils' speaking and listening skills;
- Tightening up the intentions for learning in lesson planning so that teachers are very clear about what they want pupils to learn, especially higher attainers and to enable all pupils to have sufficiently demanding work that helps them work at a good pace;
- Sharpening up the ways in which teachers ask questions that involve both girls and boys and extending the opportunities to probe and deepen pupils' thinking skills;
- Setting targets to support pupils' learning in science and widening opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves;
- Identifying exactly what knowledge, understanding and skills pupils need to build in lessons and ensuring that there is sufficient time for these to be developed;
- Identifying and sharing the features of the best teaching and learning to be found in school;
- Drawing more people into the process of self-critical review through a well-planned and properly resourced monitoring and evaluation timetable;
- Developing the subject leader's role to enable each to play a full part in raising standards in the subject for which they have responsibility.

Paragraphs :1, 4, 19, 20, 30, 31, 67, 80, 82, 91, 92, 96, 131, 134, 136

2. Improve systems to enable teachers and managers to track pupils' progress in all subjects by:

- Establishing assessment procedures to take stock of learning in all subjects;
- Checking how well different pupils achieve in their lessons and using this information consistently to set suitably challenging work, especially for higher attaining pupils;
- Using marking as a tool to make sure that pupils' progress is on track and to give clear feedback on the next steps for improvement;
- Widening the use of individual targets and sharing these with pupils and their parents so that they can play a full part in reviewing individual progress.
- Involving subject leaders in charting pupils' achievement against National Curriculum levels in the subject they lead on;
- Sharpening up the ways in which data is used to track individual progress and set new targets that can be measured and used to assist the school in improving its results and overall targets
- Using data to check up on how well pupils from different minority ethnic groups are achieving in all years.

Paragraphs :19, 20, 27, 42, 43, 54, 55, 58, 59, 60, 66, 68, 80, 85, 87, 89, 93, 94, 96, 97, 103, 109, 114, 119, 124, 125, 130, 136, 138, 141, 143, 145, 146

3. Drawing together the work of nursery and reception classes to build a cohesive Foundation Stage by:

- Ensuring time for shared approaches to planning and curriculum delivery;
- Providing opportunities for staff from each year to share in and support one another's practice;
- Establish a system in the Foundation Stage that enables children to take the next small step in learning at the appropriate time;
- Press ahead with the appointment of a Foundation Stage manager.

Paragraphs :25, 43, 57, 70, 71, 74, 77, 78, 79

4. Continuing to target better attendance and parental support for improvement.

Paragraphs :12, 18, 24, 47, 64, 93

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

- Good provision is made for EAL pupils
- Pupils different cultures and backgrounds are celebrated and this leads to very good racial harmony
- Pupils with limited English are given good support to enable them to makes good progress in learning to speak English
- A small group of pupils does not make the same sure progress as others due to the time they have away from school.
- The next step is to enhance leadership and management aspects of the provision

64. The quality of provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good overall. This represents good improvement since the time of the previous inspection. Currently, there are 409 pupils for whom English is an additional language, and of those 113 are at an early stage of learning English. The school has appointed three bi-lingual teachers and ten bilingual support staff who work in all areas of the school to support their learning. This is done effectively in small group work and alongside class teachers using the pupils' home language, which may be one of many including Urdu, Gujerati, Punjabi, Mirpuri, Bengali, Pushtu, Arabic or Somali. Resources to support bi-lingual and multi-lingual learning have been chosen well and the school provides a range of meaningful contexts, to help pupils, access learning. By the end of Year 6 the majority of these pupils will have made good progress to reach good standards compared with their very low starting point. A small but significant group of pupils does not make as good progress as their peers due to extended absences, usually for holidays to Pakistan. The school welcomes all of these pupils back into school after their holidays and works to good impact to help them catch up.
65. Teachers and EAL support staff plan jointly to provide a suitable range of learning opportunities within the daily curriculum, which enable most pupils to make good progress. This works well because the support staff make skilful and timely interventions to ensure pupils learning develops well in lessons. During the whole class shared text activities in the literacy hour individual pupils are well supported by the learning assistants. Their good support and close attention to providing additional information as required, sometimes using the pupils' home language, means that pupils are able to play a full part in the lesson. Pupils are encouraged to contribute orally, and their confidence builds well as a result. In small group work too, the lesson will be conducted in English, but pupils' home language will be used to provide greater clarification. This strategy is commonly used throughout the school to support pupils of all ages. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the pupils were working hard upon an activity requiring them to place several decimal numbers in sequence. The learning support assistant took a very good role as she talked through the method in a different way to the class teacher. She then used Urdu to reinforce the key points. The pupils responded well to this assistance, and their learning developed effectively. Similarly, in a Year 5 class lesson, pupils were in the process of deciphering mathematical problems. The class teacher focused on the keywords in the problems. The learning support assistant made some very good contributions and amplified the teacher's points in a way that helped all pupils understand the work. At appropriate moments she spoke in Urdu, which also was very helpful. Her contributions enabled the pupils to relate confidently to their work. The quality of teaching of pupils with EAL is now good overall, and the 'team' approach is effectively meeting the needs of pupils. Good relationships ensure that pupils feel valued. This motivates them to want learn and contributes significantly to their progress. Opportunities for pupils to talk and to develop their language skills occur regularly in

literacy and numeracy lessons, and in specially organised activities, such as the 'Language Alive' poetry-writing workshop, and the Community Education organised citizenship debating activities.

66. Records of assessment are kept in reading, writing and mathematics, but the assessment of the stages of language development that pupils' reach is currently under review. A commercial scheme was used to limited effect to chart progress in the past but managers are now considering the merits of the latest guidance that suggests that an extended scale would be more beneficial to track progress towards National Curriculum level 1. The new deputy head is leading the introduction of a more useful tool for assessing language development in English and the home language.
67. Pupils with English as an additional language enjoy school, and participate well in groups and lessons. This contributes well to their social development. They behave well and generally show a very positive attitude to school. At times there is a tendency for a number of pupils, mainly girls, to be rather reticent about speaking out in class, or responding to questions. This is an area where increased support is needed to improve achievement; particularly in targeting specific questions that can harness their early involvement in lessons. Pupils from different cultures and backgrounds work well together and there is no evident tension. Everyone in school is recognised as an individual; differences and similarities are celebrated and this assists the very good racial harmony so prominent in school.
68. There has been a corporate management approach to the provision for EAL pupils in the absence of the EAL teacher. The services of the senco have been co-opted, and her skills used in helping to ascertain whether certain pupils experiencing difficulties have special educational needs or merely a limited knowledge of English. The school has made effective use of the delegated funding of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) in the provision and deployment of staffing with specialisms in a range of languages. A conscious decision has been made to employ a large number of bi-lingual learning support assistants to match the needs of the high number of pupils who require language support. The effective use of EMAG funding for this purpose provides good value for money. The main areas for development are three-fold the allocation of overall management of provision; production of a management plan that will have the purpose of raising standards, in conjunction with the development of appropriate assessment procedures to measure pupils' progress in the acquisition of spoken language skills. The school is alert to all three and has plans to make improvement in the near future.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	103
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	19	44	35	4	1	0
Percentage	0	18	43	34	4	1	0

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

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)	65	408
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	264

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	106

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	409

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	73
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	76

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.6
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 (Year2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	27	32	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	20
	Girls	29	30	28
	Total	49	51	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (82)	86 (82)	81 (77)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	19
	Girls	29	28	27
	Total	50	49	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (83)	83 (85)	78 (83)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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
	2002	29	29	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	16	22
	Girls	17	14	19
	Total	36	30	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (76)	52 (65)	71 (89)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	16	21
	Girls	12	14	19
	Total	31	30	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (73)	52 (65)	69 (82)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
10	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
10	4	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	1	0
14	0	0
211	0	0
56	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
46	0	0
0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17.4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	389

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	32.5
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	1,396,385
Total expenditure	1,294,563
Expenditure per pupil	2,737
Balance brought forward from previous year	151,581
Balance carried forward to next year	253,403

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	473
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	38	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	41	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	32	4	7	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	29	14	10	7
The teaching is good.	58	36	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	35	4	7	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	30	1	6	6
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	17	13	4	3
The school works closely with parents.	43	36	10	3	7
The school is well led and managed.	51	30	13	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	28	12	0	10
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	19	13	13	13

NB Rows may not total 100% due to rounding

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

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standards are well below the level expected, particularly speaking skills• Good teaching in the nursery helps children to make a good start• Basic skills are carefully taught• On-going assessment is effective and usefully informs daily planning, particularly in the nursery• Planning and organisation in reception and the deployment of support staff is weak• The lack of cohesion between the Nursery and the reception year has a detrimental effect on progression |
|---|

69. Children are admitted to the nursery at the start of the school year following their third birthday. They join the reception classes at the start of the school year in which they become five years old. At the time of the inspection there were sixty-four children in the nursery and sixty children in the two reception classes. Early assessment and other information indicate that attainment on entry to the nursery is very low, and is still well below average overall when the children leave the reception year.
70. Provision in the nursery is good. Teaching is often good, providing a wide range of interesting experiences which enable children to make good gains in their acquisition of skills and knowledge. Although teaching is satisfactory overall, it is not as good in the reception classes and in a few instances it is unsatisfactory. Weaknesses in planning and organisation, together with a lack of attention to health and safety issues, are the prime reasons why teaching is sometimes unsatisfactory. Basic skills are carefully taught, learning objectives in planning reflect the 'stepping stones' leading towards the early learning goals for children of this age. A strength in the nursery and to a lesser extent in the reception classes is the on-going assessment of children's work. Adults in the nursery work together as an effective team with a seamless division of responsibilities. This is not the case in the reception classes, where although lessons are jointly planned the teachers operate quite independently for much of the time. The good team work in the nursery and planned intervention is a major reason why learning is more effective than in the reception classes. At present the Foundation Stage lacks an effective manager.
71. Overall, progress is satisfactory and has been maintained since the last inspection. There is no difference in the learning by children from different ethnic groups. The very good provision for special educational needs in the school ensures early intervention. Such children are well supported. As a result they make good progress in their learning. Nevertheless, by the time they start in Year 1, most children's attainment is well below average. The work of the nursery and reception are not welded closely enough to provide effective progression and cohesion in the Foundation Stage.

Personal, social and emotional development

72. Children start with low personal and social development skills. For many, nursery is the first time they have separated from their parents or carers and most are unused to playing and learning alongside others. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory overall and enables the children to make good gains. Teaching is good in the nursery promoting sure independence and the young children get a spurt on in learning how to play together with confidence, take turns and

share. Most children have positive attitudes to learning and are happy to come to school. Most listen carefully and follow instructions obediently such as at snack time where the children sit in a circle in their family groups, sharing fruit and drinks with one another and remembering to say 'please' and 'thank you'. The children are calm and well mannered with the adults providing good role models. Speaking skills are very limited for a significant number of children who lack the range and understanding of vocabulary. Several sit passively but the adults work hard to draw them into discussions. They share equipment and take turns, for example, when using the large outdoor wheeled toys. They behave well and enjoy good relationships with the adults working with them. Most children have good attitudes to learning. These children move confidently about the classroom and the outdoor areas. They select activities independently and take responsibility for tidying away at the end of an activity. Although a few children are likely to achieve the expected level for this area of learning a significant proportion will be below the level set out in the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

73. Children make steady progress in their acquisition of language skills. In the nursery where teaching is good this is reflected in the effective learning taking place. For example, in a small group activity where the learning support assistant helped children to cut out pictures into a collage on sugar paper, the adult spoke to one boy, a Bengali speaker, in mother tongue. This is very effective as it gives him full access to the activity and ensures that he benefits from the experience. Many children demonstrate a limited vocabulary. In spite of well-planned opportunities for children to speak to adults and other children in the class these skills remain well below average at the end of the reception year.
74. Children enjoy listening to stories. The careful teaching of basic skills results in children handling books correctly. They are interested in the illustrations and turn pages carefully. Many recognise the difference between text and pictures and a small number recognise some initial sounds. Many have little understanding of rhyming words. Poor quality teacher made pre-reading books do not inspire children to want to read. Reading skills would be helped if children were allowed to take their reading books home.
75. Writing skills are weak. In the nursery the most able hold their pencil correctly and have good pencil control, modelling writing from left to right and giving meaning to the writing using various letters and symbols. They are beginning to write their name. Average and below average children experiment with mark making. Some have poor pencil control. Children make steady progress in the reception classes with more able children using an increasing number of letters in their writing and attempting to write their name independently. They are beginning to recognise initial sounds. A number of children reverse letters and are unsure of some letter shapes. Below average children have little awareness of the difference between drawing and writing and are unable to write their name. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for children to write for different purposes, such as a list for Father Christmas or making a birthday card and retelling of stories and news. In the nursery, good opportunities are provided for writing through role-play. For example, in the 'Fashion Shop' the children write orders and lists for sales jot down messages and give receipts. Good intervention by supporting adults ensures that the play does not deteriorate through a lack of ideas from the children. By contrast, the children in a reception class played in the café for a considerable time with no adult intervention. The activity was not well structured to promote speaking and writing skills and the result was low-level tasks. Similarly, in the other reception class, sand and water activities undertaken by several children lacked any adult intervention and the activities lacked a clear purpose. This resulted in a very superficial level of learning. Few children are likely to achieve the expected level by the time

they leave the reception classes in spite of the steady progress being made and largely satisfactory teaching. Most are well below the level expected.

Mathematical development

76. Children make steady gains in their learning as a result of satisfactory teaching overall, with some good teaching in the nursery. For example, children in the nursery count the beakers for their drinks and count the different colours. The language of number is being well used by the adults. Role-play in the fashion shop extends their knowledge of different sizes, colours and whether the clothes will fit. They know that they have to pay for the goods with money. More able children in the reception classes match one to one and understand 'more' or 'less'. They count to 9 and understand positional language such as 'on', 'between' and 'next'. They have some awareness of common two-dimensional shapes such as 'circle', 'square' and 'triangle'. Lower attainers are unable to count accurately a number of objects and many are not confident when asked to draw 5 conkers. They begin to understand repeating patterns as they print with cotton reels, using two colours. A number of children need help for this task.
77. children's understanding of mathematical language such as 'bigger', 'biggest' and 'smallest' is hindered by their limited language skills in a significant number of cases. Problem-solving skills are very limited for all but the most able. Most children are not yet secure with number formation to 10. Activities such as sand and water are not always well structured to develop mathematical understanding. Standards remain well below average in mathematics by the time the children start in Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78. When children start school their knowledge and understanding of the world is extremely limited. Good teaching in the nursery and satisfactory teaching in the reception classes helps children to make steady gains in their learning. They use their senses in the nursery for example, as they smell different common smells, many unaware that they use their nose for smelling, and many unable to identify the different smells. Children learn to care for the birds, making bird cakes to feed them and learn the names of different body parts. Using mirrors they become aware of their own reflection. They know that different clothes are worn in the winter to the summer. In the reception classes they explore 'floating' and 'sinking' through water play. They observe change and they watch the teacher making porridge. However, some children lose interest in this task because they are not actively involved. They are unable to see what is happening as the teacher obscures the cooker. The lesson is unsatisfactory because the teacher fails to give due attention to hygiene, no one washes their hands before they begin, and the final porridge with different toppings is eaten in bowls placed on the floor which are shared by all the children dipping their spoons in. This is not good practice and does not contribute to children's personal development. Through stories and assemblies the children learn about celebrations in different cultures. Visits, for example to the seaside, and visitors such as people who help us, extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world effectively as do autumn and winter walks when children learn about the changing seasons and weather. They have access to computers. Most children are at an early stage of familiarisation with the mouse, making random movements with little control. More able children in the reception classes control the mouse reasonably well and know how to change colour and tool and use the fill button. They can locate letters of their name and type these in. In spite of steady gains in learning, for most children attainment remains well below the expected level by the time children start in Year 1.

Physical development

79. developing their physical skills but attainment is below the expected level at the end of the reception year. The large outdoor space is reasonably resourced with wheeled toys and a climbing frame, although the area itself is rather barren and unexciting. Although the area is used regularly by the nursery and reception classes, there is little planned intervention by the adults who take on a supervisory role rather than interacting with children and extending the play with imaginative ideas. Most children pedal and push the wheeled toys but not all are confident when using the 'stepping stones' and the climbing frame. Children also experience use of the large hall and the soft play area. However, the lesson seen in the hall for the reception class was unsatisfactory because the teacher did not ensure safe practice. There were too many children on some benches, some children were wearing jewellery and a number of children were not changed appropriately for the lesson. The teacher was also wearing outdoor shoes and did not provide a good role model in this lesson. Many children do not have a good enough awareness of space and safety. The children make steady gains in their control of pencils, scissors and other tools.

Creative development

80. Attainment by the end of reception is below the level expected level for children of this age. There is good provision in the nursery and satisfactory provision in the reception classes for children's creative development. Children are presented with a range of opportunities to paint, mould dough, create collage pictures and use construction materials. The majority use brushes, scissors and glue spreaders with satisfactory control, although a significant minority lack sufficient control in fine motor skills such as drawing, cutting and sticking. In the nursery children make observational drawings of fruit using pastels and explore colour mixing creating handprints of different colours. Self portraits on paper plates link well to work on body parts. There are good opportunities to explore and experiment with finger painting and collage. In the reception classes, children build steadily on these skills creating collage friezes of nursery rhymes and stories. They use cellophane to create stained glass windows, make handprints and footprints and paint with fruit and vegetables. Brightly coloured pictures of 'Elmer the elephant' consolidate control of paint. Children use paint and of computers to create repeating patterns. The children enjoy singing and music making and there are good opportunities in the nursery for them to explore a range of un-tuned percussion instruments. They have a satisfactory repertoire of songs and rhymes which contribute to mathematics through the use of rhymes and help to consolidate learning. There are fewer opportunities for children to listen to music and explore percussion instruments in the reception classes, but progress overall is satisfactory as a result of satisfactory teaching.

ENGLISH

- Standards are well below average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6
- Good teaching in Year 2 and 6 leads to accelerated learning in these classes
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress
- Additional strategies in English support learning well
- Skills in speaking, spelling and comprehension are weak
- Teaching in Year 4 is not as good as in other years and this leads to a dip in pupils' progress
- The use of assessment to inform planning and setting of targets is at an early stage of development and improvement is required

81. Standards at the end of Year 2 are well below average in speaking, reading and writing. At the end of Year 6 they are below average. Progress is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and it is good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' effective learning has been maintained since the last inspection and has improved in Years 3 to 6. There is no difference in the progress made by boys and girls from different ethnic backgrounds, though in some lessons, girls are more reticent than boys in answering questions. In recorded work, both genders achieve broadly similar standards of work. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good, reflecting the very good provision and support for these pupils in the school. The group of pupils who could potentially do better in school are the highest achievers. There is inconsistent practice between year groups in the setting of sufficiently challenging work that would ensure these pupils always reach the levels of which they are capable. The good focus given by teachers in Year 2 and Year 6 to ensuring that all pupils are stretched to a comfortable point when given independent tasks, is a positive feature, that shows up well in the work accomplished and in the SATs.
82. Since the previous inspection the National Literacy Strategy has been successfully embedded and resources improved to support this. The school's scheme of work for English ensures a balance of coverage and focuses carefully on the teaching of the basic skills. The introduction of additional strategies to support English is having a positive effect on standards, particularly in reading and in providing support for lower attainers. The extra support given to those pupils learning English as an additional language is proving effective, but these pupils take time to build the skills they need, especially those at a very early stage of language acquisition. As such their learning is developing slowly but surely. More recent developments include the introduction of target setting in English, although this has not yet had time to impact on standards, such initiatives are supporting the good quality teaching and learning well.
83. The quality of speaking and listening on entry to the nursery is very low and it remains well below average when pupils start in the reception classes. Many pupils have a very limited vocabulary and their understanding of language is poor. Most teachers make a deliberate effort to build on these skills. However, on several occasions, inspectors noted girls were more reluctant to engage in oral contributions to lessons and too often allowed to sit passively. Not enough was done to ensure that more reticent girls were drawn into discussions and encouraged to respond to questions. There are good opportunities for pupils to engage in discussions and conversations but few pupils participate in more extended conversations. In many classes there is a good emphasis on speaking aloud and developing confidence in expressing ideas and opinions. In a good Year 1 lesson role-play was used well to extend language development. The learning support assistant translated into Bengali to help one boy and into Urdu for another. This gives good support to pupils with English as an additional language and enables them to access lessons as well as others. Pupils participated in a role-play of a re-told traditional story. Pupils re-enacted the characters with confidence and enjoyment. Others watched the play attentively. In a good Year 6 lesson the very challenging text 'Overhead on the Saltmarsh' was used to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of different poetry forms. The teacher focused on some of the powerful language 'I will howl in the deep lagoon for your green glass beads...' Pupils listened attentively and responded willingly to questions that explored the meaning and definition of words. The teacher modelled reading aloud with expression and pupils emulated his style as they attempt to read with the same expression. When pupils are given such opportunities and are well challenged in this way, there are clear gains in the learning of a significant proportion.
84. Reading standards are well below average at the age of seven, and below average at the age of eleven. Most pupils have positive attitudes to reading, although there is little reading done at home. This is compounded by the school's policy that reading scheme books are not sent home.

A good proportion of pupils belong to a local public library and older pupils in particular talk knowledgeably about the books and authors they like. They show less enthusiasm for non-fiction texts and are not confident about how books are classified. There are good opportunities for reading in school with silent reading daily and a reading partner scheme when older pupils read to younger pupils. There are regular opportunities to read to an adult. Pupils are keen to read and want to become good readers. Reading diaries are not consistently maintained. They do not involve parents and pupils enough in the record keeping or reviews. Older pupils make books for younger pupils, some of which are displayed in the library. There is a good library provision with ample space for working in the non-fiction library. Books in the fiction library are classified in alphabetical order by author and in the non-fiction library they are Dewey classified. There is a satisfactory range of books available. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and when withdrawn, helped to make good progress toward their specific targets. Although some higher-attaining readers read with fluency and expression, comprehension skills are not as good and skills such as inference and deduction are less developed.

85. There has been good attention given to writing since the last inspection and indications from the work seen are that standards are improving. Increasing opportunities for writing and a well-embedded literacy strategy are contributing to this improvement. Limited experiences and understanding inhibit pupils' ability to use powerful vocabulary and exciting language in many cases. There are good opportunities for literacy skills to be developed across other subjects of the curriculum. For example, in science there is a good focus on developing scientific vocabulary whilst good use is made of stories within history lessons. Opportunities are not as well made in geography however, where too many work sheets are in use that limit personal writing. Spelling skills are a weakness for a significant number of pupils and marking does not always pick it up. Pupils write for an increasing range of purpose and many try hard to present their work neatly. Opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length, although many find extended writing difficult. There is a good focus on poetry throughout the school. Pupils in Year 6 show understanding of the use of personification in their poems for example, a higher attaining pupil wrote 'The wind yawns when the sun came out. The wind blows, puffing out his cheeks... the wind is lonely now and cries for someone to play with him'. An average attaining pupil wrote 'The wind awoke and whispered to the trees. As it picked up speed, the muttering of the leaves increased. They spoke of the storm to come...'
86. Alongside weaknesses in spelling are often grammatical errors, such as the use of incorrect tenses and weak sentence structure. Pupils are sometimes unsure how to add connectives to join two sentences and are confused by whether to use 'were' or 'where', for example. There is some evidence of pupils' redrafting their work but this is often to improve spelling, punctuation and presentation rather than a critical appraisal of the content of the writing.
87. Good links are made to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with poetry in particular, used well to inspire writing in several year groups. Other year groups draw on traditional tales to develop understanding of character, setting and plot. Year 4 pupils write descriptively about old people. Pupils in Year 6 write letters of thanks to the theatre following a visit to see 'George's Marvellous Medicine' and create their own medicine recipes. Year 5 pupils write in the style of Kit Wright's poem 'The Magic Box' for example, 'I will put in the box a lovely present wrapped in gold paper and a silver bow'. Diary entries, instructional texts and simple play-scripts are other writing tasks undertaken.
88. Work is regularly marked and in the best practice refers to targets in order to improve. Pupils are mindful of teachers' comments for improvement and often respond to these with a message

of their own. The good marking practice is inconsistent across the school. Pupils make use of computers for word processing their work with increasing skill.

89. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with particular strengths in Years 2 and 6. Pupils enjoy their lessons when work is challenging and interesting. They work together well in groups and on their own. In the best practice, good subject knowledge motivates pupils well. The brisk lesson pace ensures pupils work hard and cover a good amount of work. Teachers often use plenary sessions well to assess what has been learned and what needs to be consolidated further.
90. The leadership and management of English are satisfactory. The recently appointed subject leader has not yet had time to influence teaching, standards or progress. Overall, there have been steady improvements in English but work remains to be done particularly in providing guidance to teachers to support improvement in promoting pupils' speaking and listening skills and wider comprehension if standards are to improve. The use of target setting to aid advancement is at first base and this too requires sharper focus to support improvement.

MATHEMATICS

- Standards are improving and pupils make good progress from a low level of mathematics skills and knowledge at the beginning of school to below average standards at eleven.
- The lowest standards (well below average) are in Year 4 and the best (almost average) are in Year 5.
- The work to support pupils with EAL is of good, and sometimes very good impact.
- Some pupils have irregular attendance patterns and miss much work. The school does not monitor the impact of this on progress rigorously enough.
- Higher attaining pupils could be challenged more, though pupils with special educational needs generally learn well.
- Teaching and learning are good and there are some clear strengths. There are a few aspects for continuing improvement though.
- Leadership and management are good and the subject leader is keen to make the necessary improvements in monitoring, evaluation, target setting and tracking.

91. In 1997 it was reported that standards in mathematics were below average at the end of Year 6 but that pupils made satisfactory progress from their well below average starting point in the nursery. Due to good leadership and management the school has moved mathematics on and improvement has been good overall.
92. Today, standards are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6. The chief factors, in this picture of standards, are the very low entry level of mathematical skill and knowledge and a lack of language and literacy skills that affect the ability of pupils to explain mathematical thinking and understand written questions. The well below average standards attained in last year's SATs is a reflection of these factors. However, there is strong determination in school that the pupils will make good progress, and this they do. There is evidence of improving standards, with many pupils attaining average standards in some aspects of their mathematics such as arithmetic and data handling in Year 5. However, standards in Year 4 are not as good, and are the lowest in the school when compared to similar aged pupils, because of the attitudes and behaviour of some boys with particular needs and the use of some inappropriate teaching strategies to improve their learning.

93. Whether in lesson observations or in the sample of past work studied during the inspection, there is little evidence of high attainment. A handful of pupils are attaining a secure level 5 in Year 6, but the overall proportion is low and this impacts on the overall standards achieved. The school is working to improve the attainment of pupils in the next group down and has reorganised its sets in Year 6 to make better provision for pupils who might reach level 5 by the end of school. Pupils with learning difficulties are generally supported well in their work and the setting system is working in their favour. There are times when the support staff listen to the teacher along with the pupils and this restricts the impact of their otherwise good work to help and encourage the lower attaining pupils in their work.
94. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make up the majority of pupils. A sizeable proportion have very little English, including a few Year 5 and 6 pupils, and their ability to understand the nature of the task or to show that they can complete the mathematics is limited by their lack of English. Furthermore, a significant minority of pupils takes extended holidays overseas and others have irregular attendance patterns. These pupils miss much work and take a long time to catch up because they are often also pupils with little English or have learning difficulties. The school is not monitoring sufficiently rigorously the impact that frequent absence has on learning and progress. Most of the time the support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is of good quality as shown below.
95. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good. The management of pupils, teaching of basic skills, teachers' knowledge and confidence, the pace of work and the attention to basic numeracy skills all stand out as strengths. Planning is not sufficiently clear about just what skills, knowledge and understanding are to be learned by pupils in lessons and marking does not identify frequently enough what the pupil must do to improve their work. In some lessons teachers spend too long talking, which a number of pupils find difficult to manage as their concentration span and listening skills are weak. In such lessons, boys can be loud and sometimes disruptive whilst the girls get on with quiet learning. Such traits in learning have not been monitored closely enough by the school to ensure that lessons meet the needs of all learners. However, in most lessons the response is good; pupils have good attitudes to their work, there is a good level of productive, collaborative work and relationships are a strength.
96. The best mathematics lesson observed was in a Year 5 class where pupils were developing their knowledge of halving and doubling in order to solve fractions problems. The teacher was confident, had a very good rapport with the pupils, taught at a good pace and gave clear instructions. Pupils' attention was captured by his lively and sometimes original teaching style and they tried very hard to answer his questions. The focus on *keywords* in the problems that gave a hint of the method to be used was a particularly successful strategy for these pupils, many of whom had difficulties with English. An additional and conspicuously successful initiative was the partnership between the teacher and the bilingual support assistant. After the teacher had completed his explanation, the assistant spent a few moments putting the points across in an alternative form. Initially, this was in English and resulted in more pupils being ready to complete the tasks. For the few who still had difficulties, she explained briefly in mother tongue the work and emphasised the *keywords* again. The pupils picked up well on the need to work methodically. They quite quickly doubled values from £1.00 to £10 and beyond. The speed of response increased as the sequence grew. The teacher suggested that later they might like to work out how much money they would have if they started with £1.00 that week and continued to double it for 20 weeks. There was a buzz of activity as the pupils contemplated with relish their chances of becoming millionaires! There was a real sense of mathematical adventure in this lesson that involved all pupils, regardless of background.

97. The curriculum for mathematics is well balanced and of sufficient breadth. Whilst ample work is completed in mathematical problem solving and investigation, it is in this aspect that pupils lack most confidence as to succeed they need skills of explanation, prediction and evaluation that some find difficult because of their state of English language development. There is satisfactory use made of ICT to further pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills, though the subject leader recognises this as an aspect for continued improvement. The setting of pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 is largely successful in meeting pupils' needs though in many sets all pupils complete exactly the same tasks and this does not make full allowance for their differing needs. This especially relates to the higher attainers, some of whom are capable of more demanding tasks. The use of the data produced by assessment in setting targets and tracking that pupils achieve these well enough is another aspect for improvement. In both cases, the school has identified the issue but has yet to take concerted action to overcome the weakness.
98. The leadership of mathematics is good. There is well-planned educational direction and all staff are resolved to make improvement. The subject leader is a good manager and has firm understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She has, however, had insufficient opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of education and standards in other classes. She is keen for this opportunity and has already shown that she is capable of rigorous evaluation and good action planning to bring improvement through her work to check planning and sample pupils' work. Continued improvement in mathematics is assured.

SCIENCE

- Standards in the 2002 SATs for Year 6 were well below average when compared to all schools but average when compared to similar schools
- Girls under performed in the tests
- Inspection evidence shows below average standards in both Years 2 and 6
- Much attention is being paid by the school to the practical nature of the activities to support learning so that progress is satisfactory in infant classes and builds up to a good rate in junior classes
- There is accelerated learning in Years 5 and 6
- Teaching is good throughout the school as teachers devise interesting and imaginative tasks for the pupils because they have secure subject knowledge
- There is satisfactory leadership of the subject by a part-time teacher

99. Standards in the 2002 SATs at Year 6 were well below average when compared with national figures but were average when compared to similar schools. Performance at a higher level is average when compared to similar schools in science as in all tested subjects. There was an under performance from girls as in all tested subjects. Teachers' assessments of science in 2002 in Year 2 show that well below standards were achieved.
100. Inspection evidence, based on a sample of work from both infant and junior classes combined with lesson observations, show standards are below average at Years 2 and 6. There are a number of reasons for this improvement in comparison with SATs results. The school has been giving much more careful attention to the development of practical investigations in science where pupils do not have to record as much. The language barrier that pupils, whose first home language is not English, face is not as great in practically based learning. The school has given appropriate attention to resources which support the practical work effectively. Teaching is good throughout the school as teachers have secure subject knowledge built on the helpful guidance provided in the scheme of work. There has been thoughtful attention paid to the inclusion of girls in giving spoken answers to questions in lessons. Many are still reluctant to

contribute but teachers work patiently together with support staff to elicit accurate answers from the girls. Pupils who have special needs other than their language needs are also receiving helpful support from teachers and support staff.

101. In infant classes there is a good emphasis given to investigation that is built upon pupils earliest experiences in the foundation stage classes. By Year 2, the pupils are covering the requirements of the National Curriculum and are able to show secure recall of previous learning. For example in lessons on making circuits in electricity in Year 2, small steps in learning supported pupils' understanding effectively. A learning support assistant helped pupils with language difficulties by using their mother tongue. The pupils with special needs other than language difficulties were also receiving sympathetic support from class teachers and support assistants. More able pupils extended awareness as they discovered that would not light if the battery was turned around. One girl summed up findings for the group as she explained that this happened "because the metal isn't friends with the plastic". Teachers accept this level of explanation but at the same time use accurate subject language and continually encourage pupils to do the same. Checks on the way that circuits work are made by the pupils as they respond accurately to well directed questions. Learning is further extended as pupils make good use of ICT as they use software to design and present electric circuits. This is typical of the supportive methods of recording that the school uses effectively.
102. This is built upon further in the junior classes where accelerated learning takes place in Years 5 and 6. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils learn appropriately about the human body and moving and growing through being involved in a number of practical activities. They move on in Year 5 to make accurate comparisons between day and night through whole and smaller group activities. The whole class joined hands to circle around a light and in this way confirmed their understanding of *orbit and rotation*. Partner work using torches to make shadows and producing silhouettes helps to develop deeper understanding. Pupils record their understanding through the production of accurate graphs. A very good lesson in Year 6 is typical of the practical emphasis that is being given to learning. The pupils learn about air resistance and the meaning of force and gravity as they fair test in pairs the speed of fall of a paper spinner. Boys and girls work together purposefully in their investigations as they carry out their experiments with spinners that have the same and then different numbers of paper clips attached. A real buzz of excitement confirms the learning taking place. The recording of understanding is reinforced as pupils use ICT skills to produce a spread-sheet that records their findings accurately.
103. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They plan imaginatively so that interesting tasks are devised. Lessons are well organised with good resources helping the pupils to understand new concepts and learn well. Support staff are deployed effectively and help to give impetus to the pupils' confidence in recording of their investigations.
104. A part time teacher leads the subject satisfactorily. Some monitoring has been completed but not enough time has been given to this aspect of management. Neither has enough attention been paid to developing useful on-going assessment or the use of target setting and tracking pupils' progress in science to check for the effectiveness of the scheme of work. There is too little attention given to ensuring pupils of all ages record their work neatly and accurately, and this is an area for development.

ART AND DESIGN

- Good standards in evidence at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained
- Standards are above average for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds
- The quality of teaching is good and all pupils make very good progress including those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs
- The quality of display throughout the school significantly enhances the learning environment and reflects the cultural diversity of the school
- The provision and organisation of materials for art and design is very good
- The use of assessment to inform future planning needs to be more consistently applied throughout the school
- The role of the subject leader should be enhanced by monitoring standards and supporting teachers in the classroom

105. Standards in the subject have been maintained at above average levels since the previous inspection and this is a positive feature. Pupils of all ages make very good progress due to the consistently good teaching that they receive. Learning experiences in art and design are chosen to both inspire and challenge pupils' creativity and responses are universally very positive. The long-term curriculum plan supports teachers in enabling both continuity and progression in the development of skills in art and design. Additionally, ICT is used effectively to support and extend children's learning. For example, children in Year 2 have used draw and paint programmes to produce pictures in the style of Jason Pollock to a high level of quality.
106. The quality of the display of children's work significantly enhances the school's learning environment and adds to the spiritual and cultural dimension of the school. Children gain recognition through the sympathetic and imaginative displays of their work whether individual or collaborative. Cross-curricular links are frequently exploited through display; for example, the Year 1 science work on senses; links to a Year 2 geography topic on Sparkbrook and the Lickey Hills. There is a multi-cultural approach to the development of art, producing a wide range of learning experiences, involving pupils, staff and artists at study centres working collaboratively to produce artwork across a broad spectrum of media and techniques.
107. Teaching in both key stages is good, providing exciting and worthwhile experiences for the children who make very good progress overall. In a lesson observed In Year 1, pupils worked with originality as they weaved pre-cut paper strips into a pattern of their choosing. Some exercised strong preferences in the use of materials so that different textures were a part of the finished article. There is an acceleration of progress towards the end of the junior phase where teachers' expectations of pupils' attainment are particularly high. Of particular note is a display of decorative clock faces of a very high standard on working clocks created by Year 6 pupils, demonstrating an imaginative use of coroflute and rigid foam. Other work includes good quality pastel still life drawings of fruit making effective use of shade and tone to produce depth and very good quality Year 6 pupils spoke to inspectors about the prints in the style of William Morris with immense pride.
108. Teachers subject knowledge is good and classroom assistants are employed effectively to support children's learning. Teachers' planning however lacks some consistency with regards to both stretching the more talented artists and identifying opportunities for assessment. Where sketch-books are used effectively children's work shows good progress over time. The use of sketch-books however is not consistently applied throughout the school and this is an area for improvement.
109. Pupils respond positively to the subject, contributing significantly to their personal development. An extremely popular art club is offered to pupils on a rota basis as part of the lunchtime

activities scheme organised through the learning mentors. Children at this club have access to the art co-ordinator, supported by classroom assistants, one lunchtime each week and their work is displayed with normal classwork along the school's corridors. The teaching of children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is well supported and these children make at least as good progress as other children in both key stages.

110. The subject leader has recently taken over from a member of the senior management team who had taken on responsibility for the subject on a temporary basis. These two people have worked together to lead the subject by example and where their influence has been exerted, standards have risen. There are exciting ideas in the pipeline for the school to place its art gallery on the school's web page. The new subject leader has had little opportunity to monitor and support teaching and learning throughout the school other than through observing displays and pupils' sketch books. The role of monitoring standards on a regular, consistent basis needs to be developed in order to maintain standards and to ensure a sustained good level of provision for pupils throughout all year groups.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- Standards across the school have been maintained since the last inspection
- Standards are average for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds
- The quality of teaching is good in Years 2 and 6 and satisfactory overall
- The use of ICT and control technology is well-developed in Year 6 to support design experiences
- Pupils behave well and the subject contributes effectively to their personal development
- The subject leader is enthusiastic and has very good subject knowledge but he needs greater access to other classes to influence standards through the monitoring and support of teaching and learning
- Pupils' evaluation of their own work and the use of assessment to inform future planning need to be more consistently applied.

111. Standards are average for seven and eleven year old pupils. Both boys and girls make sound progress during their time in school but make better progress in Years 2 and Year 6 than elsewhere. Lesson observations during the week of inspection together with a scrutiny of pupils' work in books and in displays in classrooms and corridors demonstrate that pupils have access to a suitable range of materials; they are creating design proposals and in some classes are evaluating their work for future improvement. The best practice in school is not yet shared to iron out inconsistencies. The range of pupils work is diverse and covers: making fruit salads, sandwiches, dolls' clothes, pop-up toys and books, moving toys with cams and slippers.

112. Where there is evidence of more effective learning, teachers' subject knowledge is good, pupils are challenged through open-ended tasks and cross-curricular links are clearly identified; for example, work in Year 6 shows good understanding of the workings of cogs, gears, levers, pulleys and waterwheels in a display of work inspired by a visit to Sarehole Mill. In a lesson observed in Year 6, the pupils built on earlier learning of designing and making fairground models to support new learning as they used laptops with *power-point* to present digital images of what the finished product might look like. A boy recently back from Pakistan, was very well supported by his peers so that he too could share in the very much-enjoyed lesson. In Year 5, a 3-dimensional display of boxes complements poems written in the style of Kit Wright. Teaching is good at the end of the infant phase where, for example, a display of pupils' work demonstrates the skills and stages of process in designing and making a coat for a doll. The word-rich classroom display provides good support for language skills.

113. Teaching is more consistently good at the end of the junior phase where the subject leader creates imaginative learning opportunities for the pupils to engage in both prescriptive and more open-ended tasks. ICT is used very effectively to enhance and extend pupils' skills and self-confidence. There is also a well-developed use of control technology in these classes where class-sharing by teachers enables pupils in both Year 6 classes to benefit from the subject leader's skill and knowledge. This needs to be extended to other classes so that pupils and teachers in those year groups can also benefit from sharing good practice.
114. Overall, both boys and girls make satisfactory progress in all years, but there is a boost in progress at the end of the junior phase due to better teaching. There is good provision both for pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress.
115. The subject is well managed by a skilful and talented leader who has very good subject knowledge and who provides enriched learning opportunities for pupils through an extra-curricular design technology club. Assessment of pupils' progress is made through discussions with class teachers but there have been few opportunities to monitor lessons being taught. Resources are adequate and are stored in mobile units which are available to all classes. Pupils have access to a full range of materials and processes to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject. Assessment needs to be used however in a more consistent manner to inform future planning.

GEOGRAPHY

- Standards are below average because pupils have limited language and literacy skills
- Pupils of all ages have restricted experiences of localities away from their own
- The geography curriculum is firmly focused on the development of knowledge and skills
- Teaching and learning are sound overall, though there is too much use of worksheets in some parts of the school
- The school is working well to provide pupils with a wider range of experiences that will enhance the standards attained
- Geography is managed effectively, though the subject leader has no opportunities to monitor and evaluate standards and the quality of education in other classes

116. The previous inspection report indicated that progress in geography was satisfactory and the quality of education was sound. Over the intervening period, geography has been improved satisfactorily, though standards are below average.
117. There is firm evidence to be found in pupils' past work to show that their geographical knowledge is developed soundly. There is a consistent level of provision in all classes and the curriculum is firmly focused on the demands of the National Curriculum. However, pupils weak literacy skills work against their attaining average standards. Whilst pupils can retell key facts and information, they do not always write about their geography experiences in sufficient detail or in their own words. There is an over-use of worksheets in some parts of the school that works against the broadening of the geography curriculum, the development of research and study skills and the overall progress made. The subject leader recognises this weakness and is resolved to make the necessary improvements.
118. When children start school they have very little experience and knowledge of places outside their immediate neighbourhood. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is broadened sufficiently but at the time they join Year 1, many pupils have not ventured even as far as the

city centre, two miles to the north of the school. Recognising this lack of experience, the school has purchased a mini-bus, and is considering the purchase of a second, to give pupils the chance to visit places that are unfamiliar to them. Thus, infant pupils visit the nearby Lickey Hills, where they are sometimes over-awed by the difference in the physical attributes of that locality. Other pupils are not able to name such familiar things as streetlights and bus stops that they pass en route for school. This is in part due to their many different language heritages. The school is determined that the lack of experience and language will not hold back learning and provides many good quality learning opportunities to assist pupils develop improved geography knowledge. The provision of the min bus is a cost-effective way of doing this.

119. Despite the progress they make in infant classes, junior pupils still have much to learn. There are pupils in Year 3 that do not know what an island is and do not know that they live on an island. The school has firm plans to introduce a residential visit to a different locality from inner city Birmingham in a bid to further broaden the pupils' horizons. The subject leader has amassed a good collection of maps at different scales to introduce pupils to other communities and there are good quality resources generally to support the enhancement of learning. In the one geography lesson observed, in Year 6, the pupils were gaining knowledge of several mountain ranges around the world and were distinguishing how they were formed. However, the relative lack of language and literacy skills hampered the achievement of average standards. One group was researching volcanoes in Hawaii on the Internet and had found some useful information. The pupils had difficulties in writing about these volcanoes in their own words, making errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. This did not lessen their interest or enthusiasm, however, and the work progressed at a good pace.
120. Teaching and learning are sound overall. The next priority for the school is to ensure that the work is matched more closely to pupils' individual and ability group needs. At present, much of the work is exactly the same, regardless of the ability or background of the pupils. The quality of lesson planning is not sufficiently precise to enable different pupils to maximise their gains in learning. Additionally, there is limited evaluation of how well different pupils have achieved. The subject leader has a good grasp of these shortcomings, and the other priorities for improvement, such as the development of a consistent assessment system through the school. She has so far had no opportunity to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in other classes, though she has examined planning and pupils' work to find out what works and what requires improvement. The subject leader has firm and sensible plans for the future and geography is secure in her management.

HISTORY

- Standards are well below average in infant classes and below average in junior classes but there is evidence of improving standards throughout the school
- There are better standards when there is an emphasis upon practical activities
- Teaching is satisfactory with good features in infant classes and good in junior classes
- There is an overuse of worksheets to record learning in Year 4 that impedes progress which is satisfactory in infant classes and good overall in junior classes
- There is good leadership of the subject with well managed resource provision
- There is too little opportunity for the subject leader to work and monitor in classrooms throughout the school

121. Standards in written work in history are well below average by the end of Year 2 and below average by the end of Year 6. In lesson observations, the standards were better; and were judged as below average by the end of Year 2 and average by the end of Year 6. In lesson, the

pupils were seen to show sound knowledge and understanding of historical concepts, including chronology, when they answered questions. In simple comprehension-based activities they can record their learning appropriately. The standards drop when pupils are asked to record their work independently. This is because of their limited writing skills which holds back the potential shown in oral contributions in particular. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in the provision of a scheme of work that supports the use of more practical activities where less recording is required.

122. All pupils are making at least satisfactory progress with better progress than this in junior classes. Those pupils who have special needs, other than their language needs, receive extra support from both class teachers and support staff. Tasks that are helpful to them so that they can achieve appropriately are very carefully drawn up in well structured planning.
123. The work in infant classes is appropriately completed as part of a topic focus. The sample of work shows that the focus is targeted effectively at areas of natural interest in comparing past times with the present time. An example of this is the study of homes. No specific subject language targets are being used in order to support the pupils better in developing appropriate recording skills. This does not help to underpin the understanding of pupils whose first home language is not English. However, as a result of the helpful marking and annotation of work by the teachers the pupils begin to make satisfactory progress. Boys and girls work at a similar level and make the same progress as one another. They acquire historical skills because they make positive responses to their teachers. In a Year 2 lesson observations of the great fire of London were being well supported by the practical nature of the different levels of tasks in their work. The majority worked in pairs using an interactive website where listening skills were developed and written information was produced on the computer. In the meantime a more able group used written and pictorial resources to answer a series of questions accurately. Although this gave some minor difficulties in reading accurately it began to give independence to the recording of knowledge. This met the high expectations of the teacher.
124. The sample of work and lesson observations in junior classes show that pupils begin to record more independently in Year 3 and Years 5 and 6. Too much use is made of work-sheets to record learning in Year 4 which impedes progress. Nevertheless there is an acceleration of learning in Years 5 and 6 that assures satisfactory progress is being made by the end of Year 6 overall. In Year 3 where the pupils are learning about the Ancient Greeks their understanding is well motivated because their teacher presents the story of *Theseus and the minotaur* to them dramatically. In a lesson observed, the pupils played parts whilst the teacher outlined the story expressively. The teacher interacted effectively with the audience by stopping regularly and asking what they thought would happen next. The pupils were enthralled at the way the story unfolded and so always had a view to express. The imaginative presentation supported well the development of the pupils' literacy skills without losing sight of the historical focus of the pupils learning. In Year 5 classes the pupils chose their focus of learning as they researched the work of a sailor in Tudor times in mixed ability groups of threes. This enabled the better reader to interrogate the books used as source material, the better writer to record knowledge and the third to discuss with both of them. This pupil then presented findings to the whole class. The well-thought out approach developed individual talents of pupils systematically and gave them understanding of how to build their strengths in other ways. When the subject leader teaches pupils in Year 6 they make good progress in their learning in lessons. The pupils use a variety of resources in small groups such as the *internet* and video material with confidence as they make comparisons between use of leisure time now and in Victorian times. They move into this work after they have had first hand resources of objects such as stones and swing toys used in Victorian times presented to them as a whole class.

125. The teaching of history is satisfactory with good features in infant classes and good in junior classes. Where it is best active learning is being fostered effectively. The teachers plan carefully. They provide interesting starting points in the tasks. Different levels of work are thought about so that pupils learn at an appropriate level as well as learning from one another. Lessons are well organised so that pupils can share their learning with one another in whole group plenary sessions at the end of lessons after group work has been completed enthusiastically. There is brisk pace in the very best lessons. In less effective learning tasks are not interesting to the pupils. The intention for learning outcomes in lesson planning is not clear enough to show what different pupils are expected to achieve. Their recording is confined to the use of work-sheets. Work is less well developed when teachers have not marked work so that there are clear indications about what the pupils need to do in order to improve upon their work, There is a good impact upon the pupils' learning of citizenship as they make comparisons between conditions now and in the past in the junior classes. The different methods of completing work independently, or small groups or as whole classes supports their social development effectively. The pupils enjoy the different ways that tasks are presented to them and they make enthusiastic and positive responses.
126. The leadership of history is good. The subject leader supports teaching colleagues well through the provision of a suitable scheme of work that is thoughtfully up-dated. The subject leader manages the subject efficiently through the provision of a satisfactory level of resources and the monitoring of pupils' written work. However, the monitoring would be more effective if the subject leader had more time to work with colleagues, particularly in infant classes, in their classrooms. This is an area for improvement.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- Standards are improving well and are average overall
- Pupils work hard, are well behaved and produce good amounts of work
- Teaching and learning are good though some improvement is required in planning
- The support staff make a good contribution to the progress made by pupils who speak English as an additional language
- The curriculum is well focused on the systematic development of skills
- Target setting, tracking, monitoring and evaluation require improvement
- The subject is well led and managed

127. There has been very good improvement in ICT from the below average standards recorded in the 1998 inspection report. The school has updated its computer resources and added other resources to enhance the ICT experiences of the pupils. Staff training has improved significantly teachers' subject knowledge and confidence, though some teachers have yet to complete the national training undertaken some little time ago by many colleagues in other primary schools.
128. The improvements have worked through to standards and progress. Today, standards are broadly average through the school and pupils build skills and knowledge well. Indeed, in Years 1 and 2 there is evidence of some above average attainment because of the high expectations and highly successful teaching of basic skills in these year groups. This suggests that there is very good potential for future standards in school if this quality of provision is maintained. The majority of pupils speaks English as an additional language; provision for these pupils is good overall, and sometimes very good. Because pupils get instant feedback from the computer as they work, all pupils are well motivated to learning and language difficulties are minimised. Bilingual explanation at appropriate times ensures that all pupils can take advantage of the good

quality lessons and make good progress. Thus, despite some difficulties over “*place these things in sets*” which some pupils understood to say “*place these things insects*”, Year 1 pupils were able to complete their work to classify items in a story that could be entered into a simple database. This was because the teacher’s intervention and support assistant’s work were well targeted and misunderstandings eliminated quickly.

129. Pupils’ attitudes to ICT are a strength that also impacts well on learning. Pupils are keen to take part in the work and most concentrate well over long periods. They work together well and relationships are very good. The level of racial harmony is very good and learning in ICT is a happy and productive business where pupils grow well in confidence, responsibility and independence. The Year 6 lesson centred on the computer based control of processes, such as traffic light phases, and audible and visual signals to act as alarms illustrated the productive response of pupils and the hard work that is put into learning. In this lesson, pupils’ knowledge and skills were increased significantly as they programmed sensors to operate machines, lights and buzzers. The standards achieved were average for most pupils but for one or two, they were above average. This marked very good progress from their starting point at the age of five.
130. There is a well-planned curriculum that is focused on the systematic development of skills and knowledge. Since most pupils have virtually no experience of using computers before they start school and few pupils of all ages have computers at home, it is very clear that the increase in skills and knowledge is due to the school’s good efforts. Teaching quality is good, as is learning. Pupils have consistent opportunities across parallel classes to learn the same skills and knowledge and the management of pupils and organisation of lessons are both good. Additionally, subject knowledge, expectations and the role of support staff work positively in the interests of the pupils. The clarity of planning in identifying the skills and knowledge to be learned by pupils of different ability is an aspect of teaching that is ripe for improvement. Nonetheless, learning is productive, well paced and an enjoyable experience that pupils take seriously. Some good cross-curricular work in ICT was observed during the inspection, though shortages of resources in some subjects restricts the breadth of this. The subject leader is alert to the need to strengthen the use of the computers in classrooms as opposed those in the ICT suite to widen the cross-curricular development of skills and knowledge.
131. Assessment procedures have been improved recently and are satisfactory though there is no target setting and tracking in ICT yet. The subject leader is well informed and influential in moving the subject ahead. He is alert to the need to ensure that strengths in his own teaching and that of some colleagues are spread throughout the school. To this end, more involvement in monitoring and evaluation is awaited with anticipation that it will be instrumental in continuing the trend to better standards and provision.

MUSIC

- Standards are average at seven years of age but below average at eleven years of age
- The expertise and enthusiasm of the subject leader is beginning to have a positive influence on music in the school
- Many teachers lack expertise and confidence in the subject
- Insufficient time is given to music for older pupils particularly in Year 6, to enable them to improve singing skills and build successfully on earlier experiences

132. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average and pupils make satisfactory progress. They are below average at the end of Year 6 and progress is unsatisfactory. Although standards present

a similar picture to those at the previous inspection, recent improvements in music, particularly in the junior classes, is beginning to have a positive effect and there are signs that standards are beginning to rise where the music specialist has a direct input into lessons. Although all aspects of the music curriculum are covered, the systematic development of skills in areas such as composition are a weakness throughout the school as is the development of singing skills, particularly in Years 3 to 6. There is little opportunity for higher attaining pupils to be well challenged. There is too little time devoted to music in Year 6 and this is a shortcoming.

133. Progress made by pupils with special educational needs is the same as other pupils in the class. Pupils with English as an additional language also make the same progress as others in the class and there is no difference between the different ethnic groups.
134. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn a variety of songs and explore a range of unpitched percussion instruments and are beginning to identify these by name. They keep a steady pulse when required. They use hand actions to sing names of notes such as 'doh me soh la'. Pupils sing songs such as 'The Grand Old Duke of York' with gusto and enthusiasm but not very tunefully. They perform well in class assemblies such as the Year 1 assembly when the infant band played percussion instruments with confidence and accuracy, keeping a steady beat in order to lead the singing which was enthusiastically performed.
135. By the end of Year 6, the lack of sufficient time given to music means that musical skills are not well developed. Pupils are unable to compose simple melodies or create percussion parts to songs. Their knowledge of music from other cultures is limited. There are insufficient opportunities for listening to a range of music in a structured and purposeful way, in order to appraise and compare it to other music they have heard. Standards in singing are below average. Pupils do not sing tunefully, but shout and singing is flat. They do not have a good understanding of musical terms such as 'tempo' and 'dynamics'.
136. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 5, when music is taken by the subject leader, teaching is good, but unsatisfactory teaching was observed in one lesson because the class teacher lacked subject knowledge and was ill-prepared for the lesson. Progress remains unsatisfactory in the junior phase because pupils in Year 5 are covering the same work in Years 3 and 4. In Year 6 there is no music time allocated on the time table. Pupils have not acquired appropriate skills over time as a result. No use is made of computers to support pupils' learning, although some pupils do have a chance to experiment with keyboards, such as in the Year 5 assembly. When teaching is good, it is because the teacher's own knowledge is secure. Lessons are well planned and resourced and basic skills are well taught. Pupils participate fully, with enthusiasm and enjoyment when this is the case. Pupils are introduced to 'ostinato' rhythms and in Year 5 begin to sing in two parts. They are well challenged in these lessons, although singing remains below average. Pupils show some improvement in the quality of singing through practice in these lessons. A positive feature of music was its use in a Year 5 class assembly where pupils used xylophones and a keyboard to perform a simple composition. Pupils worked together well with obvious enjoyment.
137. The subject has suffered from a lack of clear direction and leadership and a lack of musical expertise over time. The present co-ordinator is enthusiastic and his expertise is beginning to influence the quality of music produced in some classes. An appropriate scheme of work has been implemented which provides a more structured approach. However, there are training needs for the majority of teachers in this subject. The lack of assessment to inform planning and the lack of a rigorous monitoring system adversely affect the progress pupils make. The

lack of sufficient time for music for older pupils is a major factor affecting standards and progress in this subject.

138. Music makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with visits from various singers and musicians. A group of pupils took part in the Asian Music Festival, and other pupils from across the junior classes attended the Lollipop Prom at the Symphony Hall.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Standards are average for seven-year-olds and eleven-year-olds
- The quality of teaching is good in Years 2 and 6 and is satisfactory in other years
- Provision for swimming is good and pupils make good progress
- Both boys and girls are enthusiastic towards the subject and where this is harnessed effectively they make better progress
- Lunchtime and after school activities provide valuable additional learning opportunities for pupils, some of whom have barriers to learning and this enables particular talent to be nurtured
- The subject leader is keen and enthusiastic but she needs greater access to other classes to influence standards through the monitoring and support of teaching and learning
- Pupils' evaluation of their own work and the use of assessment to inform future planning have yet to be more consistently applied

139. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average. From their different starting points, boys and girls, irrespective of ethnicity and ability, make good progress in swimming and broadly satisfactory progress in all other aspects of the subject. Lesson planning though satisfactory would stand tighter focus so that teachers are very clear about what they want pupils to learn, especially the most talented pupils and to enable all pupils to have sufficiently demanding work that helps them work at a good pace.
140. Where there is evidence of more effective learning, teachers' subject knowledge is good and pupils' enthusiasm is harnessed and focussed towards achieving more demanding objectives. For example, in a Year 6 dance lesson the class teacher chose a challenging piece of music for pupils to create their own impressive sequence of dance movements. In such lessons pupils are also expected to consider and build on their previous learning but this practice is not sufficiently widespread. In a satisfactory games lesson in Year 4, the teacher used good questioning to secure pupils' engagement and sustained interest as they practiced how best to throw and catch a ball before extending skills to reach correctly to retrieve when chasing from behind. In this and a few otherwise sound lessons observed, there was limited opportunity for the pupils to feedback their ideas for refining and improving their work and, occasionally, silly calling out limited the potential for a brisker pace of learning. In a Year 3 dance lesson, the teacher undertook a good warm up session and usefully linked movement to exploring language, for example in asking pupils to explain what *jerky* movements might look like. Later in the lesson the pupils developed dances that encompassed *sinking*, *floating*, *drifting* movements. Lunchtime and after school clubs provide valuable additional learning experiences for pupils to extend their skills and physical development experiences.
141. Teaching is good at the end of the infant phase where, for example, during a music and movement lesson pupils create good sequences of movement to drum rhythms, changing direction with sharp pushing/pulling movements whilst keeping to the rhythm very well. Teaching is also good at the end of the junior phase where class teachers display good knowledge and respond effectively to the pupils' natural enthusiasm, directing it in a creative and productive

way. Opportunities have yet to be created for staff from other classes to see how pupils learn in such lessons so that pupils and teachers in those year groups can benefit from the sharing of good practice.

142. The subject is led by an Early Years teacher who has little or no opportunity to influence the quality of teaching and learning in the subject as she has limited means of monitoring what is going on throughout the school. Pupils benefit from an extra-curricular dance activity that she runs but other than that she has no teaching contact with children from outside the school's nursery class. Assessment of pupils' progress is made through discussions with class teachers but there have been few opportunities to monitor lessons being taught. Resources are adequate and are stored in or near to the two halls that are available for indoor physical education activities. Pupils have access to a nearby swimming pool for swimming lessons but outdoor games are limited due to the restricted grassed area and playground.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average
- The curriculum is closely matched to the agreed syllabus followed by local schools
- Pupils are increasingly beginning to learn from religion as well as about religion and making satisfactory progress
- Religious education is taught satisfactorily with some good features in infant classes whilst teaching is good in junior classes
- Pupils are recording their learning more independently in junior classes, except in Year 4 where there is too much reliance on the use of worksheets
- Staff have recognised the need to make more use of assessment and ICT

143. Standards in religious education are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because of the difficulties that pupils have in recording accurately. They are gradually catching up on developing their language and literacy skills in English from a very low base. Both boys and girls from different ethnic backgrounds achieve appropriately. This marks sustained progress since the last inspection. The pupils who have special needs, other than English language acquisition, are being equally well supported by both teachers and support staff. They have work provided at a level that gives them the right support that they need to make good progress in their learning
144. Both lesson observations and a sample of work confirm that the curriculum is being carefully matched to the locally agreed syllabus. This secures an increase in the pupils' knowledge about a good range of world religions. In the infant classes the sample of work confirms the emphasis being given to the Christian religion as well as some issues such as special people. When issues are a focus of the pupils learning they begin to learn from religions because of the values of special people that are presented to them. There is too little evidence of different levels of work for the younger pupils in infant classes. However, in an observation of a lesson in Year 2 where pupils were learning from the Jewish religion about special places for special purposes they were being better supported in their learning. A teacher who was well prepared presented a number of good quality artefacts to the whole class. Although they recorded with the help of a worksheet there were different levels of worksheets that matched pupils' ability. The pupils understanding grew because they are able to complete written recording successfully. This is a sound introduction to learning from religion.
145. This focus is well extended in the junior classes. There is a good level of continuity and progression in the work as the pupils move from infant to junior classes. Comparable work within the year groups continues to be the common practice. However, there is a successful

focus upon a wider range of world religions in junior classes. This adequately meets the requirements of the syllabus followed by local schools. By Year 6 the sample of work confirms that the more able pupils are recording more fully and taking care with the presentation of their work. There is more independence in the way that work is recorded by all pupils except in Year 4 classes where too much use is made of worksheets to record knowledge and understanding. This impedes the progress made by the pupils in Year 3 but this is accelerated again in Years 5 and 6. In Year 3 pupils focus on aspects of trust and honesty in relationships but this is made more meaningful for them as they are matched to what happens to them in school. There are effective paired and whole group discussions that draw appropriate conclusions that it is necessary to establish rules in order to live in an orderly community. A Year 5 lesson developed skills in writing that allowed pupils a choice of preparing a play script or having a conversation between two Sikhs having heard the story of *Malik Bhago* through watching a video. This was a good example of learning from religion as two pupils from Muslim backgrounds prepared the conversation. They felt it was possible to do so because they said they listened to all people and knew that everyone worshipped a God who represented a particular religion but had the same role whatever the religion.

146. Religious education is taught satisfactorily with some good features in infant classes. There is generally good teaching in the junior classes. Where teaching is best, teachers have secure subject knowledge based on the scheme provided by the locally agreed syllabus. Good use is made of satisfactory resources. More artefact resources for the Jewish religion would better support work on that religion. Lessons are mainly conducted at a good pace. Teachers prepare interesting tasks. Support staff are well deployed to maximise the benefit that pupils gain from their help. Some use is made of ICT skills but this is recognised as an area for further development by the school. There is also a recognised need to give more focus to assessment practice that would help to raise standards further. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education by the way that it focuses on issues in a range of world religions. The way that activities are organised in different forms of groups gives pupils an opportunity to learn effectively from one another.
147. The subject has had satisfactory leadership from a caretaker subject leader in the absence of the permanent post holder. This post holder has returned to work part time at the beginning of the term and the teachers are now working together successfully until the permanent post holder returns to full time work. Provision is well managed as both teachers are very aware of the developmental needs of the subject. There is not enough opportunity within the school development plan for the subject leader to adequately monitor by direct observation and input into the teaching of the subject. Nevertheless all staff have a good commitment to teaching religious education successfully.