

INSPECTION REPORT

CROWN MEADOW FIRST SCHOOL

Alvechurch, Birmingham

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116646

Headteacher: Mrs N Kift

Reporting inspector: Mr S Hill
21277

Dates of inspection: 21st to 24th October 2002

Inspection number: 247655

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Tanyard Lane Alvechurch Birmingham
Postcode:	B48 7LN
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Parry
Date of previous inspection:	24 th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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21277	Steve Hill	Registered inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology, Design and technology, Educational Inclusion	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19361	Keith Ross	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20003	Suzi Metcalfe	Team inspector	English, Geography, History	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
18498	Denise Morris	Team inspector	Foundation stage, Special educational needs, Music, Religious education	
25799	Geraldine Lewendon	Team inspector	Science, Art and design, Physical education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a medium sized first school catering for 266 boys and girls aged from four to nine, in ten classes. It is in Alvechurch, a large village south of Birmingham. The social circumstances of pupils are better than average, with few (5%) entitled to free school meals. Relatively small numbers of pupils (11.5%) have special educational needs and only one has a statement of special needs. All pupils speak English as their home language. Most pupils are of white British ethnic origin, with only nine coming from other ethnic groups. Pupils' overall attainment on entry to school is above average. Since the last inspection, a purpose built suite for information and communication technology (ICT) has been developed, extra sports and extra curricular activities introduced, and improvements in general made to the building. There have been major staffing changes in the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, in which pupils consistently achieve well, because of the good teaching they receive. The school is very well led by the headteacher, strongly supported by her colleagues and by the governing body. Management is good and the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are good in English, maths, science, ICT and music.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Strong leadership from the headteacher has resulted in a good team who work together very effectively.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, form very good relationships, and behave well.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are good.
- The school has a good partnership with parents.
- The school provides a good all-round curriculum, with a particularly wide range of interesting extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

- Curriculum leaders could play a bigger part in checking up on standards and teaching in their subjects.
- More use could be made of ICT in lessons in other subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in November 1997, the improvement has been very good. Standards have risen and are now good overall. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good, with about two thirds of lessons seen being good or better, and there is much less unsatisfactory teaching than at the last inspection. The key issues from the last inspection have been dealt with effectively. As well as the improvement in teaching, the length of the school day has been increased. A detailed and effective policy is in place for child protection. There is a good strategic plan for the development of the school, and the overall standards and progress of the school are monitored well. Improvements to the toilets have been made and will be completed shortly. Time had been made available for curriculum co-ordinators to monitor their subject areas, but this lapsed to a large extent because of major recent changes in staffing. The school now has plans to re-establish the monitoring systems with the new co-ordinators. Assessment, which was unsatisfactory in 1997, is now a strength of the school.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	B	A	A	A
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	B	B	A	B

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

The school has consistently achieved good results in national assessments at age seven, both in comparison with schools nationally, and in comparison with similar schools (those with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals). Results have gone up steadily over several years, at a greater rate than national results. The evidence from inspection confirms the high standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the infants. In the junior classes, these high standards in English and mathematics are maintained, and pupils are attaining ahead of national expectations by the age of nine.

Teacher assessments in science showed high standards for seven-year-olds in 2001, although results were only average in 2002. Inspection evidence shows that the 2001 results best reflect the standards in school. At the ages of both seven and nine, pupils attain good standards in science. They also achieve good standards in ICT and music, and satisfactory standards in all other subjects.

Children in the Foundation Stage (in the reception classes) are on line to attain the early learning goals (the nationally expected standards) in their physical development, and to exceed them in the other areas of learning.

Across the school as a whole, pupils achieve well in the light of their initial attainment, particularly in English and mathematics. The school sets challenging targets for the results of national tests, based on its good assessment procedures, and usually meets them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to school, and join in activities with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and pupils' personal qualities are developed well. They work together very effectively, but need to develop their independence more.
Attendance	Good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	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.

The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection, about two thirds of teaching seen was good or better, and a fifth was very good, including one excellent lesson. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. Examples of good teaching were observed in every class.

A significant strength of teaching is the careful matching of work to pupils' needs, so that those who struggle are given extra support or easier work, and high fliers are given more difficult, challenging work. As a result, the school meets the needs of all pupils well, regardless of ability, gender or ethnic background, and they all achieve similarly well. English and mathematics, including the skills of literacy and numeracy, are taught well. ICT is taught well in the computer suite. In all subjects, teachers prepare lessons thoroughly, and generally give pupils interesting work, which engages their interest so they make good progress. Lessons have a good pace, and good use is made of time, so pupils get a lot done. In most lessons, good use is made of the skilled support staff to help children learn.

A relative weakness in teaching is in the use of ICT in other subjects, although there are examples of good practice in this. In a few lessons, pupils spend too long sitting and listening without being effectively involved, and then their concentration weakens.

Pupils' learning is good. Particular strengths are good concentration and hard work. Pupils are interested in what they do and take a pride in their accomplishments. They work very well together and share ideas well. Their independent learning skills, however, are relatively underdeveloped.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced. The provision for extra curricular activities is a particular strength. There is a need to make more use of ICT in other subjects across the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, both for those who struggle with academic work, and for those with particular skills or talents.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Provision for their social and moral development is good, and strongly supports their positive attitudes, very good relationships and good behaviour. All this supports the good standards they achieve. Provision for their cultural development is satisfactory. It has many strengths, but there is room for improvement in the work done to study a wide range of cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Day-to-day care of pupils is good, and all staff work hard to meet their needs. Provision for child protection is very good. However, formal procedures to undertake risk assessments have lapsed, as have arrangements to check electrical equipment. The school is currently arranging to remedy both these shortcomings. Procedures to assess pupils' attainment are good, and are used well to support their learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very strong leadership, and is ably supported by her deputy and by the co-ordinators for subject areas, for special needs, and for the foundation stage. The staff work together as an effective team. There is a need for co-ordinators to be more involved in checking up on pupils' work and the quality of teaching in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are very supportive and serve well as a critical friend. They fulfil most of their statutory responsibilities well, except for missing out some information from their annual report, and the lack of formal records of risk assessments. They are putting plans into place to remedy these.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school is very careful to monitor the attainment of pupils in the core subjects, and to ensure that these are maintained at a high standard.
The strategic use of resources	Staffing levels are good because of the large number of skilled classroom assistants employed. The accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. Resources are used effectively. Spending decisions are carefully based on the school's educational needs and priorities, and money is spent wisely and effectively. Good use is made of the principles of "best value".

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children are making good progress. • The teaching is good. • Behaviour is good. • Children are expected to do their best. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents are unhappy about the amount of homework given. • Some parents do not feel well informed about how their children are doing. • Some parents do not feel the school works closely with them. • Some parents do not feel the school is well led and managed.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. The school works well with parents, and the information they are given is good. The provision of homework is satisfactory. The leadership of the school is very good, and it is well managed.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards are good and this is shown both by inspection evidence and by the results of national assessments for pupils aged seven. Standards have improved since the last inspection, particularly in English, mathematics and ICT. A significant strength of the school is that pupils of all abilities achieve well. Boys and girls, and the pupils from different ethnic backgrounds make similarly good progress. Brighter pupils make good progress because of the good level of challenge that they usually meet in the work they are set. Pupils who find tasks more difficult are given work at an appropriate level, so they too make good progress in lessons, often helped by extra support from skilled classroom assistants. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress against the targets in their individual education plans. The school makes good use of its assessment procedures to ensure that work is at a suitable level for all its pupils.
2. Children in the foundation stage are making good progress and many are on line to exceed the expected standards in all areas of learning except physical development, where they are still likely to meet the expected standard.
3. Results of national assessments at age seven in reading, writing and mathematics have been above average for several years, and have risen considerably since the last inspection. Improvement has been at a faster rate than results nationally. In 2002 results were well above average in all three areas in comparison to national figures. Results in reading and writing were also well above average when compared to similar schools (those with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals), and were above average in mathematics. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils aged seven are attaining ahead of national expectations in English and mathematics.
4. The results of teacher assessments of seven-year-olds in science for 2002 were only average overall, a significant drop from high scores the previous year. The school has suggested that there may have been some under-estimation of pupils' achievement by the two relatively inexperienced staff who administered the tests last year. The observation of work in school would support this, with pupils generally attaining good standards in science.
5. For pupils aged nine, at the end of the school, results of "optional" standardised assessments have also been above those found nationally. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils in the juniors continue to do well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Their standards in English and science are better than expectations by Year 4, and standards are well ahead of expectations in mathematics.
6. In English, pupils' reading and writing skills are particularly high, as are their listening skills. Relatively weak aspects of English, though still satisfactory, are pupils' handwriting and their speaking skills. The strengths in mathematics are pupils' very good mental arithmetic skills, and their ability to apply their numeracy skills to solving problems. In science, pupils show good levels of understanding of all the topics they study, as well as a good understanding of the scientific process.
7. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used well in subjects across the curriculum. For example, the pupils in Year 4 described how they had to measure with very great care to complete a task in design and technology last year.
8. Standards in ICT are above expectations at each key stage, with pupils in each class using computers with great confidence. Basic skills are taught very well in the ICT suite, and all pupils

get good opportunities to use the computers with a wide range of programs. Some good use is made of their skills in other lessons, but the school does not yet have a comprehensive plan for this, and sometimes opportunities are missed.

9. Standards are also good in music, with pupils doing well in all aspects of the subject, including instrumental work and singing.
10. In other subjects, standards at both key stages are in line with those expected nationally.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. This continues to be a strength of the school because of good procedures for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
12. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are very positive. Pupils enjoy coming to school. In all lessons, the majority listen attentively to teachers' explanations, ask pertinent questions and show a keen interest in their work. Pupils sustain interest in a range of tasks. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed working on their storyboards and discussing their chosen characters. Attitudes in music lessons are particularly good, with a positive impact on standards in this subject.
13. Good standards of behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection. Parents believe that pupils behave well and inspection findings concur with this view. Pupils are polite and courteous, opening doors for adults, for example, and help each other on many occasions. They benefit from the good range of activities provided, which foster interest and enjoyment. In practical activities, pupils often exhibit particularly good behaviour. For example in science, art and music pupils were observed responding very positively to their teachers. Pupils are clear about how they should behave, and they know right from wrong. They say "sorry" quickly if they bump into another pupil, and they respect the viewpoints of their peers. Pupils and parents confirm that bullying is rare; during the inspection no examples of bullying were seen. There was one, temporary exclusion last year, of a pupil who has now moved elsewhere. This was appropriate in the circumstances of very poor behaviour, to safeguard other pupils' safety.
14. Relationships at all levels are good and this has a positive impact upon the progress made and the standards attained. Pupils respond with respect to adults and to each other, because adults provide good role models and treat pupils with respect and fairness. A feature of most lessons in all classes is the calm, patient manner of teaching and support staff when dealing with pupils. As a result, there is a calm working atmosphere and pupils behave sensibly and responsibly.
15. Pupils' personal development is good. Within each class, pupils willingly undertake a wide range of responsibilities, such as acting as monitors and helping to tidy away equipment. Pupils work together very effectively, but need to develop their independence more. For example, in a Year 4 lesson in science, all measurement equipment was placed on tables without pupils having to make appropriate choices. Pupils are actively involved in fund raising. They also show very good commitment and perseverance in a range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes towards their work, take part fully in all activities and are confident in the knowledge that their efforts will be valued.
16. Attendance is good and at 94.7% is above the average in most schools. The level of unauthorised absence is better than the national average. The previous inspection report noted that attendance was very good, and attendance has fallen since then. A small but significant minority of parents take children out of school for family holidays and this has an adverse effect on attendance levels.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall throughout the school. During this inspection, about two thirds of teaching seen was good or better, and a fifth was very good, including one excellent lesson. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. Examples of good teaching were observed in every class. The teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, when only a third of lessons were good or better, ten percent were unsatisfactory, and teaching was only satisfactory overall. This improvement has been maintained despite significant staffing changes over the last two years.
18. The teaching of literacy is a strength, particularly at Key Stage Two. Pupils are helped to develop good skills in reading and writing, and these underpin much of the work in other subjects, helping them make progress which is good overall, and which is at least satisfactory in all subjects. Good use is made of the elements of the National Literacy Strategy to structure much of the teaching. Mathematics is also taught well, and good attention is given to the National Numeracy strategy. Teachers are skilled in teaching the mental arithmetic sections of the strategy, resulting in good skills from pupils. Good attention is also paid to helping pupils to use their understanding of number to solve a variety of problems, and as a result they do this well.
19. In most lessons, a particular feature is the strength of relationships, which underpin good management of the pupils. Teachers are always calm and positive towards their pupils and treat them with kindness and respect. As a result, pupils are keen to please them, work hard and behave well.
20. A strength of many lessons, particularly in mathematics and English, is the careful matching of work to pupils' needs. This ensures that all pupils, regardless of gender, ability or ethnic origin make good progress. Teachers make good use of the school's good assessment procedures to plan different work for different pupils. Those who find academic work relatively easy are given more challenging tasks, so they attain high standards. Those who struggle with their work, are given somewhat easier tasks that are nonetheless demanding for them personally, and progress well at their own rates. Teachers make good use of support staff to help pupils with the work, particularly those who find some tasks difficult. As a result, many pupils who would otherwise lag behind are enabled to keep up with their classmates and achieve the nationally expected standards. Support staff are usually well briefed, and contribute very effectively to learning in the lessons. They contribute particularly effectively to the learning of pupils with special educational needs, who consequently make good progress in their individual education plans.
21. Teachers have established clear expectations and routines for lessons, and little time is wasted. Pupils come into lessons on time, settle quickly, and spend their time learning. Lessons are thoroughly prepared, are taught at a good pace, and good use is made of available resources. All this helps to gain pupils' interest and enthusiasm, so they concentrate well and work hard. Planning is good, and lessons are well structured to build on pupils' previous experiences and understanding. Good use is made of questioning to recap on previous work, so pupils recall what they have learned already, and then make good progress in the next stage of learning.
22. The teaching of ICT in the computer suite is done well across the school, and this is helping pupils to develop good skills in the subject. Some good use is made of ICT to support work in other subjects. However, teachers do not always identify when ICT could be used effectively to support work in other lessons, and pupils sometimes miss out on opportunities to practise their ICT skills while enhancing their understanding of another subject.
23. In the lessons that were only satisfactory, sometimes the pace was a little slow, or pupils spent too long sitting on the carpet listening, rather than becoming actively involved. In such cases, their concentration tended to lapse at times, slowing their progress. Very occasionally, there was insufficient thought given to the role of the support staff, who then spent parts of the lesson sitting and watching, rather than being actively involved in pupils' learning. In some lessons, the resources available were limited, and made it difficult for the teacher to really engage pupils'

enthusiasm. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher had attempted a different way of grouping pupils, which was not successful, and pupils' behaviour and concentration were unsatisfactory.

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

24. The curriculum covers the Foundation Stage for pupils in their early years and the revised National Curriculum in full. All statutory requirements are met. The curriculum is well planned and this ensures that an appropriate amount of time is spent on each subject.
25. The quality of the curriculum for pupils in the Reception classes (the Foundation Stage), is good. Curriculum opportunities are planned to move children across into national curriculum work by the time they are five.
26. For older pupils, good policies and schemes of work are in place for the different subjects. These enable the progressive and systematic development of knowledge and skills in each area of the curriculum. No curriculum area is taught in isolation; rather common themes are highlighted each term for each year group. This enables the knowledge and skills from the literacy and numeracy strategies to support work in lessons such as history, geography, science and religious education. Conversely, stories from religious education or history, as well as map work from the local environment in geography, are used in literacy lessons. Numeracy and mathematics support work in geography, history and art and design. However, clearer strategies could be established to enable ICT to support other subjects of the curriculum more systematically.
27. The strategies for teaching literacy skills are good while those for teaching numeracy are very good. Teachers provide pupils with a good range of activities that are planned to be enjoyed, to add to their knowledge and skills and to challenge them to learn. The headteacher has a good overview of the whole curriculum. Subject co-ordinators offer specialist advice to their teaching colleagues and supporting adults. When they attend courses they share information with their colleagues. Although there is no monitoring of lessons within classes by most subject co-ordinators, they do keep track of plans and match these to the scheme of work. The overall plan for the curriculum is regularly reviewed and updated.
28. Educational visits, including residential opportunities, contribute to curriculum knowledge and understanding as well as to the development of pupils' social skills and independence. There is a full range of sports and arts activities extra to the curriculum outside the school hours. Pupils have the opportunity to be members of the school's hockey, football and other sports teams, attend the drama and dance groups or join the gardening club, to name just a few. The school also involves pupils in an annual pantomime and regular concerts for parents and community members. The whole school makes an annual visit to the pantomime in the nearby town of Redditch. The school makes sure that all pupils are fully included in all activities, and have equality of access and opportunity regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability. A careful monitoring of each pupil's progress across the curriculum over time, especially in formal assessments of progress, highlights any areas of concern.
29. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support to access the full curriculum. Provision is good, and they make good progress towards their individual targets. Provision has improved since the previous inspection. Although the number of pupils with special needs at the school is low in comparison to other schools, the support that they receive is good and is helping them to achieve well. Support is targeted towards literacy and numeracy lessons, so that specific help is available, particularly during independent work times. This strategy is effective in helping to raise confidence and self-esteem and to promote full inclusion. Some good, specific groups have been established to enable pupils with identified difficulties, such as dyspraxia, to benefit from expert help and guidance. Good resources are used well across the school to ensure that the content of lessons is accessible to all.
30. The arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education are good. A well-planned and structured scheme develops pupils' understanding that they can help support and resolve problems

and conflicts. A regular 'circle time' session within the class enables pupils to share concerns and contribute to a feeling of being a member of a community. Sex education and the development of an awareness of the misuse of drugs and medicines prepare pupils well for future life. This work is reinforced under the science policy.

31. The school has good relationships with nearby schools, nurseries and pre-school playgroups. Good relationships with the middle school on the same site ensure that pupils have access to a continuous and progressive curriculum. Records of pupils' progress and achievements are shared and these ensure a smooth transfer for pupils when they are nine years old.
32. There is a good contribution from the community to pupils' learning. Parents lend resources to support work in subjects such as history. The Friends' Association raises money for specific projects and supports social events, as well as providing parental support to accompany pupils on visits and with sporting and other community events. The local police, fire, first aid and medical services come to the school to undertake health checks and contribute to personal development programmes as necessary. Sporting links include Birmingham City Football Club and the Bromsgrove Sports Development Council, which help pupils to improve their sporting skills and encourages a healthy interest in physical education.
33. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, and daily assemblies meet the requirement for collective worship. Although ways of offering pupils spiritual experiences are not identified or planned through subjects, there are occasions when these occur across the curriculum, for example in music and literature. Work in religious education helps pupils to recognise the place and the power of religious belief in human life. They learn about faiths that may be new to them and are shown the importance of respect for other faiths and cultures.
34. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is good. There is a clear school behavioural code shared with parents, which most pupils understand and observe. This is supported by class rules in every classroom. Pupils work hard to receive certificates for positive attitudes and good behaviour, which are presented to them at the achievement assembly. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and, in "circle time", they have good opportunities to discuss moral issues and choices. They also benefit from effective moral teaching in assembly where, for example, they learn about using their senses to be kind and caring towards others. In another assembly, pupils discussed the importance of listening carefully. Staff in the school provide good role models and they have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response.
35. The social development of pupils is also good. There are many examples of pupils working together, sharing and helping each other. They are encouraged to work in pairs and small groups, and to negotiate with each other in many practical sessions. It is particularly evident in subjects such as information and communication technology, where they share systems well, and in physical education where they often work in pairs. Pupils are reminded about their social responsibilities as they raise money for different charities such as the NSPCC and Water Aid. The extra-curricular provision in the school is very strong and plays a major role in the high standards of social skills achieved by pupils.
36. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Drama and literature enrich pupils' lives. They enjoy a wide variety of visits from craftspeople, such as the ceramicist who visited recently, and take part in visiting drama and poetry workshops. Pupils learn about world faiths in religious education and develop a growing awareness of how some of the festivals are an essential element of many different religions and cultures. For example, in a Year 4 art lesson, having previously learnt about Hindu weddings, they had the experience of having Mehnedi patterns painted onto their hands. This gave the pupils the opportunity to reflect on the traditions and beliefs of another of the cultures in modern British society. The school is aware that such opportunities are relatively few, and is working towards extending and improving them. This should remedy the relative weakness in preparing pupils for life in a multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Overall, the school has satisfactory arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils. The day-to-day personal support and guidance provided for pupils is good, especially in relation to monitoring and promoting good behaviour and attendance. Pupils' academic progress and personal development are monitored well. However, there are some weaknesses. For example, formal risk assessment, which is a statutory responsibility of the governing body, has not been carried out. The current documentation does not show a full and accurate awareness of all potential risks to pupils' safety. Safety checks of portable electric equipment are long overdue. The school is now aware of these concerns and has plans to take appropriate action to resolve them as a matter of urgency. There are effective procedures to report health and safety concerns and to record any remedial action taken.
38. The school also has very good procedures for child protection and all staff are aware of their responsibilities and duties if they feel a child is at risk. This was an issue at the previous inspection, which the school has put right. Fire drills are carried out regularly. First aid procedures are implemented very well and many staff have received first aid training. There is a suitable medical room and effective arrangements to inform parents about illness or accidents at school that may require further monitoring. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and the school has enlisted with the "Fruit for schools" scheme and is also encouraging parents to provide healthy snacks for their children. Procedures for overseeing and promoting regular attendance are good and this is reflected in the above average levels of attendance. The computerised system the school uses provides attendance and tracking information quickly and effectively.
39. Procedures for helping children to settle in the reception class are very good; consequently, children settle quickly and display a good level of confidence. An appropriate programme is in place to ease pupils' transfer to the next stage of their education. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. The school's policy is based on a positive ethos and recognition that pupils need to care for themselves and each other. A suitable range of sanctions and rewards is available to back this up. The schools' values embrace inclusion. For example, by the way it manages a small number of pupils who have behaviour problems. Lunchtime routines are well established and midday supervisors, who have received training to undertake this role, work effectively to ensure that the lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion. Teachers and other staff are sensitive to pupils' needs and monitor their personal development satisfactorily.
40. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are good, and are having a positive impact on raising standards. They have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Procedures are good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, where they are used well to plan and teach the next stage of learning. In the non-core subjects, assessment procedures are developing appropriately. Much evidence is gathered through informal observations in classrooms within the non-core subjects. However, subject action plans indicate that the development of more formal procedures has rightly been identified for improvement.
41. Assessment of children as they enter the reception classes is good and forms the basis of evidence for future target setting. Nationally recognised tests are taken annually to ensure that each pupil reaches their full potential. The results of these tests are analysed in detail so that any difficulties are quickly identified and dealt with. The tracking of pupils' academic performance in this way, as they move through the school, is a major strength of the provision. It enables the school to monitor each pupil's progress in the core subjects, and to set individual targets.
42. Procedures for the assessment and identification of pupils' special educational needs are good. Systems are used effectively to identify difficulties and provide support and guidance where

needed. Small steps to success are identified and these help pupils to achieve their targets. Good links with parents ensure that they are fully involved in this process.

43. The effective co-ordination and management of assessment across the school is a strength that is having a significant impact in the development of new procedures and in the monitoring of standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school has a good partnership with parents, as at the time of the last inspection. The vast majority of parents have positive views of the school. They are especially approving of the teaching their children receive. Nearly all parents feel the school expects their children to work hard and do their best, that children's behaviour is good and their children are making good progress. In contrast, however, a small but significant minority have concerns. For example, about the information on their children's progress, how closely the school works with parents and with homework. The inspection team agrees with the positive comments made. They consider that parents are kept well informed about their children's progress, that the school works well with parents, and that the range of homework is satisfactory.
45. The school seeks parents' views on aspects of its work. For example, governors organised a survey of parental opinion. Questions dealt with such matters as the taught curriculum, communication, behaviour in school and the range of activities outside lessons. Parents responded very positively.
46. Parents are provided with good quality information about the school through the school brochure, regular newsletters and general correspondence that give a clear overview of the school and cover all activities and requirements of the school year. There is also an open day when parents have an opportunity to observe their children in the classroom. A particularly good feature of the school communications is that parents are given advance information on topics and programmes of work in all areas of the curriculum, an innovation since the last inspection. Also, termly consultation meetings are held with parents when children's individual targets are shared and evaluated. This information gives parents an opportunity to support their children's learning at home in a practical way. The governors' annual report contains useful information about the work of the school and the governing body. However, it does not meet statutory requirements. There are several omissions from this important document. For example, it does not mention the support provided by outside agencies, how the special educational needs budget is spent and the level of success of its special needs policy. Pupils' annual reports are of good quality. They make clear what children know, understand and can do, show targets for improvement and are clearly personal and individual to each child.
47. The contribution of parents to their children's learning at school and at home is good. Parents are actively encouraged to help in school and a small number do so productively on a regular basis. They give time to activities such as helping in the school library, or supporting swimming and sports fixtures. Pupils' reading diaries are used effectively to encourage reading at home and also as a means of communication between home and school. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved. Additionally, the school values the strong and effective support provided by the parent teacher association, which organises a wide range of social and fund-raising events. This is a very positive feature of the relationship between parents and the school and the very substantial monies raised make a valuable contribution to school resources and benefit the pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The headteacher provides very strong leadership to the school and gives it clear educational direction. This has been of enormous benefit during the last two years, when there have been substantial changes in staffing. The head has ensured that both new and long-serving members of staff have quickly become an effective team, who work together very well. Despite the many changes, standards have been improved, the quality of teaching is good, and the positive ethos of the school has been maintained. The quality of leadership from other key staff is also good. The deputy provides good support to the headteacher, and subject co-ordinators, most of whom are new to their posts, are providing good support to colleagues, and setting clear directions for the

development of their subjects. Similar good leadership is provided in the foundation stage and for special educational needs.

49. The school is well managed. Good systems ensure that the school runs effectively on a day-to-day basis. The school monitors its overall progress well through tracking the results of national tests for pupils aged seven, as well as through a variety of other standardised tests for older pupils. As a result, it is good at identifying in general terms where improvements need to be made, and how to address them. The monitoring of teaching and standards in more detail has weaknesses. This was a key issue at the time of the last inspection, and the school had addressed it well, with systems established to involve subject co-ordinators in checking up on progress in their subjects. However, with the major staffing changes over the last two years, many of these systems have lapsed. The school has identified this as a major priority for its development over the next year. Currently, most subject co-ordinators have had little opportunity to check up on the standards of work or quality of teaching in classes across the school. As a result, some are unsure about some aspects of the work in their subject, or of the details of its strengths and weaknesses across the school.
50. The quality of teaching has been maintained and improved since the previous inspection through positive support and some useful monitoring by the headteacher and by the previous deputy. Performance management is firmly established in the school and good progress is being made, considering all the staffing changes. Objectives for teachers rightly include both school priorities and priorities related to each teacher's personal, professional development. Systems for the induction of new staff are very effective, as seen in the way the many teachers who have started in school recently are fully integrated into the effective team.
51. A clear focus on standards has enabled them to rise, and the new staff have all taken on board this emphasis in their own work. The key issues for improvement from the last inspection have all been addressed successfully, with the exception of the hiatus in subject leaders' monitoring arrangements outlined above.
52. The governing body provides good support to the school and has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, based on good systems. The system of committees is effective in gathering relevant information and in feeding it back to the governing body as a whole. The governing body acts appropriately as a "critical friend" to the school, and contributes well to its overall direction. Governors generally fulfil their responsibilities well, but there are two particular weaknesses. Formal risk assessment procedures are not fully established, and the governors' report to parents has missed out a number of statutory requirements.
53. The aspect of special educational needs is well led and organised, and there is a good range of expertise within the school. The special needs policy meets the requirements of the new Code of Practice and there are good links established with parents, governors and the local education authority.
54. The accommodation is satisfactory. Improvements since the last inspection include refurbishing toilets, and the provision of a computer suite, which enables teachers to teach to whole classes at a time. The site manager and cleaning staff maintain a clean environment. The school is able to share the adjoining field with the middle school for games and sport.
55. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall. Some good resources are available in English, where the recent National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on provision. There are also some good music resources available, which enable all pupils to take part fully in practical musical activities. Resources are satisfactory in all other subjects, but in art and design, design and technology and religious education, they are relatively limited and a broader range would enable teachers to prepare more interesting and exciting work. Loans from local centres enhance provision in many subjects and teachers make the best use of the resources that are available. The

external area of the school is used well to support learning. Resources have improved since the previous inspection, when they were just adequate. Resources to support pupils with special educational needs are good, with particular strengths in early literacy games and activities.

56. Financial management is good, and spending is clearly targeted on the school's education priorities. The recent heavy spending on the computer suite and on the increased numbers of support assistants has been well judged. Both initiatives are working well in practice, and are contributing significantly to raising pupils' standards. The relatively high contingency fund is prudent in view of the predicted fall in pupil numbers in the short term, due to demographic factors. The money available should enable the school to maintain its current staffing levels and to maintain stability in the curriculum by keeping single aged classes during the next two or three years, when pupils' numbers are expected to temporarily decline. The principles of "best value" are applied well to ensure that good use is made of all the school's resources in the broadest sense. In view of the good and improving standards, pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour, the good teaching and strong leadership and management, and the broadly average spending per pupil, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve on the current good provision the school should

- (1) Improve the arrangements for curriculum leaders to monitor their subjects (Paragraph Nos. 49. 80. 85. 98. 102. 105. 111. 116. 121. 127) (as in the school's current plans) by
 - a. Devising systems for them to check up on the standards of work in the different classes.
 - b. Providing opportunities, as money and time permit, for them to observe examples of teaching in other classes.
 - c. Recording the results of a and b above, and feeding the information gained back to their colleagues.

- (2) Improve the planning for the use of ICT in the full range of subjects (Paragraph Nos. 22. 26. 110) by
 - a. Enabling the ICT co-ordinator to work together with other subject co-ordinators to establish in detail how ICT could best be used to support work in each age group.
 - b. Providing training for staff as needed.
 - c. Auditing the resources available for ICT in each subject, and making up any identified shortfalls.

The governors might also wish to consider the following more minor issues for inclusion in their development plan.

1. Ensure that the governors' report to parents meets statutory requirements, and that effective, formal risk assessment procedures are put in place. (Paragraph Nos. 37. 46. 52)

2. Improve the quality and range of resources in DT, RE and PE, and improve provision for outdoor play for children in the reception class. (Paragraph Nos. 55. 65. 98. 122. 126)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	26	18	1	0	0
Percentage	2	19	46	31	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	266
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	29

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	24	29	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	24
	Girls	28	28	28
	Total	52	52	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (96)	98 (95)	98 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	24	21
	Girls	28	27	27
	Total	50	51	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (95)	96 (96)	91 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	248	1	
White – Irish			
White – any other White background	4		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1		
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	3		
No ethnic group recorded	9		

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 – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.75
Average class size	26.6

Education support staff: YR– Y4

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	223

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2
	£
Total income	541 984
Total expenditure	516 897
Expenditure per pupil	1 833
Balance brought forward from previous year	55 013
Balance carried forward to next year	80 100

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	266
Number of questionnaires returned	69

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	35	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	45	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	51	1	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	49	13	1	3
The teaching is good.	49	49	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	48	19	1	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	26	3	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	39	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	28	52	14	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	33	43	10	3	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	51	3	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	41	9	3	6

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

57. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (in the reception classes) is good, and provides a good start to their school lives. The good provision has been maintained since the previous inspection. This is because of consistently good teaching in all areas of learning, and an effective curriculum, which successfully meets the needs of the children. Learning is enriched by the high staffing levels and team approach, which enables children to have lots of individual and small-group teaching.
58. On entry to the reception classes, the majority of children achieve just above the expected levels of attainment in all areas of learning, except in physical development, where standards are in line with expectations. When they enter Year 1, children are consistently above average in almost all areas of learning, showing good progress during their reception year. Good provision is made for all aspects of learning, except for physical development and outdoor exploration and play, which are satisfactory. The lack of appropriate outdoor climbing apparatus or covered play space, are weaknesses that inhibit higher standards in these areas and impact on children's opportunities for independence and confidence.
59. Good assessment procedures are well used to identify individual strengths and weaknesses and to enable predictions about future achievements to be made. All children, regardless of their ethnic origin, gender or ability, achieve well during their time in reception.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Provision for personal, social and emotional development is good. Relationships within the reception classes are very positive and staff seek every possible opportunity to praise and support the children. Planned activities encourage independence in learning. Children are required to organise themselves, for example, as they build with construction toys and play in the 'hospital'. High staffing levels are well used to support more vulnerable children and ensure all are fully included and make friends. Good links with parents, and time to talk to children, ensure that any problems are quickly solved. Children's independence of movement is inhibited by the lack of freedom to choose outdoor play due to weaknesses in the accommodation. This reduces children's personal autonomy and leads to some high dependency by a few. Role play helps children to explore their own culture and that of others. Multi-cultural dressing up clothes help children to appreciate the differences in the world around them. Effective opportunities to work in small groups and in twos help children to form constructive friendships and learn to support each other. For example, in the hall, children were observed co-operating in a team to put apparatus out sensibly and safely.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Provision for communication, language and literacy is good. Children benefit from the use of elements of the National Literacy Strategy, which is helping to raise standards. For example, in one lesson, children were able to explain the format of books clearly. They identified the cover, title, author and illustrator, and showed good understanding that print is read from left to right. They communicate well with peers and adults, using grammatically accurate sentences and taking turns well in discussion. Many can identify a range of initial sounds and are beginning to build unknown words and read simple text. They benefit from good, structured teaching which encourages them to look at books, share information and to record their own ideas. Children in both classes were observed playing in a 'hospital'. They made good use of real resources as they took on the various roles of doctor, nurse or patient. Good negotiating skills were observed as they took turns, and early emergent writing was seen as they wrote 'prescriptions' and made

'appointments', both in writing and on the 'telephone'. The vast majority of children can recognise their own name, and many children were observed reading the names of others accurately.

Mathematical development

62. Provision for mathematical development is good and children make good progress in their numeracy lessons. This is because of good, and sometimes very good teaching, which ensures that very good use is made of resources and staff to foster clear understanding of numbers. Children achieve high standards as they count to 10 and beyond, and recognise many numerals. They use language well to support mathematics. For example, they describe objects as 'bigger', 'smaller', 'square' and 'cuboid'. Lessons are brisk and ensure that children undertake a wide range of practical numeracy tasks. For example, in one lesson, they were observed enjoying a fishing game in which they had to count the spots on the fish that they caught. In another, they counted toy animals and matched them to the correct number of spots. They were able to recognise groups of objects to 5, and count on from 10. Staff were observed supporting children very well. For example, in one lesson where children were making sausages out of play-dough, the teaching assistant asked if they could make "one more" and "how many?" sausages they had made.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. Provision for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good. The good teaching that children receive helps to develop their enquiry skills and a sense of wonder in their learning. For example, while exploring the feel and texture of a range of materials, the teacher carefully built the excitement and expectations of children as objects were passed around the group, harnessing their interest in learning about wood, metal and fabric. Many exciting activities, based on first-hand experiences, are planned. Children enjoy using computers to play games and find answers. Several children were seen making pictures and selecting an answer by using the mouse to make a choice. They were learning to solve simple problems by trying to find out how to delete or 'rub out' their drawings. Good role-play activities help children to develop understanding of their environment. During the inspection, the 'hospital' caused great excitement and children showed good understanding of the different roles, acting them out with precision.

Creative development

64. Provision for creative development is good. Carefully planned sessions focus on developing a range of creative and linguistic skills. Children listen very well to music and comment in a mature way about how the music makes them feel. They were able to differentiate between two pieces of music, identifying which one made them feel happy and which one made them feel sad. Children use brushes and sponges well to paint a surface and enjoy using different techniques to draw and create pictures. They develop their understanding of the 'senses' through creative activities. During the inspection, they were learning about the sense of touch, and were involved in a good range of tactile experiences. They were able to describe objects as 'rough', 'smooth' and 'squashy', and enjoyed moving their hands in paint to create a mono-print.

Physical development

65. Provision for physical development is satisfactory overall, and enables children to gain confidence and use a range of equipment. Fine motor skills are fostered through an appropriate range of small apparatus which children learn to manipulate and control. For example, children were observed building with small construction resources, using their fingers to paint faces during a printing activity, and consistently writing and drawing and using simple tools. They learn to cut with scissors and use sponges and brushes to paint with. Gross motor skills are developed well during hall sessions, where children were observed co-operating with each other to put apparatus out and learning to improve their balancing and rolling skills by moving in a range of ways on the equipment. They enjoyed crawling through a tunnel, jumping off a bench and into hoops, and

rolling on mats. The lack of an appropriate outdoor play area and apparatus inhibits the children's ability to move spontaneously between indoor and outdoor environments. This reduces the amount of time in which they can improve their control and co-ordination. The lack of an outdoor climbing frame also restricts standards and freedom of large-scale movement. Children's confidence in physical movement is weakened because of these restrictions. For example, they seemed hesitant as they jumped off benches in the hall, lacking the confidence to 'have a go' spontaneously.

ENGLISH

66. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were in line with national expectations in reading and below in writing for seven and nine year-olds. The findings of this inspection show that there has been a good improvement in reading and very good improvement in writing. Now standards are above those expected nationally for seven and nine year olds overall. There has been a good improvement in pupils' listening skills, which are now good. Speaking skills are as expected for their ages and abilities. The school has worked hard to improve standards in each area and progress is good. The school is making good use of the national literacy strategy. Extra opportunities are provided for individual and group reading, and for spelling and handwriting practice. These, together with national initiatives such as 'early literacy' and 'additional literacy' support projects, are used carefully to help pupils achieve higher standards. Pupils are challenged with interesting and thought-provoking work, especially higher-attaining pupils.
67. Throughout the school, pupils' listening skills are good and their speaking skills are improving. All pupils, including those who learn more quickly and those who have special educational needs, demonstrate a wider range of skills than at the time of the last inspection. This is because of the school's effective use of discussions ("circle time") in different subjects as well as in personal, social and health education work. Pupils acquire a wide vocabulary through listening to and speaking about a range of issues. They listen to stories as a stimulus for discussions. In small groups or pairs they agree or disagree with each other and give reasons for their points of view. Along the way, pupils learn to use the question to provide part of the answer, consider others' opinions and present a different point of view without arguing. Pupils gain confidence in speaking to a large group when they take part in assemblies, concerts and pantomimes for parents and friends. Most lessons end with a period of reflection when pupils explain what they have done and learned. These show pupils are becoming increasingly aware of their listeners' needs as well as of themselves as speakers.
68. Across the school, standards in reading are good. Pupils make good progress in using their knowledge of sounds and letter patterns to decipher words. They understand the difference between 'author' and 'illustrator'. Older pupils confidently uses content and index pages, alphabetical order and scanning and skimming techniques in other subjects when researching from non-fiction books. Higher attaining pupils express their opinions about key characters and major events in stories and use dictionaries and thesauruses with confidence. When led by teachers to read together in the literacy hour, pupils read with expression, though the less-confident can forget to do so when they read aloud at other times. Higher attaining pupils read in a lively and intelligent way, with fluency and expression. Most read accurately and their reading includes non-fiction, play scripts and contemporary children's literature. They look for rhyming words, examine the way punctuation is used and talk confidently about the characters and the plot. Lower-attaining pupils gain confidence and enthusiasm for reading through careful help from adults. All pupils are encouraged to take books home so parents can help their children to improve. No difference in the performance of boys and girls was noted during the inspection. The school has a good range of reading materials, including a structured reading scheme and a range of group reading texts to enable pupils to experience the enjoyment of reading with others. The non-fiction library is new and encourages the development of pupils' independent research skills. Teachers keep detailed records of pupils developing reading skills.

69. Standards in writing are above those expected nationally. Pupils write well in a range of styles and in response to different stimuli as a result of the national literacy strategy. For example, they write letters, stories, instructions and reports. Good opportunities also occur during the week for pupils to practise spelling patterns and handwriting skills in separate sessions. However, few opportunities are provided for pupils to compare and review what each of them has written, to identify and build on good practice. By the time they are seven, pupils use full stops and capital letters accurately to construct sentences. The spelling of commonly used words is correct and pupils have a good grasp of letter sounds. Higher-attaining pupils write imaginative stories and poems and develop their ideas logically. Older pupils, in their story writing, use inverted commas correctly for speech and use commas to shape increasingly complex sentences. A good range of punctuation, including exclamation marks, capital letters, question marks, ellipsis and dashes, add emphasis to their writing. Factual writing is organised well, using numbers and bullet points. Although pupils use their knowledge of sounds effectively, to read and write independently, the development of handwriting and presentation skills needs further improvement.
70. Literacy gives satisfactory support to other curriculum areas and is supported by them in turn. In subjects such as religious education, history and geography, pupils learn the appropriate and specific vocabulary. For instance, when looking at instructional words, pupils in Year 4 use a map of the local area from their geography work to navigate a stranger round the village - to the Church, hotel, shop and post box. In design and technology pupils make lists, write instructions and label diagrams and in science they record their observations and investigations.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with examples of very good teaching seen, especially for older pupils. Because of effective professional training in the National Literacy Strategy, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the content of the daily literacy session. They carefully manage learning through well-structured lessons. Teachers share lesson objectives (what they intend pupils should learn) with the class and use review time at the end to check that pupils know what they have learned. Teachers work effectively with pupils, listen carefully to them and help them order their ideas. As a result pupils make good gains in learning. Teachers effectively question pupils both to challenge their thinking and to assess what they know and understand. Lesson planning is clear and uses the format of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers provide good visual support for pupils by displaying lists of frequently used words to reinforce spelling and reading. In the literacy hour teachers choose interesting texts, many from different subjects including religious education and history. These stimulate pupils' interest, impacting positively on their response to literature and their own creative writing. Teachers use effectively assessments of pupils' work and whole class progress to help plan future lessons. Marking of pupils' work usually tells pupils what they have done well and provides clear guidelines on how they can improve their performance. Teachers make sound use of reading and spellings as homework to reinforce and extend pupils' learning.
72. Because of the good teaching, pupils enjoy lessons and take part with confidence. Most behave well, respond positively to teachers and have good relationships with adults and each other. Pupils work hard, concentrate well, and put up their hands before answering questions. Pupils are very interested in their literacy work, they explain what they have to do and work hard to complete tasks. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the good quality of provision made for them and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
73. English is well led and is in a good position to continue to improve. The previous and current subject co-ordinators have worked hard to raise standards, especially in listening and writing across the school. The co-ordinator effectively monitors the quality of teaching and learning in classes. She is able to lead staff training as a result of such monitoring. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are effective. The monitoring of pupils' progress through the school and the setting of individual targets for improvement are having a positive impact on standards. Resources for English are good, with many new group reading books and information texts purchased to enrich the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

74. Standards in mathematics are above expectations by the time pupils are seven, and well above expectations when they are nine. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were average. Results of national assessments at age seven, and standardised assessments administered by the school for older pupils, confirm these improved standards.

75. Pupils who have just started in Year 1 already are developing a good understanding of addition, and about two thirds can quickly recall addition facts to ten to help them solve problems. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils can work out fractions of whole numbers, can classify shapes by their properties, and work confidently on whole number problems involving multiplication and division. Pupils currently at the start of Year 2 showed that about a half are confident in applying their number skills to problems involving timetables, while others can tackle similar work with suitable support from the teacher or a classroom assistant.
76. By the end of Year 4, work in pupils' books shows that almost all could work out problems with division, including remainders, could add and subtract decimals to two places, all to a better standard than is usually found with pupils of this age. The current pupils in Year 4 have made a good start on measuring the perimeters of simple shapes, and in calculating their areas. The vast majority did this accurately and quickly, after only one or two lessons, but about a quarter of pupils were working much more slowly, or needed some support from adults to be consistently accurate. Higher attaining pupils (about a quarter of the class) quickly identified the pattern in the relationship between perimeter and area in "L" shapes they were studying. This work is at the standard expected of average pupils in Year 6.
77. In all classes, pupils showed good mental arithmetic skills in the "mental warm-up" sessions of maths lessons. These are very well taught by the teachers, using a variety of interesting approaches such as the "Number Fairy", who daily makes off with parts of the number line in Year 1. In these sessions, the interesting work and devices to involve all pupils (such as holding up their answers to questions on small white-boards), along with the good pace and lively presentation from the teacher, ensure that progress is usually very good. Pupils apply their good mental skills effectively in other parts of the lesson, and this supports the good progress they make in all aspects of mathematics.
78. Teaching is good throughout the school, and there are examples of very good teaching at each key stage. As a result, learning is good, pupils are interested in their work, try hard and are keen to succeed. The school has made good use of the national numeracy strategy to help raise standards. The major improvement has been in the careful match of work to the needs of different groups and individuals. This was a weakness in many lessons at the time of the last inspection, when pupils almost always did the same work, which was too hard for some, and lacked challenge for others. This situation is now completely reversed. Teachers plan carefully for pupils of different abilities, making good use of the school's improved assessment procedures. Pupils who find mathematics difficult are given correspondingly easier work, so they make good progress at their own level. Good use is made of the skilled classroom assistants to help pupils with their work, particularly those who struggle or who have special educational needs. Suitably challenging work is given to higher attainers, who respond to this positively, working hard and taking a pride in their accomplishments. This aspect of the work is the major reason that all pupils, regardless of ability, gender or ethnic background, achieve well in maths throughout the school.
79. Other strengths in teaching include the good management of pupils, based on very good relationships, clear expectations, and a brisk pace to lessons. In most lessons, when pupils are working in different groups, teachers monitor the progress of individuals well, checking up on their progress, correcting any misconceptions, and offering help and advice where needed. Occasionally, this is not done thoroughly enough, for example when the teacher spends almost all her time working with a particular group. At such times, some groups falter in their attention, or are slow to correct mistakes. Progress for these pupils is only satisfactory in this part of the lesson, and this means that a lesson that is otherwise very good, is only good overall.
80. The co-ordinator, although new to the school, is already providing good leadership to colleagues. She has set out an ambitious plan for the development of the subject during the current year, including plans for checking up on the standards and teaching in different classes; she has so far had little opportunity for this. She has monitored planning by her colleagues, has correctly

identified its strengths in the preparation of different work for different groups, as well as some areas for improvement. Good systems are in place to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, and assessment systems are good. Management of the subject has clearly been good in the past, to give the good standards currently obtained, and is continuing to be so under the skilled guidance of the new co-ordinator.

SCIENCE

81. In recent years attainment has been good in science and this is confirmed from the inspection evidence, which shows that standards of work in the current Year 2 and year 4 classes are above average. However, in 2002 results of teacher assessments for seven-year-olds were only average. The school was aware of this dip, which it attributes to some inaccuracies in assessment, and has put strategies in place to remedy this. Almost all pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the aspects of science they have covered, and a number of higher attaining pupils show very good levels of understanding. The small number of pupils who have special educational needs are given good support and make good progress in relation to their ability.
82. The experimental and testing aspect of the subject is well developed across the school and all pupils develop their investigative skills well. In Year 2, pupils understand the principle of a fair test and are able to predict the possible outcomes of an experiment, for example when comparing differences between each other's hand-spans. In a lesson observed on fair testing, the learning was good for all pupils because the teacher had asked them to think for themselves. Pupils in Year 3 extend this good work, for example by planning a fair test for finding out the best material for making an umbrella. Pupils in Year 4 were able to investigate a question on what happens to the size of two muscles when relaxed and contracted. They were able to use appropriate equipment.
83. Teaching in science is good overall. Teachers are well prepared and use their own subject knowledge to enthuse their pupils. Work is well matched to the differing ages and abilities of pupils so that they all have the chance to achieve. Consequently, attitudes to science work are good throughout the school. Pupils are interested and enthusiastic in their approach to experiments, and work well together when required to do so. They take turns fairly and share resources so that most lessons proceed in a workmanlike and worthwhile manner. Pupils work hard and achieve well, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability.
84. Science is used in conjunction with other subjects to develop and extend learning. Skills in reading and writing and mathematics are used and benefit from work in science. For example, in Year 4 pupils measured their biceps and calf muscles when relaxed and contracted, and recorded their results accurately, using appropriate charts. However, there is little evidence of ICT being used in the classroom to help pupils develop their understanding of science or their research skills. Pupils with special educational needs are always well-supported in class and make good progress in relation to their needs. An examination of pupils' books and displays around the school shows that pupils cover a good range of work, but marking throughout the school seldom indicates to pupils how they could improve.
85. Teachers assess achievement at the end of each module of work and this provides a good record of pupils' progress. The process of agreeing levels for pupils' attainment is now being developed, but relatively little attention is given to pupils' progress in the development of scientific skills, as opposed to their specific scientific knowledge. The newly appointed co-ordinators have reviewed the policy and assessment procedures, and are considering how they could be improved. However, they do not yet have clear information about what is going on in each year group, either through the monitoring of pupils' work or from lesson observations. Management of the subject is currently satisfactory. While resources for the subject are broadly satisfactory, improvements

could enable teachers to plan a more interesting range of work for pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

86. The sound standards in art identified in the last inspection have been maintained. Throughout the school all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. At the end of Year 2 and when the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, standards of work are in line with those expected nationally. The work seen across the school shows good coverage of two-dimensional media and techniques. During the inspection there was less evidence of three-dimensional work, although this is represented adequately in photographs of last year's work, and in teachers' planning.
87. During Key Stage One, pupils experience a wide variety of two-dimensional work. In a Year 1 class, good observational skills were seen in pupils' self-portraits. Using mirrors and a variety of media pupils were able to place their main features accurately, using pen and charcoal to show shading. The teacher was careful to explain aspects of technique to the class. Pupils also looked at the artist Van Gogh and his self-portrait and discussed his use of colour, features and mood. Pupils show good control of drawing implements. They are encouraged to look closely at their work and to use their imagination creatively. In this way pupils in Year 2, after looking at different illustrators, used their imagination and experience to plan their own storyboards, in groups.
88. The standard of pupils' finished products is frequently good and work is mounted carefully and displayed with pride. This was evident in a Year 2 classroom, where pupils had recorded first hand observations outside their school both in their drawing and using a digital camera.
89. At Key Stage Two, pupils continue to develop their skills and extend their knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Year 4 are knowledgeable about the work of William Morris, and his designs for tiles, curtains, furniture and wallpaper. They drew their own interesting designs, based on the artist's technique. However, when they made tiles they found their designs difficult to execute. They found manipulating the clay difficult especially when making the fine details.
90. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to art. They say they enjoy this subject and look forward to lessons. In the lessons seen pupils were very enthusiastic about their work and eager to participate in practical activities. Individual lessons are well planned. The teaching programme is planned appropriately to cover all the elements in the curriculum but the results are sometimes disappointing, particularly in some sketch-books, which are not always used regularly or effectively. Conversely, some good use of sketches is made. The teacher in a Year 2 class, for example, used the pupils' mistakes well to further develop their ideas and skills.
91. The subject is often linked to other subjects such as history, geography and religious education. For example, in Year 3 pupils created "Roman" patterns using fabric crayons. As part of an "Arts Week" a ceramicist visited the school and worked with pupils on making clay tiles. They enjoyed this work and produced a good quality mural based on local themes.
92. The recently appointed co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management. She has a clear vision of where she wants the school to go in art and has already begun to bring about improvements. The art club, recently started, is well attended and the standard of work they produce is good. The school has adopted national guidelines to support teachers' planning, but monitoring of the subject and discussion with teachers shows that this needs more refinement. It does not yet ensure the systematic and progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding, particularly in the use of textiles. Few examples were seen of the study of art and craft from other than Western cultures, and this is a weakness.
93. Resources are adequate. The school is spending extra money on the subject this year to enable the purchase of a wider and more exciting range of materials.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Design and technology (DT) is taught in “blocks”, alternating on a half-termly basis with art lessons. No DT lessons were observed during the inspection, as no classes undertake the subject until the second half of the term. Evidence was limited, but photographs of work from last year, teachers’ planning, and discussion with pupils (both in the current Year 4 and from last year’s) indicates that standards across the school are in line with expectations in a range of work. This is similar to the situation at the last inspection.
95. The work in photographs included designs made from a variety of materials including clay, textiles, wood, food, and card, all used appropriately across the school. The finished products were of a satisfactory standard overall, and often included a good deal of individuality in the designs. Although there are some satisfactory Lego models of a park on display in the current Year 2, there was little evidence of this being followed up to any extent by older pupils using different construction kits for their designs. Other current work on display included ceramic work done to a good standard with a visiting artist during art week, and papier-mache “fruit” in Year 1.
96. The pupils who were in Year 4 last year have a clear grasp of the design and making process, which they had applied to the making of a photograph frame. The work was done with a clear purpose, as a present for a specific occasion and a specific person. They described in detail how they had planned the work on paper, before making it, modifying their designs as they went along to deal with problems that they encountered. They then wrote evaluations of the work and of how it could be improved. These pupils enjoyed their work in DT throughout their time at Crown Meadow, and could remember things they had made in different age groups, such as animal puppets in Year 2, and pneumatic toys in Year 3. They were disappointed that they had run out of time to complete a complex project in Year 4, to make an alarm for a box. This was obviously a sophisticated design using a range of materials, applying their understanding of electricity from science, and they had clearly put a lot of thought into it.
97. Current pupils in Year 4 described a similar range of work undertaken, including some “Roman” chariots and bowls they made in Year 3. They were able to evaluate the outcomes, saying whether they were happy with their designs, and why some worked better than others. Their understanding and knowledge match the expected levels for their age. They described how difficult they had found it to make CD boxes, because of the very precise measuring and fine manipulative skills needed; this made good use of their numeracy skills. They have used a good range of tools during their time in school, including saws and bench-hooks.
98. Pupils’ sound knowledge and understanding of the subject indicates that teaching and learning are at least satisfactory. The planning for the subject uses some national guidelines, but is strongly related to the topics the pupils study in other subjects. This is producing a generally broad and balanced curriculum. The co-ordinator is new to the subject this term, and has had little opportunity yet to audit what is happening, or to check up on standards and provision across other classes. She has correctly identified limited resources in some aspects of the subject, and is starting to devise assessment sheets to keep track of pupils’ progress. Her grasp of the current situation is sound, in view of the limited time she has had, and she has a clear plan to gain a better view of the subject, so that she can support her colleagues more effectively.

GEOGRAPHY

99. Pupils aged seven and nine reach the standards that are expected for pupils of their ages. Following improvements in provision, they are now making good progress. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when higher attaining pupils were not making sufficient progress through a lack of challenge. It was also reported that too many worksheets were used which hampered pupils’ progress; this is no longer the case.

100. Younger pupils know their local environment. They have made a field trip to identify “nice” and “nasty” places and match these to a map of the local area. Together they discuss how the nasty could be improved, sharing information gained from other places they have visited when on holiday or visiting family and friends. Year 2 pupils continue their map work and know the location of Britain in Europe and places they have visited on holiday. Pupils successfully use secondary sources such as posters and brochures to identify the main features of holiday places. They answer the question “What makes people go?” by producing information leaflets and posters of their own. Samples of pupils’ work show their awareness of the key features of living upon an island, being able to compare the island of Britain with that of a smaller island such as Skye. By Year 4, pupils investigate the climate and weather, especially of a comparative study of a village in India with their own. They produce an information sheet about “hot places”, linked to their literacy work with a non-fiction writing frame and text boxes from their work on computers in information and communication technology. They know what different climatic words mean such as tropical, polar and desert and design their own and consider more formal signs and symbols to represent different weather types.
101. The quality of teaching and learning is good for all pupils. Pupils are introduced to a good range of geographical concepts, knowledge and vocabulary. Skills are progressively developed with pupils encouraged to think, question and investigate. Good use is made of the locality through a range of activities such as field trips, and directional guides are composed using pupils’ literacy skills well. Pupils enjoy their work and respond positively to all activities, confidently co-operating over resources and with good relationships to adults and pupils alike.
102. The subject is well managed by an experienced co-ordinator, although she has not been able to monitor the quality of teaching and learning within classes. After a review of the subject across the school, including the rewriting of the policy, units of work from a published scheme have been adopted. A satisfactory range of resources has been purchased though the school still needs more globes and large maps. The school has moved away from worksheets to a skills based curriculum, which is raising standards. A coherent action plan to develop the subject further has been written, and assessment procedures have been planned, to help teachers identify the skills that pupils have developed.

HISTORY

103. Pupils aged seven and nine reach standards that are expected of pupils of their ages. As in geography, improvements in provision mean that pupils now make good progress. There has been an improvement since the last inspection when there was too much reliance upon worksheets. Pupils study a good range of topics in a reasonable amount of depth, focused upon developing historical research skills rather than just learning facts. They have gained a good sense of time; for example, through studying holidays through the ages, the Romans, the Tudors and World War II. Pupils empathise with the Celts and Boudicca against the Roman Empire, while the oldest pupils construct questionnaires to prepare for interviews with people who lived through the Second World War. Younger pupils make good use of secondary sources such as photographs, posters, postcards and artefacts to investigate holidays of a hundred years ago, fifty years ago and last summer. The investigation of a sports bag ‘found’ within a Year 2 classroom enabled pupils to share learning about beach holidays. Pupils identified the difference in swimming costumes between now and the 1950’s, the gender of the swimmer, the different types of holiday resorts and the materials for the beach shoes to place the bag in time. This, and other information learned about holidays then and now shared during the discussion, enabled the teacher to check for accuracy of knowledge as well as the development of archaeological skills.
104. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school and results in a good response from pupils who enjoy good relationships with adults, are confident and concentrate well on their

work. A good range of teaching and learning styles is used. Historical artefacts, as well as secondary resources such as photographs, posters, postcards and books, are used well to engage pupils' interest. Teachers focus upon the systematic and progressive development of skills with many activities chosen especially to match the range of abilities within their classes. Teachers make links across the curriculum to encourage pupils to use their reading and writing skills and plan the layout of their work from their art and design lessons. When possible, pupils use visitors to the school, for instance when learning about life in Tudor England, Tudor Singers introducing pupils to the instruments and music of the period. Pupils record their work in a variety of ways and the few worksheets are used well to supplement pupils' own recording. Where it is possible, teachers set up a class museum with artefacts borrowed from the museum service and also from members of the local community.

105. History is well managed, though the co-ordinator has not had the chance to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in different classes. She ensures that a satisfactory range of resources and artefacts are provided to support the work within classes and that a sufficient amount of time is allocated. The school makes visits to places of interest in the local area to support learning, places such as the Black Country Museum. Visitors are invited into the school to add interest to the curriculum, which supports pupils' learning. The school also makes good use of a number of Internet web sites to widen the resource base to support the development of research skills. The co-ordinator has devised an assessment grid to help teachers identify pupils' progress as historical researchers.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

106. Standards are better than national expectations for pupils in all classes. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when standards were satisfactory. A major factor in the improved standards is the provision of a dedicated ICT suite where a large group of pupils can have "hands on" experience with computers. The other major factor in improvement is the consistently good teaching. All pupils are achieving well and making good progress, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability.
107. By the time they start Year 2, most pupils already are working at the level expected by the end of the year. In a very good lesson, which combined ICT and English, pupils were able to log onto the computer and access the relevant program with confidence. They showed good skills for their age in using a word processing package, using menus, keyboard and mouse competently. They wrote a poem and corrected their work, using arrow keys, delete button and the shift key with confidence. They were able to insert commas into their work, when they identified a need. In a good lesson in another class, Year 2 pupils made good progress in getting a programmable toy to do what they wanted, although most found it difficult to plan a long series of instructions accurately, without help from adults.
108. Pupils continue to make good progress across the juniors. Pupils in Year 3 start to use text boxes and can use the spell-check facility to monitor their work. By Year 4 pupils are confident in using such text boxes in a variety of shapes, and can change the colours of both text and background. They show good skills in using the elements of a word-processing package to change the font size and style. They know how to group different graphic elements, and can change their size, or cut and paste them to different parts of their document. All are very competent in saving and retrieving their own work, and in printing it out.
109. Teaching is consistently good in specific ICT lessons, and is sometimes very good. Subject knowledge is generally good and lessons are prepared thoroughly. Good relationships and clear expectations, as well as the interesting work prepared, ensure good behaviour and concentration, and a high degree of interest. Pupils enjoy the work and take a pride in what they do. In a very good lesson in the suite with Year 4 pupils, very good explanations and a clear recap of previous

work helped pupils to be very clear about what they were doing. Very good pace ensured the involvement of all pupils. A well-judged balance between instruction and the chance for “hands-on” use of the computers ensured that they made very good progress in their understanding.

110. The curriculum delivered in specific ICT lessons is broad and balanced, covering all the relevant strands of the national curriculum. There are examples of good work in using ICT to support work in other subjects. However, in other lessons, opportunities to use ICT were missed. The use of ICT in other subjects is not yet organised systematically across the school, and the co-ordinators of different subjects have not had the chance to work out exactly how ICT should be used in different age groups.
111. The subject has been well managed for some time, which has resulted in the improved standards, the good teaching and the improvements in equipment. The current co-ordinator has only been in place for a few weeks, and has made a good start on continuing the good management. She is getting a good grip on the current state of the subject, and identifying areas for development. She has started to check up on pupils’ progress across the school by looking at samples of work in other classes. She had identified the need to upgrade classroom computers, and is overseeing the introduction of a system to assess and record pupils’ progress. She has had no opportunity as yet to observe lessons in other classes. Resources in the suite are good and are used very effectively. There is no comprehensive audit at the moment of exactly what software is used in each subject. Computers in the classroom vary in quality, and some teachers find it difficult to follow up work from the suite back in the classroom. The school has plans to improve this situation shortly, by installing a “store box” which should enable the sharing of documents and programs.

MUSIC

112. Standards in music are above those expected for pupils across the school. Pupils make good progress in music lessons and benefit from the good extra-curricular activities and peripatetic teaching that is helping to keep standards high. The many performances by the pupils help to promote confidence and self-esteem. Provision and standards have improved since the previous inspection.
113. Pupils across the school sing sweetly and in tune during assemblies. They show high levels of enthusiasm and willingness to join in. Pupils in Year 2 show good understanding of sound and are able to combine sounds well to create simple compositions. In one lesson, they were developing their own ideas about sounds linked to a story they had studied called ‘Peace at Last’ by Jill Murphy. Each group had created their own composition, and performed it to the rest of the class. They showed mature appraisal skills as they commented critically on each other’s work and were able to follow a simple score to play untuned percussion instruments well. They kept time and took turns very well, showing good awareness of other members of the group. They achieved high standards in playing, composing and performing, and listened well to others.
114. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrated their good musical ability as they created a piece of music based on the pentatonic scale. They showed an accurate sense of rhythm as they clapped from notation, commenting on the differences between crotchets, quavers and minims. They showed high levels of understanding about the impact of changing the beat. As they worked together in groups, pupils became involved in discussions about the importance of using a key in their compositions so that each pupil would know which symbol related to which musical instrument. By the end of the lesson, good progress was evident as one group successfully composed a keyboard piece, and other groups composed a score to a simple song, using notation and a key so that others could play it.
115. The quality of teaching and learning in music is always good and there are many very good features. Very good questioning enables pupils to remember prior work and show that they have

understood their tasks. For example, in one lesson, specific questions by the teacher helped to improve pupils' knowledge of notation. In another lesson, good questioning enabled pupils to think carefully about the quality of sounds made by different instruments, and different ways of playing them. Good use is made of a range of good resources to stimulate interest and increase the range of sounds that can be made. The very good additional peripatetic music teaching contributes significantly to pupils' musical abilities. Many pupils take lessons in brass and woodwind. All pupils in Year 4 have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder, and this is a real strength of the provision for music, which ensures equality of opportunity and high standards.

116. Music is well led and effectively organised. A major strength is the high quality performances that take place annually, and the concerts at Christmas and Easter. These provide opportunities for all pupils to perform in front of an audience, and play a significant part in the raising of self-esteem and confidence, contributing significantly to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The good range of extra-curricular activities is also a strength, which contributes well to the overall positive ethos within the school. There is an excellent capacity within the school for further improvement in standards and provision, and staff and pupils are fully committed to the subject. The co-ordinator is rightly aware of the lack of monitoring of lessons, and this has been identified as an area for improvement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. Pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress at both key stages across the range of physical education activities. By the end of Key Stage One and at the age of nine, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations, as at the time of the last inspection.
118. Pupils in Year 1 moved in a variety of ways, exploring movements through shape in a dance lesson. The quality of the movements was generally good but there was a lack of imaginative response when the movements were put to music. By the end of end of Key Stage One, pupils perform simple skills safely and show control in linking their actions together. They understand how to play small-sided team games and are learning to co-operate well. For example, in a Year 2 games lesson, pupils were able to discuss reasons for rules and were encouraged by the teacher to organise themselves into teams. They do not, however, often demonstrate the ability to reflect and refine their performance or to make simple judgements about their own practice.
119. By the age of nine pupils are developing good heading and ball control skills in football. This is partly due to the clear specific demonstration of techniques by a coach from Birmingham City F.C. Standards in competitive games are greatly enhanced for pupils by their involvement in extra-curricular activities and tournaments.
120. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and is good in Year 4. As a result, pupils' attitudes are good. They clearly enjoy the opportunity to engage in physical activity and behave well. Members of staff deal with the few behavioural problems that arise effectively and quickly by using a range of appropriate strategies. Teachers take great care to use the correct technical vocabulary. Pupils all follow safety rules well, clearly understanding the need to warm up before, and cool down after exercise. They co-operate sensibly with one another in pairs and small groups. Teachers are always dressed appropriately and have secure knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the subject and all safety issues. The scheme of work supports teachers' planning effectively but assessment strategies are not built into lesson planning to check progress or inform future planning.
121. The curriculum is broad, in that it contains all the required elements, but the newly appointed co-ordinator is aware that some minor adjustments need to be made to the balance between the different elements, with greater emphasis being given to improving skills in dance. The curriculum

is greatly enhanced by the range of extra curricular sports activities. There are good links not only with Birmingham City FC but also with Bromsgrove Sports Development Council. The implementation of the scheme of work is being monitored by the recently appointed subject co-ordinator. Monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum are at an early stage of development. There are no formal procedures for assessing or recording the attainment or progress of individual pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus for pupils in Year 2 and in Year 4. Progress across the school, for all pupils, is satisfactory because of satisfactory provision and teaching. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. The lack of sufficient appropriate resources has a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning in many classes.
123. In Key Stage One, pupils learn about stories from the Old Testament. They enjoy listening to stories and concentrate well on their tasks. They benefit from good discussions, which help them to develop their own personal skills. For example, in one lesson, pupils were learning about the story of Joseph and his Coat of Many Colours. They became involved in an exploration of the meaning of 'jealousy'. Many pupils were able to empathise with this feeling, giving appropriate examples. Pupils showed that they remembered many aspects of other Bible stories they had heard. In another lesson, they discussed the story of Noah and the Ark. Pupils offered appropriate opinions about how all the animals would have fitted into the Ark, and what size it must have been.
124. In Years 3 and 4, pupils continue to enjoy their religious education lessons, and begin to develop an understanding of other faiths. In a lesson with Year 3 pupils learned about Hindu Gods. They were able to understand the concept of one God appearing in different guises because of the good explanations by the teacher, and the well linked activity in which pupils described themselves in their own guises. For example, as son, grandson, pupil, friend.
125. In Year 4, pupils showed that they were aware of differences between the Christian and Hindu customs. They were able to create charts to identify similarities and differences in wedding ceremonies between the two faiths. They identified the different symbols, clothes and ceremonies by remembering past lessons and from their own experiences. Because the teacher focused carefully on the use of vocabulary, pupils talked to each other knowledgeably about the tasks. However, the lack of pictorial and book resources reduced pupils' ability to find out new knowledge for themselves, hence limiting their learning.
126. The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is satisfactory overall, and sometimes good. Some good questioning helps to develop pupils' thinking skills and discussion is used well to develop ideas. Teachers make good use of the limited resources available to further pupils' skills. For example, the good use of a video about Brahman, had a very positive impact on pupils' ability to understand aspects of Hinduism. There are times, however, when not enough resources are available and this reduces the quality of learning for some groups. For example, in lessons about the Old Testament stories, the lack of appropriate resources led to some confusion about Joseph, his family and his actions. Scrutiny of pupils' writing shows that religious education contributes significantly to the development of literacy skills. Some good extended accounts of stories they have heard are evident in pupils' books, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
127. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory, with several strengths. Good support is provided for staff so that their expertise and the content of lessons are improving. A good assessment grid has been implemented, but its use is not yet having an impact in lessons. Not enough monitoring has taken place to inform the co-ordinator about the quality of the provision, and this is a major weakness that is impacting on standards. She is aware of some strengths and weaknesses within the subject and has rightly identified the lack of sufficient, good quality resources and the lack of visits to

different places of worship, as areas for further development. The subject contributes appropriately to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils learn about other faiths and customs, such as when a Hindu visitor talked to them about Hindu weddings and showed them how to make Mehendi patterns on their hands. However, there is limited evidence of the subject's contribution to pupils' full awareness of cultural diversity in their local area.