

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **STOKE PRIOR PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Stoke Prior, Leominster

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116736

Headteacher: Mrs C Holder

Reporting inspector: Mr J Donnelly  
23637

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2002

Inspection number: 247679

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stoke Prior Leominster
Postcode:	HR6 0ND
Telephone number:	(01568) 760207
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Barker
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23637	J Donnelly	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
31718	D Shields	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
2756	M Barron	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
12394	C May	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage English Geography History Religious education	How well are pupils taught?

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>7 - 9</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>9 - 10</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>10 - 11</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>11 - 12</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>12 - 13</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>13 - 14</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>15 - 18</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>19 - 28</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Stoke Prior Primary is a school catering for 68 pupils aged four to 11 years and is much smaller than average. The school serves a mixed social and economic community in a rural area of Herefordshire. There are three classes; for the reception children and pupils aged six, for pupils aged seven to nine and for those aged nine to 11. There are 34 boys and 34 girls. Three pupils are entitled to free school meals, well below the national average. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with national averages. Many pupils are from a white, British background. A few pupils, four per cent, come from a non-white British background. Twenty per cent of pupils have special educational needs, broadly in line with the national average; one pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Stoke Prior Primary school is an effective school with some very good features. Teaching is good, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and pupils make good progress in the lessons observed and achieve well over time. The trend is one of improving standards. Leadership and management are good and the school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards are above average throughout the school in English as a result of high quality teaching and learning.
- Pupils' progress overall and learning in lessons are good.
- Pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm are very good and the relationships between pupils and staff are also very good.
- Teaching is consistently good in English and mathematics and often very good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is very good.
- The school has very good links with parents and provides very good support and guidance to pupils' personal development.
- Leadership by the headteacher is very good and the very good teamwork of the whole staff is having a positive impact on raising standards.

#### **What could be improved**

- Accommodation for children in the reception class.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good progress overall since the last inspection in February 1997 and in some areas progress has been very good. The quality of teaching has been maintained and, in English and mathematics, standards are rising in the classroom. The resources for information and communication technology (ICT) and its use in learning are much improved. The school development plan is now focused and gives very good direction. There are now good methods of finding out what works well in the school and what needs improving. The headteacher is well supported by members of the governing body and the capacity for the school to improve further is very good.

### **STANDARDS**

Standards observed during the inspection are above average in English, mathematics, art and design and religious education. In all other subjects, standards are average. Only nine pupils in Year 6 took the national tests in 2002. This is a very small number and therefore no reliable comparisons can be made with any other schools. The 2002 tests indicate that standards in English are well above average, average in science, but below average in mathematics. Only ten pupils in Year 2 took the national tests in 2002 and no reliable comparison can be made. The tests indicate that standards are well above average in English and above average in mathematics. Teacher assessment for Year 2 pupils in science is average.

In the lessons observed a significant number of pupils in Years 2 and 6 were judged to be attaining standards above those expected. Pupils' learning and progress in English, mathematics and science are good and the challenge offered to higher attainers, particularly in Years 5 and 6, is good. The small numbers of pupils means there is considerable year to year variation; however, the trend of improvement over the last five years is slightly below the national trend. Inspection evidence indicates a rising trend in standards overall, especially for more able pupils. The school is setting challenging targets for the end of Year 6 and is on course to meet them. Inspection findings show standards to be above average in literacy and numeracy.

During their time in school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall as a result of rich learning experiences and consistently good teaching. Children in the reception class make satisfactory progress; in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development they are likely to exceed expectations.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils are very enthusiastic about the work they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in class and around the school. Pupils are very friendly, polite and courteous. There are no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils, as observed in the lessons and around the school, are very good, as is the absence of oppressive behaviour and bullying. Pupils' personal development is very good.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are very good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching for the reception children, who are in a class with Year 1 pupils, is satisfactory. Teaching across the rest of the school is consistently good in English and mathematics. The needs of all the pupils are well met, including those with special educational needs. Literacy and numeracy are well taught. There are examples of very good teaching in English, mathematics, art and design and religious education.

### Strengths:

- Teachers know their pupils very well and use this knowledge when questioning them to ensure they learn through challenging tasks.
- Teachers are good role models and give a strong lead on pupils' moral and social development.
- The pace of teaching is good and pupils respond to this enthusiasm and learn effectively.
- Subject knowledge in English is good and pupils are challenged well in their learning.
- Support staff make a very positive contribution to the progress pupils make.

### Areas for development in otherwise satisfactory lessons:

- The summary of the lesson is sometimes rushed so pupils' progress cannot be fully reviewed and celebrated at the end of the lesson.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory in the reception class. The content and organisation of the curriculum provides access to the full range of learning experiences and statutory requirements are met.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is very good. The school meets the needs of all of its pupils well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The personal support and guidance given to pupils by staff, led by the headteacher, is very good. Pupils are very well supported in their learning by support staff who make a positive contribution to the progress they make. Child protection procedures and health and safety procedures are effective.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents	The quality of information offered to parents is very good. There is an effective dialogue between home and school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership by the headteacher and other key staff is effective and she has a very good and clear view of the educational direction of the school. All staff are very committed to the schools aims.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are committed and offer good support to the headteacher. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Their clear approach to evaluating the standards pupils achieve and the targeting of resources to support the progress pupils make have not yet had a full impact in the classroom.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's system of taking account of its academic performance is good.
The strategic use of resources	The accommodation for children in reception class is unsatisfactory overall. There is no separate fenced area and limited resources to develop children's physical development. The governors ensure that the budget is spent wisely.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The high standards of support and guidance the school offers.</li> <li>The atmosphere of mutual caring and respect amongst children.</li> <li>Children like coming to school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were no significant areas that the parents offered in the meeting, in the questionnaire or in their letters.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the very positive views of the parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Small year groups have a significant impact on performance statistics. Caution should be used when interpreting these results. When looking at the performance of the pupils over the four years from 1998 to 2002, they exceeded the national average for all schools in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics and were broadly in line for pupils in Year 6 in the national tests. Inspection evidence indicates the trend across the whole school is one of rising standards, particularly for more able pupils, as a result of good quality teaching.
2. Children in the reception class are likely to achieve the expected standards in all areas of learning. In mathematical and literacy development, they are likely to achieve above average standards.
3. The results for the ten pupils in the 2002 national tests in Year 2 were well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. However, the group is too small to make reliable comparisons with the previous year. Inspection evidence indicates pupils' progress in English and mathematics is good in the lessons observed.
4. In the 2002 national tests for the nine boys in Year 6, attainment was in line with the national average in science and below in mathematics. In English it is well above average. The trend of improvement over the last four years is broadly in line with national expectations for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils demonstrate above average standards in English and mathematics in the lessons observed across the school. This is an improving trend.
5. Inspection findings show that a significant number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are attaining standards above those expected.
6. Standards in English seen during the inspection are above those expected of pupils of the same age. Improvements since the last inspection are seen in the better planning of the programmes of study so that the work is matched to the ability of all pupils. Literacy skills are above average in most other subjects.
7. The school places great emphasis on helping pupils to learn the skills of speaking and listening and pupils make very good progress due to effective teaching and the very good use of open ended questions by teachers which make pupils think hard about what they are going to say. Speaking and listening are fostered very well across the whole curriculum.
8. The very good spoken vocabulary of most pupils has a positive effect on their reading skills and all pupils make very good progress. A love of reading is fostered from pupils' earliest days in school. Pupils read a range of books including non-fiction plays and poetry with increasing competence and accuracy and by the time they are 11 pupils are able to talk with discernment about a range of authors. Classroom assistants and volunteers add much to foster and strengthen a love of reading and so improve pupils' reading skills further.
9. The content of the children's writing is very interesting and they can write in a wide variety of ways such as letters, book reviews, an account of an outing and newspaper reports. They know about varying the language used and length of sentences to suit the purpose and the audience as, for example, when designing advertisements to sell houses, or posters campaigning against water pollution. Sometimes ability to write is outstanding.
10. In mathematics, standards are above average in the lessons observed. Pupils' learning in lessons and progress over time are good. The Year 2 pupils have a good grasp of mathematical language and understand simple place value. They successfully complete number patterns and accurately use standard measures, such as centimetres. They complete data-handling exercises, for

example producing graphs that identify their favourite toys and successfully explain their work when deciding whether they have sufficient money to spend when solving real life problems. The Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of the relationships between decimals, percentages and fractions. Pupils are good at developing their own mathematical strategies for solving problems and use them well in other subjects throughout the school.

11. Progress, over time, in science is satisfactory. The Year 2 pupils have experienced a wide range of areas of learning and have conducted simple experiments. Year 6 pupils also appreciate that scientific ideas are based on evidence and have undertaken a good range of investigations and confidently explain the need for fair testing.
12. Standards are above average in art and design and religious education and average in ICT and in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets in their individual educational plans. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. Pupils' attitudes, personal development and relationships with each other and adults are very good. Their behaviour is good. These positive features help to create an atmosphere in which pupils enjoy learning; this contributes to the progress they make. Since the last full inspection, standards in all of these areas have improved.
14. In lessons and when moving around the school, almost all pupils behave well. All pupils generally try hard to live up to the schools' expectation of high standards of behaviour. There have been no exclusions. Pupils who sometimes have difficulty controlling their behaviour are supported well by the teachers and this means that the routines in the classrooms are not disrupted and pupils are able to get on with their work.
15. Behaviour is best when teaching is challenging and exciting and the activities gain the full attention of pupils. When tasks are not well matched to what pupils are able to understand and do, they become restless and easily distracted.
16. Outside pupils play and socialise well together. Older pupils play with and encourage those younger than themselves to join in games and ensure they have someone to play with. On a rare occasion, behaviour was boisterous and inappropriate. This is when supervision arrangements are not fully effective and the pupils are out of sight of the adults on duty.
17. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school. They are very eager to join in lessons and to participate in all the school has to offer, especially when lessons are well matched to their ability levels. For instance during a music lesson, humour was used to very good effect and the teacher ensured all pupils were fully involved; they followed instructions carefully and handled the musical instruments sensibly and made very good gains in their learning. Pupils are keen to answer questions and listen very well to what their teachers have to say and they know what to do next. They obviously enjoy the chance to show initiative and carry out research using the computers. These opportunities, however, are not consistently planned into lessons and not all pupils are developing the skills of independent learning.
18. Relationships between adults and each other are very good, based on mutual respect and trust. Pupils say they are happy to ask teachers for help and guidance should they need it. Pupils care for each other; they are quick to help one another if someone falls over and hurts themselves in the playground. Older pupils support those younger than themselves, for instance during the assemblies they sit together. With a quiet "ssh" younger ones are reminded to be quiet whilst an adult is speaking. Because of the very good relationships that exist, the school is a harmonious community. Incidents of bullying are extremely rare; pupils and the schools' own records confirm this. Pupils express confidence that if any incident should occur it is dealt with very quickly by teachers.

19. The pupils take personal responsibility very seriously, for example, giving the vote of thanks to the visitors who took part in the Tuesday assembly. They enjoy carrying out the responsibilities that they are given. Older pupils confirm they enjoy taking part in the residential visit, whilst others talk enthusiastically about the visits they have been on and visitors who come to the school. Pupils work well in small groups and pairs; they share equipment and handle resources with care. Most can usually work independently of the teacher during group activities and learn better as a result.
20. Attendance is very good and is well above average when compared to other schools. It has a positive impact on the standards and progress pupils make. Unauthorised absence is minimal because the overwhelming majority of pupils are only absent if they are unwell. The school is very aware of the instances where families do not provide a valid reason for the absence of their children. Virtually every pupil arrives at school on time in the morning.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

21. As at the previous inspection, the overall quality of teaching is good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. There were examples of very good teaching in English, mathematics, art and design and religious education.
22. Each class has a wide range of pupils of different ages with different learning needs. The teachers are skilled at organising and managing their classes so that pupils make satisfactory progress in every class. In the class containing the reception and Year 1 pupils, despite the restrictions imposed by lack of space, teaching constantly reaches the standard expected. The teacher and classroom assistant work closely together. They have high expectations of children's work and behaviour. Consequently, children make appropriate gains in early literacy and numeracy and in basic ICT. A balance is struck between teacher-directed tasks and children choosing their own activities. For example, whole-class teaching helped children think about early addition, later on a group of children chose to use simple jigsaw puzzles that required them to add numbers and find the right answer.
23. The school has placed great emphasis on the teaching of speaking and listening skills with much success. All teachers provide many opportunities for the pupils to speak at length within subjects. This makes a very good contribution to the pupils' moral and social development. The pupils listen attentively at all times, being respectful and tolerant of the views of others.
24. Almost all teaching builds successfully on the very good attitudes to learning that the children bring to school. There are common features to most good lessons. The key characteristics include:
  - very good relationships between teachers and pupils and between the pupils themselves which create the climate for learning to take place;
  - behaviour well managed means there is no time lost through waiting for pupils to settle or through correcting unacceptable behaviour. Thus, curriculum time is used to maximum advantage for teaching and learning;
  - good subject knowledge and teachers using the correct technical, subject-based language to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding;
  - exciting activities to engage pupils' interests and increase their motivation;
  - well briefed learning support staff who make a very valuable contribution to the quality of the pupils' learning at all stages of the lesson. Their contribution to furthering the progress of pupils with learning difficulties is particularly good. The very strong team spirit between teachers and support staff was evident in all classes in the school;
  - high expectations, with pupils rising to the challenge. They work hard in class sessions and during group working time;
  - good opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative within a lesson, often through working with a partner;
  - effective planning, particularly evident in English and mathematics lessons where lesson objectives are shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Similarly, at the end of the

- lesson, the teachers refer back to the expected outcomes to ensure that the learning has been secured. This helps the pupils to appreciate the relevance of their learning; and
    - work well matched to the different age groups and capabilities in each class.
25. Much of the best teaching occurs in English and mathematics lessons in Years 2-6. Here, the most significant factor is the consistently good teaching of the basic skills of speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics. The teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. These are well established and make a significant impact on how very well the pupils achieve in each class. All lessons move at a fast pace with a wide variety of teaching techniques. The teachers use skilful questioning and challenge pupils to think about their work. In return, the pupils are totally engaged; they maintain interest and tackle their work with enthusiasm and concentration. The arrangements for the English co-ordinator to teach literacy to all children from Years 2 – 6 is now well embedded and has a positive impact on the above average standards being attained by the pupils in the national tests in Years 2 and 6. The same arrangement has been implemented for the mathematics co-ordinator and standards are rising. This system works well because of the continuity it provides, enabling the teachers to build successfully on the lessons previously taught.
  26. The quality of teaching for pupils with learning difficulties is good and at times very good. Work is carefully planned to match targets set in pupils' individual education plans. Appropriate arrangements are made for the pupils to receive additional support from the teachers and, in particular from the learning support assistants. Support staff are involved in the planning of pupils' targets and support pupils unobtrusively during whole-class teaching sessions. Additionally, they provide appropriate help and encouragement to support pupils in completing tasks as independently as possible; they help keep the pupils on task and record assessments of their progress. This is very good practice and enhances the learning for these pupils so that they make good progress. The teaching of literacy and numeracy across the school is good. ICT is used appropriately to support learning in other subjects.
  27. Homework is used appropriately to supplement learning. Pupils take home reading books and are regularly given homework in English and mathematics. Teachers provide sufficient opportunities for homework for the age of the pupils.

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

28. Overall the school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which fully meets statutory requirements. The curriculum offers a good quality and range of learning opportunities to pupils in Years 1 to 6 and an appropriate range of learning opportunities to children in reception. The provision for pupils with special educational needs, whilst being satisfactory for children in reception, is good overall. Sex and drugs education is provided as part of the science curriculum and also as part of a broader programme of personal and health education. Standards have therefore been maintained since the previous inspection, which reported that the school then provided a broad curriculum, which met statutory requirements and was enhanced by a range of extra-curricular activities.
29. The school has adopted a two-year curriculum cycle, which works well and so provides a clear framework for both the academic and also the personal development of pupils. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. Strategies for teaching literacy are good and this is reflected in the attainment of pupils in national tests in Years 2 and 6. The school's recently adopted strategy of setting in mathematics has had a positive effect on raising standards in this subject and this was noticeable in the standard of work in numeracy observed during the inspection.
30. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good overall and enhances the curriculum effectively. Pupils have opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities including sports clubs involving football, netball and cricket as well as line dancing and SPAM (Stoke Prior Acting and

Music). In addition the school provides regular off-site visits to places of interest to broaden pupils' experiences. In the past these have included visiting the Leominster priory, galleries and museums in Birmingham and residential visits to Malvern Hills Outdoor Centre.

31. The school successfully endeavours to ensure equality of access to all activities. As a result pupils are enthusiastic about school, behave well and are interested and involved in school life.
32. The contribution of the local community to pupils' learning is very good. The school is regarded as an integral part of village life and its recently built hall was funded from contributions raised locally and built with the help of the community. A recent appeal for money to buy new computers was also well supported locally. Events run by the school's parents' and friends' association are well supported by villagers and help bring funds into the school's coffers. In addition, relationships between the school and the local church are very effective.
33. Relationships between the school and partner institutions are good. Links with the local secondary school, to which the pupils transfer at the end of Year 6, are good, assisting pupils to make the transition from primary to secondary education in a relatively easy manner. The school also belongs to a cluster of local schools whose staff meet on a regular basis to share good ideas about classroom practice. More able pupils visit schools in the area for extra provision. In addition, relationships between the school and the local nursery school are good and this also helps in the induction of children.
34. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is reflected in the school's ethos. It is a strength of the school and makes a very positive contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The school meets the statutory requirements for the daily act of collective worship in assemblies in which pupils are given regular opportunities for prayer and more limited opportunities for reflection.
35. Spiritual development is effectively promoted through daily aspects of school life. Pupils are given regular opportunities to explore values and beliefs and the ways in which they impact on people's lives. In addition the school actively promotes a climate in which pupils are encouraged to respect both themselves and others. This was evident in several observed lessons and also in an assembly when pupils celebrated a birthday with both joy and respect.
36. Provision for the moral development of pupils is very good. The school has developed an open and safe learning environment, which promotes an underlying clear moral code as a basis for behaviour. Pupils are expected to conduct themselves correctly and be tolerant of others. This was reflected in pupils behaviour throughout the inspection. Pupils were courteous, respectful and clearly understood the differences between right and wrong and that they were accountable for their own actions.
37. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good. The school fosters a sense of community, which makes pupils feel valued. This enables the development of personal qualities such as thoughtfulness and interdependence. Pupils are encouraged to co-operate with each other in lessons and respect each other's differences. They are given opportunities to develop their independence and also to work co-operatively. The school council gives pupils a voice in school affairs and encourages them to exercise leadership and take responsibility for some aspects of managing the school. An example of this was evident in a school council meeting when elected members discussed bringing in 'sin bins' for misbehaviour during playtimes!
38. Provision for the cultural development of pupils is very good. Pupils are given opportunities to develop an understanding of their own heritage through links with, for example, local industries and museums. In addition the school has developed good links with a village and a school in Tanzania and this has had a positive impact on extending pupils' knowledge of a culture other than their own. Furthermore the school provides pupils with opportunities to extend their cultural awareness with visits to such places as a Hindu temple, Coventry Cathedral and the Dome and to develop

their appreciation of cultural traditions through subjects such as religious education, art and design, music and literature.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

39. There are good arrangements to care for and support the pupils. This is in line with the findings of the previous report. Pupils are valued and encouraged to try their best by the teachers. This gives boys and girls of all ages the confidence to seek help if they should need it. Parents' confidence in the support and guidance provided for their children is well founded.
40. Health and safety arrangements are very good, as are systems to ensure the security of pupils on the school site. This area is monitored well by the governing body. Procedures relating to child protection are good. The designated person has detailed knowledge of local practice. Any issues or concerns are dealt with sensitively. Attendance is monitored effectively and, because there are relatively few pupils in the school, absence is noted quickly and followed up. Good procedures are in place to ensure pupils attend regularly and on time. The medical and welfare needs of pupils are very well catered for, but are not reflected in the schools written policy. Currently there are too few staff members who are trained in first aid and therefore able to deal with accidents or injury should they occur. There are an adequate number of adults on duty at break and lunchtime but pupils are not always in their full view. This results in some instances of inappropriate behaviour. Although overall the schools practice in relation to the care of pupils is good, many of the written policies are out of date and do not reflect the school's current arrangements.
41. There are very good procedures in place to encourage pupils to behave well and to deal with any form of bullying, racism or oppressive behaviour. This provision is very well supported by the school's emphasis on pupils' moral and social development. Class and school routines are very well established and pupils know what is expected of them; all pupils try hard to live up to the school's high expectations. Appropriate behaviour, effort and achievement, both in and outside school, are given a high profile and are regularly rewarded. The values of co-operation and tolerance are promoted effectively through assemblies, religious education lessons and the personal, social and health education programme. Other initiatives such as "the buddy system" (where older pupils are paired with and support younger ones) all contribute to ensuring the school is a supportive, friendly and harmonious community. Pupils confirm that these arrangements are very effective.
42. The personal development of pupils is given high priority. Teachers endeavour to ensure that pupils receive not just an academic education but one that develops the self-esteem and confidence of each individual child. The school is very successful in this aspect of its work. Many opportunities are provided for pupils that contribute to this, for instance, raising money for charity, taking part in community activities, residential and educational visits. Pupils speak enthusiastically about taking part in these activities. Teachers know the pupils very well and share information about them regularly. Detailed records, however, are also kept and this enables the teachers to discreetly support those individual pupils who might need additional help and support.
43. Assessment is satisfactory. The school has recently improved the assessment procedures to take good account of the information provided by national test results. This information is used to identify the children who need particular types of support and to group the older children in sets for English and mathematics lessons. The systems are used effectively to show what the children should achieve, based on their earlier standards, and this helps the staff set appropriate targets. Shorter-term targets for the children to meet during the year, are set for English and mathematics. This system is securely established for English, but was put into place more recently for mathematics and is becoming increasingly effective. The targets for both subjects are taken from the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and linked to the National Curriculum levels and staff can easily identify the children's rate of progress. The school's marking and feedback policy is effective. Pupils are given constructive written feedback to guide them on specific ways to improve their work.

44. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties is monitored carefully and the work provided for them is adjusted to suit their needs well. The recommendations of the special educational needs code of practice are followed well. The school has identified pupils who are gifted and talented and special provision is made for them. For example, one of the oldest pupils is currently taking some lessons at a neighbouring school. Detailed records are kept of the progress the youngest children make towards the expected standards and this information is used appropriately to adjust the work provided for them.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

45. Parents have very positive views about the school. An effective partnership has been built up and this enables parents to contribute to their children's learning.
46. Just over half of the inspection questionnaires were returned. Almost none expressed any dissatisfaction and virtually all gave a positive view. Pupils think the teaching is good and they feel able to approach the teachers if they have any concerns or problems. Parents indicate that their children enjoy coming to school. Those parents who attended the meeting prior to the inspection expressed equally positive views. The inspection findings agree with parents' positive comments about the school. An extremely small number of parents expressed some concern about the amount of work their children were expected to do at home and the information they receive about the progress their children make. Inspectors found no evidence to support these views.
47. The information provided for parents is very good. Letters are regular and sent in good time. Class newsletters keep parents informed about what their children will be learning. The reading diaries for the younger pupils and the homework diary for the older pupils, ensure that parents know when and what their children are expected to do at home. Almost all parents support the homework policy and help their children where they are able; most noticeably helping them to read at home. The school brochure and governors' annual report to parents contain all the information they should. They are very well presented and provide much practical information. There is a meeting in school for parents of children who will be joining the reception class. Annual reports, giving details of children's progress are very good. They reflect individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses in all subject areas and clearly identify areas needing improvement. They provide parents with a very good picture of the progress their children have made during the year and indicate how they might help to improve their learning further.
48. The parent, teacher and friends' association is very active and events that are organised are very well supported. This results in substantial sums of money being raised that benefits the school financially. Recent purchases have included, stacking racks for hall chairs, jubilee coins and Christmas parties. Events in which the children are directly involved, such as the Christmas concert, are very well attended. A recent family learning course for parents of the youngest pupils was very successful. This provided parents with a valuable opportunity to gain an insight into how to help their children with their work. Few parents, however, help with class based activities on a regular basis, although they do accompany pupils on school visits, providing a much needed "extra pair of hands" and occasionally some help with practical activities such as cooking. The school has tried to involve parents in their children's learning, for example by organising curriculum workshops, but these are poorly attended. Parents' views are sought informally, for instance through discussion with them at parents' evenings or through members of the parent, teacher and friends association but the school does not have a regular system to seek the views of all parents.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

49. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has the full confidence and support of the staff, governors and parents. She has a very clear educational vision and has put together a strategic plan that clearly identifies the school's educational priorities. She has her own high standards and expectations and these are clearly reflected in the drive to raise standards and particularly the percentages of pupils that achieve above the nationally expected levels in the national tests in Years 2 and 6. As a very good leader, the headteacher has a good understanding

of her school, staff and pupils. She knows the pupils very well individually and the pupils want to do well for her. The school operates in an environment where everyone's contribution is valued. It is very noticeable when visiting that everyone is enjoying what they are doing and smiling faces and enthusiasm are features of the school. The teaching and non-teaching staff work very well together for the benefit of the pupils. Good progress has been made since the last inspection overall.

50. There is a very strong team spirit in the school, which has a positive impact on the progress pupils make. The school is forward thinking and pupils' performance is always being considered and monitored. The school's policies and practices to promote all aspects of inclusion and equality of opportunity are appropriate. The school looks to meet the needs of all pupils as individuals and this aspiration is well reflected in the day-to-day life of the school. This is further reflected in the sound planning that ensures appropriate subject coverage for mixed age classes and pupils' entitlement to the various elements of the curriculum.
51. The governors are well informed and monitoring and evaluation procedures are developing significantly. The result of this is that the progress of all pupils can be tracked and the school can review and consider its practices and further develop procedures. There is a clear commitment throughout the school to development and working as a team. As in most schools this size the staff work at subject development as a group rather than it being the responsibility of one individual. There is a shared commitment to improve and very good capacity to succeed. With small year groups the school has to consider its classroom organisation very carefully and on an annual basis. All circumstances are considered thoroughly before any decisions are made. For the current year it was decided to have a reception and Year 1 class in recognition of recent changes in the required curriculum. This ensures that the pupils are provided with satisfactory access to all of the recommended areas of learning and a good start to full-time education. The headteacher teaches mathematics to all pupils in Years 2-6 and English is taught similarly by a subject specialist. This arrangement works well and shows again that the challenges of a small school are well managed and the needs of all pupils always considered. The governing body fulfils its statutory requirements to the full.
52. The governing body is energetic and supports the school well. The chair of governors holds discussions with the headteacher and staff to ensure that they keep abreast of how the school is progressing on a day-to-day basis. Governors understand the importance of good planning and manage the budget efficiently. Financial planning is good and the school improvement plan is costed and issues such as class sizes and the deployment of teaching assistants are carefully debated. Specific grants including the budget are spent wisely. Day-to-day administration in the school office is good.
53. The quality of the accommodation has been enhanced since the last inspection by the building of a hall area and a very well resourced ICT provision. This idea has been well thought through. Accommodation for the reception class is unsatisfactory overall - there is no fenced-in play area and no covered outdoor area to promote pupils' physical development further. The school provides good value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to improve standards further, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:

- (1) Seek ways to improve the overall facilities for children in the reception class, including the outdoor play area, in order to improve their capacity to learn.

*(Paragraph 53)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	6	13	4	0	0	0
Percentage	4	25	54	16	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	68
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

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	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.1
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete 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	65	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	20

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	280,000
Total expenditure	279,000
Expenditure per pupil	4,100
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,000
Balance carried forward to next year	1,000

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.2

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	68
Number of questionnaires returned	38

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	24	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	29	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	29	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	39	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	71	26	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	37	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	24	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	32	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	55	37	3	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	66	32	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	29	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	37	5	0	8

## **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**

54. The school has made sound progress in implementing the new nationally recommended curriculum for children in the reception class. Following initial testing carried out in the first six weeks of the autumn term, the attainment of pupils on entry to school was judged to be broadly average in all areas of learning. These pupils made sound progress throughout the year. Overall attainment on entry is broadly average and most children, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
55. A wide variety of activities are provided ensuring the children achieve soundly in most areas of learning. The quality of teaching is judged as sound overall. By the end of the reception year children are likely to reach the standard that is expected for their age in communication language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. In these areas the teaching is sound and children make appropriate progress. All children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and in speaking and listening. In these areas the teaching is good and standards are above expectations by the end of the reception year.
56. There are 12 reception age children who share a class with ten Year 1 pupils. There is an additional member of the support staff who works in the class every morning. The teacher and the classroom assistant work very well as a team and both place appropriately high emphasis on personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.
57. The curriculum provided for the reception class is satisfactory. The activities are planned to address all six areas of learning. The teacher's planning is very thorough and appropriately linked to the targets identified in the nationally recommended curriculum guidance for these children. Sometimes, however, there are too many targets identified for them all to be addressed adequately.
58. The leadership and management of the reception class are sound. There is a very good induction system that helps pupils to settle happily into school and plans are afoot to improve this significantly in the future. The relationships between the staff, the children and their parents are very good. Parents are kept well informed about the curriculum and advised of ways in which they can help their children at home. The space inside the classroom is very cramped and teaching and learning is hampered by insufficient space to provide the kind of activity based curriculum both inside and out which is recommended in the guidance document for the reception class. For example, the book box is currently in between the unit containing the construction toys and another piece of furniture. This means that the children cannot readily have access to either. Whilst the teacher provides small containers of sand and water for the children to use individually, there is insufficient room for the large sand and water trays available in most reception classes. There is no room for painting easels to be constantly available, which restricts the development of creativity and the fine motor skills needed for writing. The role play area is, of necessity very small with limited resources and although there is a large outdoor play area immediately outside the classroom, this cannot be seen from inside and there is no secure fence around it. This curtails the provision of the recommended outdoor play based curriculum.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

59. The teaching in this area of learning is good and by the end of the reception year, many children are likely to exceed the national targets in this area of learning. They make good progress in developing self-confidence and self-esteem because of the strengths of the provision and the good role models demonstrated by the staff. Children rise to staff's expectations that they will take care of their own needs and join in what is going on. Children settle into school very quickly and soon

gain confidence from knowing the routines and pattern of the sessions. As a result, children come happily into their classroom each morning. They respond very well to the staff and usually sit quietly and listen when required, try hard to follow the teacher's instructions and interact very well both with one another and with adults, taking their cue from the very good role models set by the staff. As a result they learn to help each other, say please and thank you and are polite and friendly towards one another. Should disagreements arise the staff help the children to sort things out and advise on how to avoid similar problems in the future. This helps children to make very good progress in understanding and respecting the rights and opinions of others. The children are able to concentrate for a long time when engaged in tasks that interest them as was observed when a child was using the computer and refused to be distracted even when the classroom assistant tried to tempt him to use the modelling clay. The children take turns and share when allowed to choose their own activities, tidy away the things they have used quickly when asked and move around the school in an orderly fashion.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

60. The quality of teaching and provision for developing speaking and listening is good. The adults generally structure their teaching well to develop children's spoken language. Through the daily class and group activities the children learn to join in rhymes, songs and familiar stories. All these activities help children to practise speaking and to increase their vocabulary. Staff encourage pupils to listen to one another and not interrupt. As a result, the children make good progress and they are likely to exceed the level expected.
61. The teaching of reading and writing is satisfactory; the children make sound progress and are likely to achieve the standard expected at the end of the reception year. Adults read stories to the children and encourage them to discuss the pictures. Pupils change the books they take home frequently. They are taught to recognise letters and sounds. Most children can form the letters in their own name correctly and the teacher encourages them to write their name on their work. The teacher regularly checks the children's progress in forming letters correctly and demonstrates how to form letters in simple three letter words correctly and pays good attention to teaching children about full stops and capital letters.

### **Mathematical development**

62. By the end of the reception year many children are likely to meet the expected standards. They make appropriate progress and teaching is sound overall. Children regularly engage in counting activities and sing number rhymes. They are given opportunities to use number puzzles and games and helped to learn the mathematical language of shape. The children learn to make patterns, using different mathematical shapes; they sort toys and learn how to add and subtract in a practical way. When children take part in the daily mathematics lesson they learn to count in sequence to 20, recognise and write numbers to ten and to use numbers in familiar contexts. Appropriate teaching methods and tasks are well matched to the age and stage of development of the children. A wide range of mathematical activities are provided for the children to choose from such as number puzzles and shape and colour matching games on the computer that help move children forward in their learning.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

63. On entry to school, the general knowledge of most of the children is average, by the end of the reception year. Many children are likely to meet the expected standard expected for their age. During their time in the reception class the children make satisfactory progress in making sense of the world; teaching is sound overall. Children begin to understand about the jobs that adults do. At present the children are learning what it means to be a customer or member of staff in the class café. By the end of the reception class children can name the common parts of the body and of plants. They can name some everyday things that move by pushing and some that move when they are pulled. The children learn how to use computers independently. They are taught to use the mouse to click on the icons that operate simple computer programs. Children regularly engage in designing and making using paper, paste and glue and learn how to cut, stick and join. For

example, in preparation for Christmas, the children had made reindeer pictures that involved cutting and sticking. They had also made Christmas presents for their parents using collage and paint. However, the cramped space restricts the opportunities for children to use these materials independently. Lack of space also prevents them from having ready access to large construction toys and sufficient opportunities to experiment with natural materials, such as wet and dry sand and using water play to make dams and operate water driven toys such as water wheels.

### **Physical development**

64. In this area of learning the children make satisfactory progress and the teaching is sound. By the end of the reception year children are likely to meet the expected standard for their age. From the earliest days in school the children are encouraged to put on their own coats and get changed for physical education lessons. Most of the children rise to the challenge and succeed although some take a very long time. Children achieve better when using the gross motor skills needed for physical education than they do in the skills needed in writing, cutting and drawing. In the lesson observed in the hall, the teacher explained the 'rules' clearly but did not explain what the children were expected to learn during the lesson. Also the pace of the lesson was slow and some of the children were restless and inattentive. Opportunities for the children to engage regularly in high quality activities outside are limited because there is no discrete outdoor play area accessible regularly throughout the day. The children have opportunities to practise and refine their fine motor skills by the use of a variety of tools, implements and equipment across all areas of learning. They use thick and thin pencils and felt tips and practise cutting out. However, these skills are not yet well developed and they have poor hand control. This is likely to affect the standard they achieve in handwriting at the end of the year.

### **Creative development**

65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children make sound progress and many are likely to reach the expected national targets. Children are given the opportunity to use and experiment with a wide variety of media, tools and textures. Through daily class and group lessons, the children learn to listen to and join in rhymes and songs and to play percussion instruments. By the end of the reception year children are beginning to understand about using loud and quiet sounds for different effects and how to make a fast or slow sound. They learn to sit quietly and listen to music for short periods of time. Children have opportunities to experiment with printing, make collage pictures and paint but these are limited because of the space available. For the same reason, they have limited opportunities to dress up and act out stories heard in role-play.

## **ENGLISH**

66. Standards in English are above average and pupils make good progress during their time at school. This represents an improvement from the last inspection when standards were found to be in line with national averages. Five boys and five girls took the national tests in Year 2 in 2002 and results show that the standards they attained were well above average in reading and writing when compared with all schools nationally. Standards were above those attained by similar schools in reading and well above in writing. In Year 6, only nine pupils took the tests and they all attained standards well above most pupils nationally in English. Over the past three years, standards have climbed steadily. All pupils, regardless of background, make good progress during their time at school.
67. The school places great emphasis on helping pupils to learn the skills of speaking and listening and pupils make very good progress due to effective teaching and the very good use of open ended questions by teachers which make pupils think hard about what they are going to say. Speaking and listening is fostered very well across the whole curriculum. As a result, they can discuss their opinions and ideas about very complex texts. For example, pupils in Years 4,5, and 6 understand and can explain the effect of Shakespeare's use of opposites in Romeo and Juliet. They can also discuss topics in a mature fashion in other subjects, as for example the effects of pollution in rivers in their geography lessons and, can articulate their understanding of what it means to be a

'believer' in their religious education lessons. During the inspection, pupils of all ages demonstrated their ability to talk articulately about the things they like about school.

68. The very good spoken vocabulary of most pupils has a positive effect on their reading skills and all pupils make very good progress. A love of reading is fostered from pupils' earliest days in school. Four year olds were observed 'reading' and sharing books with one another and by the age of seven most pupils read books designed for older children fluently and with understanding. Pupils read a range of books, including non-fiction plays and poetry with increasing competence and accuracy and by the time they are 11 pupils are able to talk with discernment about a range of authors and use reference books competently for research in such subjects as history and geography. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported very well by teachers, classroom assistants and by the other children so that they can take full part in all lessons. The group reading sessions held at lunchtime involve all children from Year 2. Both classroom assistants and volunteers help with these and add much to foster and strengthen a love of reading and improve pupils' reading skills.
69. The content of the children's writing is very interesting and they can write in a wide variety of ways such as letters, book reviews, an account of an outing and newspaper reports. They know about varying the language used and length of sentences to suit the purpose and the audience, as for example, when designing advertisements to sell houses, or posters campaigning against water pollution. Sometimes the ability to write is outstanding. The school is justifiably proud of some of the poems the children write and proudly incorporates them into the school prospectus. Recently, the older pupils have been pretending to be Romeo or Juliet and have written love letters. These show a very mature understanding of how to express deep feelings by use of poetic language including the use of similes. For example 'Your eyes are as blue as the Caribbean seas under a sunny sky.'
70. These high standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are the direct result of the consistently very good teaching in Years 2 – 6. These classes are taught by the English co-ordinator. Her love of English together with her subject knowledge and her high expectations of both standards of work and behaviour ensure that the children make very good progress. The strategic use of classroom assistants, the careful match of work to pupils' needs, skilled questioning and sensitive, constructive comments on their work ensure that all pupils including those with learning disabilities make good progress. Literacy skills are given good emphasis in other subjects of the curriculum.
71. In contrast to the very good content of pupils' writing, however, the presentation of work is sometimes untidy because pupils do not learn to use a cursive script early enough. Pupils' spelling is as expected for their age and the school has appropriately identified targets for improvements in spelling and handwriting in the school improvement plan. The management of the subject is very good. The results of the national tests are analysed to see where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and the curriculum is then adjusted to effect improvements. Resources are good and there is a well-stocked school library which is used effectively to help children develop their research skills. Visits out of school to the theatre and visits by professional poets to the school further enhance the rich curriculum for English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

72. In Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards in mathematics that are in line with the national average. Results in the national tests have fluctuated in recent years but have been below both the national average and below those attained by similar schools. Inspection evidence, however, indicates that standards are above average with those expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6 and progress is good. All pupils whatever their background make good progress during their time at school.
73. Standards reported during the inspection are better than those achieved in recent national tests because the school has recently developed and successfully implemented a long-term strategy for

improving attainment in mathematics. This has had a positive effect on raising standards in all classes. The strategy has included:

- setting pupils for numeracy lessons;
- setting targets for individual pupils and so matching work to individual needs and abilities;
- targeting and supporting pupils needing additional help in learning mathematics with, for example, booster classes;
- teaching to the National Numeracy Strategy; and
- training staff in teaching mathematics through, for example, attendance at relevant courses.

74. Standards of work seen in most observed lessons indicate that this strategy is effectively continuing to improve pupils' attainment.

75. By Year 2 pupils double and halve numbers and understand that subtraction is the inverse to addition. Some can mentally recall number facts from the 2x, 3x and 5x tables. More able pupils arrange numbers in number squares and recognise number sequences and are beginning to devise strategies for mentally adding and subtracting two digit numbers. Most pupils can measure using centimetres but less able pupils find this difficult even though they are beginning to recall and use addition and subtraction facts up to ten.

76. By Year 6 pupils solve mathematical problems, recognising patterns and making rules whilst predicting outcomes. They employ efficient written methods in their calculations and are able to check their results. Most are able to discuss their work in detail and display a good knowledge of mathematical terms. The more able check results by using approximations. Overall progress in numeracy is satisfactory for all groups of pupils.

77. The quality of teaching and learning of mathematics ranged from satisfactory to very good and was good overall. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and raising attainment. When teaching is good or better consistent strengths are:

- planning is detailed and ensures that all pupils are included in all aspects of the lesson;
- relationships with pupils are at least good and usually very good and so pupils exhibit a positive attitude to learning;
- support staff are well used to support the less able pupils and so enhance their learning;
- the pace of lessons is brisk and pupils are sufficiently challenged by the tasks set for them;
- teachers have a good knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and use the end of sessions well to reinforce learning and assess achievement.

78. The subject co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well and is aware of the continuing need to further improve standards. She has ensured that the National Numeracy Strategy has been fully implemented and that the need for further improvement in attainment has had a high profile within the school and that staff have shared this need. This has had a positive effect on teaching and learning. Numeracy is well taught in other subjects in the curriculum.

79. Resources are satisfactory and are constantly being updated and increased. They are well managed and well used and cover all aspects of the National Curriculum. Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are good throughout the school. Although computers are to be found in every classroom and the school has a recently built ICT suite, there was limited evidence of ICT being used meaningfully on a regular basis to enhance learning in mathematics.

80. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection and has implemented effective strategies for continuing to improve attainment. It is now well placed to continue to move forward.

## **SCIENCE**

81. Standards are average and pupils make satisfactory progress at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to that at the time of the last inspection. Judgements are based on an analysis of

records, discussion with pupils and the observation of one lesson. The results of the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are average.

82. In Year 2 pupils learn that a plant is a living thing and can name its parts, for example, stalk, leaf and stem. Some pupils know that leaves store food for the plant. Pupils have good opportunities to investigate and explore seeds growing such as cress. They make observations and guess what might happen. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported in their literacy skills; for example, staff prepare key vocabulary sentence work so some pupils can underwrite the key text. The pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by their class teachers and the learning support staff. They work alongside the other pupils in the class and they make good progress in developing their scientific skills in relation to their abilities.
83. In Year 6 pupils develop their skills in observing, recording and explaining their observations. They are encouraged to use the correct scientific terms and vocabulary in their work and use the terms stigma, ovary, pollen and stamen when learning about flowering plants. Pupils conduct experiments to discover what happens when some substances are heated or mixed in other solutions. They record their observations and make their views known to each other about what might have happened. Other pupils observe and record what happens inside a wormery they built. Good use of the Internet has been made to research topics in more depth to find out about animals that are born from eggs.
84. The science curriculum is planned to ensure that the pupils have many opportunities to plan, predict, observe and consider what has happened during their investigations. All areas of science are given appropriate coverage and the pupils are given opportunities to consolidate and extend their learning. The school has recently reviewed the curriculum in science and made some alterations.
85. The co-ordinator provides sound support and encouragement for her colleagues. She makes careful analyses of test results and alters and adjusts the curriculum accordingly.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

86. Standards in art and design across the school are above average.
87. No lessons in art and design were observed during the inspection, as none were timetabled and the quality of teaching and learning could not be judged. However, evidence drawn from a scrutiny of pupils' work, from art work on display and from a scrutiny of planning is conclusive. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well and make good progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding in the subject as they move through the school.
88. This represents an improvement in standards since the last inspection, which reported that attainment was in line with national expectations and that pupils made satisfactory progress overall.
89. Pupils now make good progress in developing their skills in art and design and this is reflected in the consistently good standard of art on display. Year 1 pupils explore and develop ideas when making junk models and are given opportunities to investigate how to mix colours correctly whilst pupils in Year 2 build up their skills and understanding by learning brush techniques. Older pupils are given opportunities to, for instance, use a range of materials such as textiles in artwork and to study, appreciate and paint in the style of artists such as Turner. Some of the seascapes painted in this style by Year 3 and Year 4 pupils showed creativity, care and the use of imagination.
90. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are able to fully explore and develop ideas and are capable of analysing their work critically to adapt and improve it to their own intentions. Many are able to develop their work whilst taking its purpose into account. Their paintings and sketches included evidence of attention to detail and matching visual qualities to their intentions.

91. Resources for art and design are good and fully meet the needs of teaching the National Curriculum. Although computers are located in every classroom and the school has a new ICT suite, the use of ICT to enhance learning is satisfactory overall.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

92. Standards in design and technology are in line with national expectations across the school.
93. Owing to timetabling arrangements it was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection. However evidence drawn from a scrutiny of pupils' design folders, from the limited amount of work on display and from photographic records of pupils' work, indicates standards are average and that the subject is satisfactorily covered during the course of the school year. The curriculum is planned in a satisfactory manner and many pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress building up skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject in all year groups within the school. This represents a maintenance of standards since the previous inspection.
94. Although the quality of teaching and its impact on learning could not be judged it was evident from both planning and from completed work that pupils are given regular and relevant opportunities to build up their skills in designing, making and evaluating as they progress through the school. The available evidence confirmed that, by the age of seven, most pupils had developed the skills needed to use and handle a range of appropriate tools safely and effectively but that they had been given more limited opportunities to develop evaluative skills.
95. Older pupils work at designing, making and evaluating slippers and are given opportunities to develop their knowledge of food technology. The available evidence confirmed that pupils made satisfactory progress in developing new skills in nearly all aspects of the subject and that they had been given opportunities to practise and refine their evaluation of products. There was, however, limited evidence of pupils being given opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of control mechanisms and this slows the rate of progress overall.
96. Resources are satisfactory and the school possesses a satisfactory range of equipment for teaching all aspects of the National Curriculum.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

97. Standards are average and pupils make satisfactory progress overall.
98. Time for geography is 'blocked' for each class from Years 2 to Year 6 with units of work planned in line with the latest national and local curriculum guidance. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection but a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils shows standards are broadly in line with those expected. These judgements are the same as at the time of the last inspection.
99. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about leisure activities, occupations, local buildings, transport, goods and services, settlements and features of the landscape. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, lessons learnt in Years 1 and 2 are built on and extended appropriately and, in addition, pupils learn about natural materials, weather, migration and environmental issues such as conservation. The geography work in books and around the school shows appropriate links made across subjects, notably using literacy, mathematics and ICT for research.
100. In the lesson observed, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 demonstrated a sound knowledge of the way in which rivers are looked after and protected. They can describe the causes of flooding and the problems it causes. They also know about the work of the Environment Agency. Teaching was satisfactory, pupils demonstrated a positive attitude to the subject and achieved the standard expected for their age. The subject is co-ordinated satisfactorily. The co-ordinator checks

teachers' planning to make sure it matches units of study mapped out over the year. Resources for geography are satisfactory and attractive displays in the classroom enhance pupils' learning.

## **HISTORY**

101. Standards are average and pupils' progress is satisfactory overall.
102. The curriculum is now organised into 'blocks' of time across classes during a school year and planning, based on the latest guidance, ensures suitable coverage. Two lessons were observed and, together with a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with groups of pupils, show that by Year 2 and Year 6 standards are average. This judgement is the same as at the last inspection.
103. In one very good lesson the teacher made the lesson objectives clear to the pupils and used a 'fun' activity to help pupils to understand the difference between fact and opinion. Pupils were very articulate, demonstrating a good knowledge of first and secondary sources of information such as aerial photography. The pupils were so excited by the topic that they all wanted to talk at once but, through skilled, good humoured class management strategies, the teacher quickly established order once more. The teacher used carefully selected resources very well and made very good use of the resources on display to help pupils distinguish fact from opinion. As a result of skilled teaching the pupils made rapid progress. Once the introduction was over, the teacher became a 'commanding officer' of a Roman legion. All the pupils were soldiers under her command. She rewarded her hardworking troops with 20 minutes in which to write home to Rome giving their opinion of Britain and the journey from Rome. In their letter, the pupils were to provide facts as well as opinions; this they did and learnt very well. The teacher reinforced the time limit by telling the pupils that any unfinished letters would miss the boat to Rome. She made very good use of the classroom assistant to support the less able pupils and the resulting work was of a very high standard due to lively, imaginative and well-focused teaching. All pupils made very good progress in the lesson.
104. The oldest pupils in Years 5/6 are learning about ancient Egypt. The lesson was appropriately linked to the geography topic of water. However, whilst there were interesting activities provided for the pupils, such as using a quiz on the computer and making models of water clocks and 'shaduf' for bringing water up from a well, the lesson was not focused sharply enough and the pace of the lesson was slow.
105. The management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator checks teachers' planning to ensure the curriculum is fully covered and that the subject is made more meaningful by appropriate links with other subjects of the curriculum. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

106. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards of attainment are in line with national expectations and pupils' progress is satisfactory. The skills and understanding that pupils demonstrate have improved from the last inspection and they are more competent users of a range of different applications.
107. Standards are improving because the school is working hard to keep pace with the constantly developing nature of the subject in terms of knowledge, understanding and resources. Throughout the school it is evident that pupils' skills in using ICT are as important as good literacy and numeracy skills, along with support of a designated teacher's knowledge and expertise. The access pupils have to new computers is enabling them to become effective users. The school has decided to resource the subject very well so that pupils can use ICT as part of all lessons to support their learning.
108. By the end of Year 2, pupils are familiar with the different functions of the keyboard and mouse. All pupils load programs and save and retrieve their work. Most pupils know what a font is and some

can change the size and appearance of their text. When using an art program, pupils change the colours and the size of the palette, control the mouse with care to drag and drop an icon in a specific place. They use the commands to fill, line draw and add text. Computers are used well to support work in literacy and numeracy and reinforce learning.

109. By the end of Year 6 standards are average. Pupils use ICT as a tool for learning, research, presentation and for reinforcing learning. They use computers with great enthusiasm and with good levels of concentration. They behave well and are ready to give a helping hand to others who might be struggling. Pupils are keen to explore the potential of computers and to find things out. There are timetabled lessons when they are directly taught the necessary skills in an appropriate manner to help them become more proficient computer users, especially for research tasks in subjects like mathematics. The pupils find information using a variety of search facilities and, instead of just printing out the information they use it to enhance their topics. Pupils are not yet proficient at using a wide range of applications, for example, desktop publishing programs. Throughout Years 2-6, pupils confidently use computers to present their written work and make very good use of them for editing and drafting.
110. Co-ordination is satisfactory, as is the curriculum. National guidelines for teaching and learning in the subject are being used and this, along with teachers' appropriate use of a range of programs, is having an impact on raising standards. Following the last inspection the governing body and the senior management team put into place an effective action plan. This, along with national initiatives, such as the National Grid for Learning and the money for training from the National Opportunities Fund, has partly helped to raise standards for the school to achieve its long-term vision. Resources have been increased considerably and are now good.

## **MUSIC**

111. By Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' standards are average and progress is satisfactory.
112. As a result of effective subject management and sound planning, pupils are given regular opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge, understanding and appreciation of all relevant aspects of music as they progress through the school. As a result most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall in all year groups. However keeping records of the progress pupils make and keeping track of subject delivery is an area for further development if the school is to ensure that the needs of all pupils are being met. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
113. Pupils in Year 2 learn about the structure of music and are given opportunities to explore sounds and rhythms. Older pupils are given opportunities to develop their skills at playing a musical instrument, usually a recorder. Pupils in Year 4 understand how musical patterns are repeated in compositions and are able to write and read music using non-standard notation. This was evident during an observed lesson on creating and maintaining rhythm patterns when pupils performed and evaluated each other's compositions. Most discussed their performances and worked with clarity and used suitable musical vocabulary in explanations.
114. The quality of teaching and learning in music in the few lessons observed is good overall and this is reflected in the work of pupils:
- the teacher's relationship with her class was very good and, as a result, this had a positive impact on learning;
  - the lesson was well prepared and the effective teaching assistant was used well to aid learning, especially that of the younger pupils;
  - all aspects of the lesson were made exciting by the class teacher who ensured that all pupils were included in all activities, and, as a result, pupils achieved well; and
  - the class teacher's pupil management was very good and this helped the lesson to proceed at a brisk pace.

115. Overall the school's instrumental resources are satisfactory and meet the needs of teaching the music National Curriculum. All classes have access to a range of pitched and un-pitched percussive instruments but the range of melodic instruments is more limited. Even though ICT is used to enhance composing the school does not presently possess any modern keyboard instruments with the ability to be linked to computers. The provision of music reproduction equipment, such as compact disc players, is good and is used well to enhance learning.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

116. Standards are average and all pupils including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and this has been maintained since the last inspection. Judgements are based on an analysis of school planning, teacher records and assessments. Pupils continue to have access to a good range of extra-curricular activities that include netball, football and athletics, which extend their skills development effectively.
117. By Year 2, pupils develop basic gymnastic skills of travelling through a space, under and over apparatus and by using different parts of their bodies. They move around safely and purposefully, introduce individuality into their sequences and listen carefully to instructions. In games, they have developed basic ball control skills. They are able to pass a ball to a partner in a controlled way and stop it with one foot. Most pupils understand why it is important to start and finish sessions with gentle exercise. They do not have sufficient opportunities to evaluate their own work and that of others.
118. By Year 6, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the subject. Pupils demonstrate that they have built up knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to improve and control ball skills. The majority are competent at throwing and catching, dribbling and passing. They have made good progress in working co-operatively in pairs and in small groups and as a result they are able to sensibly select members for teams. They combine the appropriate skills in small team games. All pupils have opportunities to learn to swim in Years 2 to 6 and by the time they leave the school the majority can swim competently.
119. There is a satisfactory curriculum in place so that, teachers have a framework to plan from and to use for assessing pupils' attainment. Residential experiences where pupils experience and learn a range of outdoor pursuit skills, such as abseiling and canoeing are good. The school is also very involved in inter-school activities and as a result it has many shields and awards that celebrate pupils' achievements in football, netball and athletics. All pupils have the opportunity to be included in all events.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

120. Standards are above the levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus and pupils make good progress. The high standards throughout the school have been maintained. The curriculum is both interesting and relevant to the needs of the pupils. A scrutiny of pupils' work from Year 2 shows that pupils learn to understand the significance of a variety of celebrations including harvest, Christmas and Easter. These are linked very well to the children's own experiences of belonging to a family. Sensitive teaching enables pupils to share deep emotional experiences with their teacher. For example, one pupil wrote about going to his Nan's funeral. The teacher's comments regarding this experience showed great respect for the pupil's thoughts and feelings. In Year 6, pupils analyse sacred texts to discover specific 'genres' used and have found examples of stories, rules, advice, prayers and letters. They have also tried writing in the style of the Ten Commandments to make rules for cooking. For example one very practical cookery commandment read, 'Thou shalt not burn the dinner.'

121. The children's positive attitude to their lessons continues to be a strength of the school. This positive attitude is reflected in the pupils' work. In every class children produce lively, well thought out responses to their lessons. In the only lesson observed, the quality of teaching is judged to be very good.
122. In the very good lesson observed pupils showed not only a good understanding of the Bible and the Torah, but also demonstrated a mature understanding that things of real importance are those involving love and commitment.
123. The curriculum is based on the Herefordshire Agreed Syllabus and has been adjusted appropriately to meet the particular needs of the school. The scheme of work provides clear guidance for teachers about what to teach, the resources to use and also the way in which religious education can be linked to and be reinforced by other subjects of the curriculum. The school's policy for religious education is out of date. The school has sufficient resources to teach the curriculum which is enhanced appropriately by visits to local churches and by ministers from local churches coming into school. Children are also taken to Coventry to look at the cathedral and a Hindu temple to enhance learning further.