

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BANTOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wolverhampton

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 132197

Headteacher: Miss P. A. Bull

Reporting inspector: C.D. Loizou  
18645

Dates of inspection: 31 March – 3 April 2003

Inspection number: 248935

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:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Aston Street Penn Fields Wolverhampton
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. J. Reynolds
Date of previous inspection:	Not applicable

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18645	C.D. Loizou	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion Science Information and communication technology Physical education	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19342	T. Heavey	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21235	M. Graham	Team inspector	English Geography History	
22788	S. West	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Mathematics Music Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
21460	R. Andrew	Team inspector	Special educational needs Foundation Stage Curriculum Art and design Design and technology	
11472	M. Beale	Team inspector	English as an additional language	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bantock Primary School opened in September 2000 as a result of the amalgamation of two primary schools. It is situated on one site near Wolverhampton city centre. Most of the pupils come from the immediate area. The turnover of pupils joining or leaving the school is very high (up to 50 per cent a year) as many families are temporarily located in this area of the city. This has a significant impact on the school. Last year the school also admitted 16 per cent of its pupils who come from refugee families. The headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in January 2001. The school is average in size and admits up to 60 children into its Reception year. There are 238 pupils on roll between the ages of four and eleven and they are taught in eleven classes. There is also a Nursery class which admits up to 60 part-time children from three years of age (30 full-time equivalent). Sixty-eight per cent of the pupils, which is well above the national average, are learning English as an additional language and most of these speak Panjabi and Urdu. Attainment on entry to the Reception year is well below the standard expected of four-year-olds. Thirty-four per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. The school has identified 19 per cent of its pupils as having special educational needs, which is average. Less than one per cent of the pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

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

The school provides a good education and the pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Since the school opened in September 2000, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels in the national tests at age 7 and 11 has been rising. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. From a low starting point the pupils make good progress in most subjects. Given that, on average, half of the pupils join or leave the school at times other than the usual year of admission, and two thirds are learning English as an additional language, the school does well for its pupils. This is confirmed by the marked improvement in standards, particularly in English and mathematics, but the school still has much to do in its drive to raise standards further. The teaching is good overall and it is very good in the Nursery. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher, senior staff and governors. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The pupils achieve well in most subjects and make good progress because the teaching is good.
- The provision made for the pupils learning English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs is good. The pupils' progress is monitored closely and well managed with very good support provided by teachers, nursery nurses and classroom assistants.
- The quality of education in the Nursery is very good. The teaching is highly effective and enables the children to get a very good start to their education.
- The development of this new school is well led and managed by the headteacher, key staff and governors.
- The school provides a good curriculum. It is well planned and also includes a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development of the pupils are good features of the school. This is having a very positive impact on relationships across the school and the social development of the pupils.



### What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 could be higher.
- Standards in information and communication technology in the junior years could be higher.
- The way teachers use the assessment information to set learning targets for individual pupils.
- Attendance rates. The school should aim to reduce the amount of authorised absence.

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

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

The school opened in September 2000. This is its first inspection. Using national assessment information, there are good indications that standards are rising, particularly in English and mathematics.

### STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	n/a	E	E	C
Mathematics	n/a	E	E	D
Science	n/a	E	E	E

**Key**

well above average      A

above average            B

average                    C

below average            D

well below average      E

(The "similar" in the table above refers to the percentage of free school meals and not the size of the school.)

The school's performance was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science in 2002 and when compared with similar schools, attainment was average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. Since 2001, compared with similar schools, results have improved well in English and mathematics but less so in science. The improvement in standards in English and mathematics is largely attributable to the good and effective teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. Inspection evidence confirms that standards continue to rise as a larger proportion of pupils compared with last year have reached the levels expected for their age.

The performance of the pupils in the national tests for Year 2 show that standards were below average in reading, writing and mathematics and, when compared with similar schools, standards were above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Like the Year 6 results, standards have been rising each year, except that teachers' assessments show that science standards were well below average and could be higher. Inspection evidence confirms that the pupils achieve well in speaking, listening, reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 but are below average by the end of Year 6. The Nursery children achieve very well with a significant number reaching the standards expected for their age by the time they start the Reception year. Again, the high turnover of children means that a large proportion of them do not complete the Foundation Stage

in the school. They make good progress in Reception, but standards overall are below those expected by the time the children move to Year 1.

The school's good curriculum and teaching enable the pupils to achieve above average standards in music and average standards in art and design, design and technology, physical education and religious education. Although standards in geography and history are below average, the pupils have made good progress and standards are affected by their limited language and communication skills in these subjects. The pupils with special educational needs and the large number learning English as an additional language make good progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to learning, to school and to each other are very good. They try hard and enjoy learning, applying themselves well, often co-operating and helping other pupils.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. This helps to create an orderly and positive learning environment. There were no exclusions last year.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils are independent and show maturity. Relationships are very good. The pupils enjoy celebrating the achievements of others.
Attendance	Below average. This is unsatisfactory because the rate of authorised absence is above that in most schools. There is very little unauthorised absence.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is good overall. The most effective teaching is in the Nursery, where the teaching is of a high standard. Most of the teaching seen across the school has sufficient challenge; the work set for the pupils is well matched to their abilities. The teaching of literacy and mathematics is consistently good across the school and this has a positive impact on how well the pupils learn. There is particularly effective support provided for the large number of pupils learning English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs. Teachers effectively assess how well the pupils are doing, especially in literacy and numeracy, and this is guiding their planning, but more could be done to use this information to set individual learning targets for the pupils and to help them to understand their learning. The teaching is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning and raising standards, although more could be done to improve information and communication technology (ICT) skills in the junior classes where there are gaps in some aspects of the ICT curriculum. However, a great deal has been achieved by the school since it opened. Staff training has ensured a common understanding of what constitutes effective teaching and money has been used well to provide teachers with the resources they need. A similar approach needs to be adopted to raise standards in ICT.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good. Teachers provide a good range of practical and relevant tasks with opportunities for the pupils to use computers to support their learning. However, there are some gaps in the information and communication technology curriculum for junior pupils, resulting in some inconsistencies in what the pupils know and can do. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities and the staff use educational visits very well to support the pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The pupils receive good and effective support. They are identified early and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good assessments of pupils' needs are made. They are supported very well in lessons. Classroom assistants and nursery nurses are on hand to support these pupils and make a valuable contribution to the progress they make.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good and is supported by a broad range of activities in school and outside school times. Good provision is made for the pupils' personal development. The pupils are developing a good understanding of life in a multi-cultural society and very good provision is made for their social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a good level of care provided for all the pupils. The school has good procedures to assess how well the pupils are doing but more could be done by teachers to set individual learning targets for the pupils to achieve.

Parents believe that the school improves their children's personal development very well. Good quality information about the curriculum and school events is provided for parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership and very clear direction for the school. The deputy headteacher and senior staff work closely with her to monitor lessons, pupils' work and their progress. The management of the school is very well focused on raising standards and providing good opportunities for its pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides good and effective support. They work closely with the school and its staff and have a clear understanding of their role in managing and monitoring the work of the school. They have coped well with the establishment of the school since it opened.
The school's evaluation of	This is good overall. The governors and staff have established clear

its performance	priorities in the school development plan through an effective process involving audits, monitoring and evaluating the pupils' performance in national tests.
The strategic use of resources	This is good. There are targets which are matched to spending priorities. The school manages its finances well, ensuring best value for money.

The administrative staff are efficient and make themselves available to parents and visitors as well as managing the smooth running of the school and its finances. The school building and school site are well maintained and managed.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and sets high expectations.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school and are kept well informed.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The range of activities provided outside lessons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information provided about their children's progress.</li> </ul>

Parents think highly of the school and are pleased with the way the headteacher and staff are approachable and supportive. The inspectors agree with all of the positive views expressed by parents and judge that the information provided by the school is of good quality.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Inspection evidence shows that on entry to the Nursery the majority of children start with standards that are well below those expected for their age. The very good teaching in the Nursery and the good teaching in the Reception classes ensures that the children make good progress. The children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. This is because all the adults who work in the Foundation Stage are skilled in observing and noting what each child knows, understands and can do, and plan a wide range of activities. In the Nursery, progress is often very good because the information gained from observing the children is used effectively to make decisions about what each child needs to learn next. This is followed through with activities that promote the skills each child needs and provides a good level of challenge. In the Reception classes, the free choice activities do not always provide enough challenge and sometimes opportunities are missed in whole class and group work to move on more able children to the next steps.
2. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below those expected in English, mathematics and science. The majority of pupils are learning English as an additional language and this affects reading and writing standards by the end of Year 2. Overall, the pupils in the infant years have made good progress in speaking, listening, reading, writing and mathematics and this is largely attributable to effective teaching by teachers and good support from teaching assistants, many of whom are specially trained and provide effective support for pupils who are in the early stages of English language acquisition. Science standards are below average because the pupils find it difficult to form ideas and hypotheses and also to explain observable changes during their investigations and experiments. In all these core skills and subjects however, the school is making good progress in raising standards and this is reflected in the national tests which show that, since the school was opened, standards have been rising year on year.
3. Similarly, standards have improved in the junior years in English and mathematics but less so in science. English and mathematics standards show particularly good improvement because the teaching in the junior years is good. The basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy are well taught and national tests reflect this as they too have been rising since the school opened. Given that the majority of pupils are learning English as an additional language and the school is greatly affected by a high turnover of pupils which can be up to 50 per cent in any one year, the school is doing well to maintain and improve standards in English and mathematics each year. However, science results show less movement because there are greater inconsistencies in the way science is taught. Although the pupils make satisfactory progress in science, more could be done to develop the pupils' questioning skills so they are better prepared to form judgements about observable changes in investigations. Thinking skills and the forming of sensible hypotheses are less well developed aspects of the pupils' learning in science compared to how they learn in other subjects.
4. In both the infant and the junior classes the pupils who have special educational needs make good progress. They are well supported by teaching assistants, have good relationships with adults and other pupils and work hard. The pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress. They are well supported in lessons and, like other pupils, reach their targets which are clearly stated and monitored well. Teaching assistants are well deployed and the pupils' progress is being monitored well to ensure that the pupils are provided with

necessary support in their learning, especially in the core skills of reading, writing and mathematics.

5. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 but below average by the end of Year 6. The pupils make good progress because ICT is linked to the work the pupils do in other subjects. The school has improved resources and teaching expertise so that more lessons involve elements of ICT across a range of subjects. However, more could be done in the junior years to improve the pupils' knowledge and understanding of control technology and graphic modelling.
6. The pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and achieve standards that are in line with those expected by the end of Year 6. They make good progress in the infant years in religious education. In art and design, design and technology and physical education, the pupils achieve standards that are in line with those expected for their age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in music are above average because there is particularly effective teaching and a good range of musical skills being taught. In geography and history, standards are below those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 but the teaching is good. Standards in geography and history are greatly affected by the pupils' limited language skills. Recording skills in both subjects are variable and the pupils do not fully understand what they have learned before. More could be done at the end of lessons to consolidate learning by providing more lessons that go over core skills and revise what learning objectives have been achieved, especially in geography and history.

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

7. The pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour supported by very good relationships and good personal development, make a major contribution to their education and are a strong feature of school life.
8. The very positive attitudes can be seen in the pupils' happy, smiling faces as they arrive punctually at school, and parents responding to the questionnaire are unanimous in declaring that their children like coming to school. The pupils respond very well to the good teaching, showing through their perseverance in tasks and their very high levels of concentration that they are determined to learn. As a result of their great efforts they make good progress as they go through the school. A mixed Year 1 and Year 2 class in a physical education lesson, for example, visibly grew in confidence and in creativity as they eagerly and carefully followed the clear instructions of their teacher. Such very positive attitudes enhance the pupils' learning experience.
9. Ninety-three per cent of parents responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire saying that behaviour at this school is very good. Inspectors agree and, as a result, the pupils are able to concentrate on their work without distraction or disturbance, and apply themselves to their work. They show great respect both to one another and to adults in the school. One child, not content with holding open the door for an inspector, proceeded to ask whether he would like her to show him round her school. From the very orderly entry into school in the morning through the calm, work-like atmosphere in the classroom to the friendly and chatty lunch hour, the pupils show great politeness and a mutual tolerance that belies their years. They celebrate one another's achievements, breaking out in spontaneous applause when one of their groups makes a particularly brave effort or achieves success in a project, as in a Year 1 physical education lesson where one child for the first time succeeded in doing a forward roll.

Inspectors saw no incident of unruly or aggressive behaviour and the school has no history of exclusions.

10. Adults in the school ably model the behaviour standards that they demand from the pupils. There are very good relationships which give the pupils the confidence to accept challenges, to extend their learning, and to develop a growing sense of personal responsibility as they progress through the school. Whilst not yet showing a great spirit of initiative and independent learning they nevertheless display an eagerness to carry out tasks allotted to them, and to take their responsibilities seriously. For example, very young pupils tidy away the heavy equipment used in the hall, or return the marked registers to the office. The more computer literate pupils in a Year 1 and 2 information and communication technology lesson were paired with less able pupils and helped them to develop their skills. Year 5 and 6 pupils help out in the dining hall and in school assemblies as well as caring for the younger pupils in the playground. In a school with such a high pupil turnover and with the pupils originating from such diverse language backgrounds the more established pupils can be seen making new pupils welcome and helping them to settle in. The pupils also demonstrate their growing sense of citizenship and their care for the disadvantaged in society by raising considerable sums of money for their chosen charities such as the Blue Peter appeals, Compton Hospice, Barnado's, National Children's Home, Books to Africa, and several other good causes. Such activities educate the pupils to see themselves as part of a wider community, and promote in them a growing sense of citizenship and personal responsibility.
11. In spite of the school's best efforts the attendance rate for the last full reporting year is well below the national average, and is therefore unsatisfactory because of the adverse effects on the education of those pupils who miss so many lessons. However, as well as showing an improvement on the previous year, the figures show that unauthorised absence was better than the national average. The main reasons for the absences include extended holidays abroad in term time, a number of pupils off roll but still on the register (linked to the very high pupil turnover), and health-related absences common in areas of social disadvantage. In many cases the blame does not lie with the pupils, since they depend on adults to bring them to school. The involvement of the Education Social Work Service and the appointment of a Home-School Liaison Officer are now working with those families to secure an improvement in attendance. The registration process at both morning and afternoon sessions complies with legal requirements, and pupils arrive punctually at school, though some time is lost between activities during the school day.

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

12. The teaching is good and ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent. A significant number of lessons, over one in four, were very good, including an excellent ICT lesson observed in a Year 1 and 2 class. Three in four of the lessons seen were good or better and very little unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers manage and organise their lessons well. In the infant and junior classes each week teachers spend part of an afternoon utilising particular subject specialisms when the pupils are divided into small groups for cross-curricular activities which involve special lessons in design and technology, art and design, food technology and community work and life skills. Teaching assistants are deployed very well to support the pupils with learning difficulties and they make a positive contribution to the quality and range of teaching across the school. They are particularly effective in supporting those pupils who are in the early stages of English language acquisition. The teaching is most effective in improving standards in literacy and numeracy. The very little unsatisfactory teaching was mainly due to a lack of subject knowledge in religious education in the junior years.

13. The teaching in the Nursery and Reception years is good overall with very good features. Three quarters of the lessons seen in the Foundation Stage were good or better. The children learn to settle quickly to routines and make good progress in their personal and social development because adults respond well to the children providing them with a structured curriculum with practical and stimulating activities. The teaching in the Nursery is strong and is mainly responsible for the good practice seen in the early years. All the adults throughout the Foundation Stage work very hard to provide resources and plan activities for all the children that challenge, stimulate and improve their language. Teachers and nursery nurses divide their time effectively so that the children benefit from effective support that enables them to make good progress in the acquisition of early language and numeracy skills. The children sing rhymes and count, follow shapes and choose to match shapes with numbers or pictures to letter sounds. More could now be done to ensure that during free-choice activities in the Reception year there are more clearly focused objectives on what the children are learning rather than what they are doing. A large number of children join the school in the very early stages of English language acquisition. Early identification of their specific needs is helping these children to make good progress.
14. Since the opening of the school two years ago, standards in English and mathematics have been rising because teachers are targeting specific support and matching activities to the pupils abilities and needs. There are significant barriers to learning that affect the rate of progress in raising standards. The high turnover of pupils means that teachers are continually adapting their learning programmes to integrate newly arrived pupils. Assessment procedures are good in this respect and allow for these disruptions. More could now be done to fine tune these arrangements so that teachers are better able to monitor the progress their pupils are making. The marking policy for example, is implemented inconsistently. Some of the marking is positive and helpful but the depth, range and effectiveness is inconsistent and this is an area for further development. Most of the teachers give good oral feedback about the work in hand. In the best lessons they encourage the pupils to identify their own mistakes and think about how to correct them. Where the marking is good, the teachers use the daily assessments of the pupils' progress to plan future work. This ensures that the pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work. The weakest marking is where the teachers do not provide the pupils with any guidance about the next steps for their learning.
15. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. Two in five lessons were very good and over three-quarters of the lessons seen were good or better and the rest satisfactory. The teachers plan their lessons carefully so that pupils in all year groups have work that is matched to their capabilities. The pupils respond well to the teaching. They listen carefully to instructions and during class discussions they offer thoughtful answers and responses. They persevere with tasks, for example, when learning to sound out unfamiliar words in Year 2 in a good literacy lesson where the pupils looked at a poem about the 'Deep Sea' or when Year 1 pupils tried very hard to mime simple actions during a good drama lesson. Year 1 and 2 pupils are taught to count, sort and calculate numbers to 100 well and can start from different points on a number line to count in 10's during the good mathematics lessons observed. The teaching is having a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour.
16. The teaching in the junior years is good. One in five lessons observed were very good including three-quarters of the lessons observed which were judged to be good or better. The rest were satisfactory with one unsatisfactory lesson in religious education. This lesson was judged to be unsatisfactory because the teacher's subject knowledge was not sufficient to deal with basic questions posed by the pupils. However, the teaching throughout the junior years is



effective because planning is good and the introductions to lessons make it clear what is expected and learning objectives are always shared with the pupils. In English lessons the teachers prepare good resources to support the pupils, as in a Year 5 and 6 lesson where the pupils investigate poetry at different levels. Here the teacher prepared extracts from poems which set different demands of the pupils according to their ability. More able pupils had to set out their ideas having learned how poems are structured and this helped them to identify the language devices used in poetry to convey meanings, humour, moods and human relationships. Average attaining and less capable pupils made good progress constructing their poems by looking at the rhythm and structure of poems. In both infant and junior lessons, more opportunities should be provided to improve the pupils' independent writing. In most lessons observed, teachers provide opportunities to extend the pupils' evaluations of their work, but in science, more could be done to improve the pupils' thinking skills using enquiry based learning and questioning that helps the pupils to draw conclusions and hypotheses when investigating or observing changes to materials or the effects of forces on objects and materials. Good use is made of computers to support the pupils' learning but in the junior years, more work could focus on control technology and graphic modelling.

17. The teachers use assessments of the pupils' performance in optional tests to monitor the pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. However, there is some inconsistency in the way teachers use assessment information to monitor the pupils' progress. The information is not being used consistently to provide specific work for more able and average attaining pupils in all lessons. In the most effective lessons this is done. But many of the lessons observed did not include sufficient revision or a plenary activity that would enable the pupils to consolidate what they have learned. Teachers keep detailed records having tested what the pupils know and this information is used to prepare annual reports to parents about their children's progress. Group learning targets are set for all the pupils and these help to predict what levels the pupils will reach at each stage but these now need to be fine tuned further so that more individual targets are set for each pupil.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and teaching assistants are fully aware of the intellectual and emotional needs of the pupils they are supporting. The individual requirements of the pupils are well matched to the learning targets within their individual education plans. The large number of pupils learning English as an additional language are fully integrated in all lessons and receive good support from teaching assistants who are particularly successful in helping these pupils to participate in class and group discussions. Teachers are very aware of the stages of English language acquisition for these pupils and they monitor their progress closely using good assessment procedures to record each stage of language development.

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

19. The curriculum offered to children in the Foundation Stage and to the pupils in the rest of the school is good. The curriculum in the Nursery is very good. Throughout the school, teachers provide rich and varied learning opportunities through a broad and balanced programme of subjects that include good opportunities for the pupils to experience topics that have good cross-curricular links. The curriculum is enriched with a wide range of experiences including visits and visitors to the school. Suitable time is allocated to each subject. However, individual lessons do not always have the allocated amount of time. This is because break times are not always strictly adhered to and time slippage here affects lessons as the day progresses. Also,

where Year 5 and 6 pupils move to mathematics or English sets or other activities, time is unnecessarily wasted in collecting books and equipment, moving rooms and settling to work.

20. Planning for each term is constructed well to meet the diverse needs of the pupils. The curriculum is planned with clear learning objectives and expected outcomes but sometimes teachers do not re-visit these objectives at the end of lessons to consolidate what the pupils have learned. Part of the school's aim is to develop responsibility and independence, to nurture self-esteem in all within the school community. All the pupils have access to the curriculum and there is a positive working atmosphere within the school which provides a good basis for the pupils to become life-long learners and caring members of society.
21. All policies and schemes of work are in place. Some are undergoing revision although the Governing Body has already approved most. A detailed Race Relations Policy is reviewed each term by the headteacher, the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) manager and the Governing Body. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are securely in place and are beginning to have an impact in raising standards. The school has thoughtfully developed systems for supporting the pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The system is based around the provision of quality in-class support. There is a very good system for inclusion which ensures that class teachers and the EMAG staff work closely together to provide these pupils access to the school's curriculum. There is a great deal of joint planning amongst the staff so that there is a clear understanding of how individual pupils can be helped to improve. The staff have a very good knowledge of the stages of language acquisition and keep detailed records on the pupils' progress which particularly relates to their speaking, listening, reading and writing development. New arrivals are carefully and sensitively introduced to the life of the school through a structured programme devised by the school's deputy headteacher. Senior staff maintain a clear overview of provision and work in partnership with the local authority to produce an EMAG development plan. The local authority provides teaching support and undertakes monitoring visits resulting in written reports and feedback to the school, about the quality and effectiveness of its EMAG provision. Teaching assistants and EMAG support staff have good subject knowledge and are able to lead groups in different lessons across the curriculum. For example, in a Year 1 English lesson, a nursery nurse led a word level activity of very good quality to a group of pupils at the early stages of language acquisition. She was able to support, encourage and challenge the pupils as they wrote and read new words containing 'ing'. The pupils were then able to rehearse and shape the use of these words in sentences using magnetic letters and a whiteboard.
22. The provision for pupils identified as having special educational needs is good. The policy has been reviewed to reflect the new Code of Practice for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs. The staff are well aware of the different levels of need in the school, and the pupils are well supported. There are effective sessions for small groups of pupils, for example, the pupils who need extra help in literacy and numeracy are catered for well. Teaching assistants in lessons give the pupils good support in their learning and are well informed as to the kind of help the pupils need. Individual education plans are devised by the staff, with a good level of consultation and support from the co-ordinator for special educational needs. There is good detail within paperwork, which is updated regularly and includes notes, for example of meetings identifying the focus of discussions and recommendations. Targets are specific and measurable, and there are regular reviews to adjust and refine these targets if necessary. There is good liaison and consultation between staff, parents, carers and pupils to agree these targets. The school has established good links with outside agencies and support from local authority groups and other schools.

23. Provision for extra curricular activities is very good. Throughout the week there are numerous clubs the pupils can attend, for example, French, Football, Dance, Art, Home Study, Gardening and Music (including percussion, recorder and choir). All the pupils have opportunities to experience a residential visit. Years 1 and 2 have an overnight stay at the Kingswood Centre, Years 3 and 4 have a three-night stay at Beaudesert where they enjoy team building and outdoor activities and Years 5 and 6 visit Wales for a week. There are numerous opportunities for the pupils to experience day visits to museums, galleries, faith centres and the local environment.
24. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is good. Because of its multi-national and multi-faith community, the whole ethos of the school emphasises living and working together and respecting points of view. During circle times pupils listen to each other and begin to value opinions and ideas. Younger pupils particularly know they can speak without fear of ridicule. They are very aware of the problems of other children; particularly those in the third world and in the last year have raised over £1000 for children less fortunate than themselves. These include Dr Barnardo's, Good Shepherd Trust for the homeless, Cancer Research, Compton Hospice toy sale, and Water for Ethiopia. Together with a musical parent they have visited a recording studio and made a CD called 'Chemical Children' which they are selling for Comic Relief. Health and sex education is suitably addressed through science programmes of study and through talks led by the school nurse. Through the 'Glug Road Show' the pupils are made aware of the dangers of drug abuse, alcohol and tobacco. The 'Kidscape' programme team talk to them about the effects of bullying and the Fire Service visit to remind them of safety in the home.
25. The school has very good links with the local community. Parents regularly visit to help with school activities. A 'mothers and toddlers' group meet four times a week. A 'family learning' group meets weekly. Led by an adult education tutor and a nursery nurse, parents choose their own programme and work first as a group and then with their children. There are good links with local faith centres and the pupils visit on a regular basis. A national bank, the Customs and Excise and a national steel company have all contributed towards enhancing the school environment. A group of pupils from Year 5 and 6 visit the Molineaux Centre Stadium in Wolverhampton twice a week for computer work and football themed activities.
26. The school has good links with partner institutions. Research is underway to make links with other Nurseries. Infant pupils are taken on a visit to the Merridale School to enjoy a pond dip. Older pupils visit a local secondary school for an Arts Day. There are good links with the Adult Education Service. Students from Further Education Colleges visit for work experience as classroom assistants and nursery nurses. The pupils from a nearby special school and other secondary schools also visit for work experience.
27. The school nurtures the pupils' personal development well. The headteacher and senior staff have carefully considered how this should be done so that it is firmly embedded in the work of the school. It figures prominently in the school's aims and all the staff do their best to put the school's intentions into practice. As a result, the pupils show respect for their teachers, other adults and each other. They are keen to learn and work and play constructively with each other. They have a good grasp of the diverse cultural backgrounds of the pupils who make up the school and a growing understanding of British cultural heritage, although for the majority it is their adopted country. Provision for aspects of personal development is built carefully into religious education and the taught programme of personal, social and health education. The school is missing some opportunities to build up the spiritual, moral, social and cultural

dimensions of the pupils' learning through the rest of the curriculum because they are not yet embedded in subject planning.

28. The school provides well for the pupils' spiritual development. Good opportunities are made to celebrate a range of religious festivals. The school considers the diverse backgrounds of the pupils when planning for assemblies and draws on their knowledge to bring assemblies to life. During the inspection, all the pupils gathered together to reflect on Mothering Sunday in the whole school assembly and to consider how much mothers and carers do to help and support their families. Later in the week, the Sikh festival of Baisakhi was explained well to the pupils in Years 1 and 2. Sikh pupils proudly helped the teacher to explain the celebrations and to show the special clothes that are worn. They reminded the pupils of the Five Ks at the centre of their religious traditions and explained what happens at the Gurdwara. All the pupils were invited to reflect on the wonder of such occasions, on their good fortune in being able to celebrate so many festivals and to give thanks together. At the end all the pupils applauded spontaneously. The pupils are taught to value what others have to say, to respect their views, customs and beliefs. Teachers contribute well to this by showing concern for all the pupils in their care and trying to draw out the best in them. They encourage the pupils to express their feelings through singing and movement as well as in words because many English language learners find this difficult. The pupils learn the school hymn, which stresses friendship and community.
29. The school gives good attention to teaching pupils moral values. Assemblies contribute as well to the pupils' moral development as they do to their spiritual development. Stories with moral themes are well chosen to form a significant part of the planned programme and the pupils develop an understanding of how their actions affect others. The pupils are taught how to tell right from wrong from an early age. The school rules are displayed prominently to remind pupils how to treat each other and take care of the school. The pupils are encouraged to think of others less fortunate than themselves and they respond by working hard to raise money for charitable causes, for example, the 'Blue Peter Water Appeal'.
30. The school promotes the pupils' social development very well. From an early age the pupils carry out classroom jobs and as they grow older take on responsibilities that help the school to run smoothly. The afternoon activity session in junior classes helps older pupils to work in the Nursery as part of the school's personal and social curriculum. The pupils are involved in the 'Buddy Scheme' so that pupils who find it difficult to make friends are befriended. They help to look after the pet guinea pig, to water the seeds that they have planted and to clear up after lessons. Very good opportunities are made to enable all the pupils from Year 1 upwards to take part in residential visits, from a one night stay to start with, increasing to five nights in Years 5 and 6. Older pupils take part in challenging physical activities as part of their programme, learn to watch out for each other and gain independence.
31. The school gives good attention to teaching pupils about the wide diversity and richness of the cultural backgrounds of the pupils who make up the school. They visit places of worship, learn about different life styles, examine different clothes, listen to different styles of music and sample a range of foods. Children in the Reception classes for example, were preparing for a party. As well as making and eating jam sandwiches and egg and cress sandwiches they tried typical Indian sweets and danced to Indian music. They have also made crowns and celebrated the Queen's Golden Jubilee. In their art and design lessons, older pupils learn about famous western artists for example Van Gogh as well as trying out painting in the style of Aboriginal artists. They have visited Wolverhampton Art Gallery to see the range of art on display. In music lessons, the pupils learn a range of songs from different cultures, traditions

and times from nursery rhymes to rap. The school library and class book boxes encourage them to read from a wide range of stories from many countries. The pupils have visited the Black Country Museum to gain a better understanding of life in the area in times gone by.

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

32. The school's good provision for the well-being, health, safety and personal security of its pupils helps them to grow in confidence and self esteem, and thus makes a good contribution to the raising of educational standards within the school.
33. The well rehearsed arrangements for child protection are good, being based on the procedures laid down by the Area Child Protection Committee. The headteacher is known by adults in the school as the designated person. She has completed appropriate training and passes on her expertise to other adults in the school. The Local Authority's Child Protection Officer has arranged to deliver additional training to the staff team. Relevant files are stored separately and securely to ensure confidentiality.
34. The range of policies and procedures covering health and safety was reviewed after the merger of the two previous schools, and now complies fully with legal requirements. Termly fire drills and weekly testing of alarms ensure that safe exit procedures are well rehearsed. The annual risk assessments conducted by the Local Authority are supplemented by the school's own health and safety committee's activities, including improved systems for reporting and recording hazards.
35. Despite the very difficult social circumstances in the area the very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance have seen an improvement over the two years of the school's existence. The very good working relationship with the Education Social Worker is enhanced by the school's decision to appoint its own Home-School Liaison Officer. The resultant joint strategy identifies patterns of absence and affects early follow-up. It also addresses the 'off roll - on register' dilemma, where pupils known to have moved elsewhere cannot be removed from the register until they have signed up with another school. Both individual pupils and classes are rewarded for good or improved attendance, though the school acts very sensitively in those situations where it is known that a child depends upon an adult to get to school.
36. The effectiveness of the very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour can be seen in the remarkably good behaviour that was noted by inspectors across the school. In consequence, the pupils can concentrate on their work without interruption or distraction. The very high standards demanded by the school are mirrored by its adults, whose very good example the pupils openly admire and imitate. The policies relating to behaviour and bullying are clearly worded and detailed. The Code of Conduct displayed in bold letter on walls in classrooms and communal areas is very succinct and to the point, while adults in the school take pleasure in celebrating the pupils' efforts as well as their successes by presenting them with 'good work' stickers. The more formal awards in the 'Super Pupil' series are taken very seriously and are much sought after by the pupils.
37. The school's good procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development have attracted strong support from parents, 93 per cent of them in the pre-inspection questionnaire declaring that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. The inspectors support that view and suggest that the success of the school's efforts lies in the extraordinary dedication of its staff team as well as in the good quality of its related policies

and procedures. There is much evidence of a strong caring ethos, seen in the detailed knowledge of each pupil's personal circumstances, and in the valuing of each person as an individual, in spite of the extremely high turnover of pupils each year. The application of the awards and sanctions policy, the celebration of effort, the tolerance of creeds and races, the subtle influence of the messages transmitted in school assemblies, the personal, social and health education programme and activities and Circle Time, as well as the 'Buddying' where older pupils care for younger ones in the playground, all combine to develop the pupils into caring and responsible young people as they progress through the school.

38. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and for tracking and recording their progress. The co-ordinator is in her second term and has yet to make an impact on these procedures. The headteacher provides the teachers with detailed information gathered from lesson observations, teachers' plans, pupils' work and the results of national and optional standardised tests.
39. The tracking system starts in the Nursery and is used to show the gains that have been made by each child in the Foundation Stage. In the infant and junior years the information provided by the headteacher is used to identify weaknesses in the pupils' performance and also in the school's provision. It is also used to reorganise classes into ability sets for Years 5 and 6 English and mathematics lessons and to set targets for groups of pupils. Some moderation of the teachers' assessments of the pupils' work is used to annotate and allocate National Curriculum levels to guide further assessment. The school is aware that this portfolio of work samples needs to be kept up to date. In the Foundation Stage the assessments influence the planning and the teaching. However, in the rest of the school the assessments are not used consistently to inform the planning of differentiated activities in English, mathematics and science. The pupils' attainments in the other subjects of the curriculum are assessed informally at the end of each unit of work but the information does not assess the development of the pupils' skills or inform curricular planning. The headteacher is considering the use of standardised tests such as those for non-verbal reasoning to refine the assessment systems and to provide more precise information for those pupils who enter at various stages throughout the school year.
40. The planning and teaching are most effective when the teachers use the assessment data to provide the pupils with work that meets their individual needs and is appropriately challenging. This is evident in the good provision for the pupils with special educational needs, those who have English as an additional language and those who are at an early stage of acquiring English. Considerable thought has been given to ways of supporting them and the teachers' plans have well defined short-term targets. However, for the other pupils, the emphasis is on what needs to be done by groups of pupils rather than on precise guidance about how specific areas of weakness can be improved or how individual pupils might work towards them on a daily basis. Not all the teachers ensure that the targets consistently reflect what is needed to help individual pupils to attain the next level. The pupils do not always know or understand what they need to do to improve as they are not always involved with the setting of targets or provided with precise information that indicates how they can be met.

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

41. The parents' very positive views of the school and the good partnership established between home and school make a good contribution to raising standards. The great majority of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire or attending the pre-inspection meeting with the inspectors agree that their children like coming to school, that they behave well and that they

make good progress. More than 90 per cent of them agree that the teaching is good, that the school expects their children to work hard, that it helps them become mature, and that it is well led and managed. Such positive views establish a good basis for the home-school relationship.

42. The inspectors support the view of most parents that the quality of information provided by the school is good, enabling parents to involve themselves in their children's learning as envisaged in the school's 'Home-School Contract'. The helpful and informative prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report to parents both comply with legal requirements. Letters to parents (though not regular newsletters, and not in languages other than English) inform them about forthcoming events and diary dates, while the Home Study Booklet (one for each Key Stage) tells parents how they can support children with homework. On a more individual basis, the pupils' Annual Reports cover each subject and there are paragraphs on personal development and attitudes to learning. Teachers set out targets in the annual reports and the pupils complete a self-evaluation which the parent is asked to comment on in the report. This is good practice.
43. Parents in their turn make a good contribution to their children's learning by communicating with the teacher through the home-school diary, and by carrying out their part of the home-school contract, for example, by ensuring that their children attend school regularly and complete their homework. Parents attend curriculum meetings such as the one arranged for numeracy, as well as supporting social and educational events. Several parents have been involved in the 'Family Learning Initiative', some going on to work in the school or to further education. Two parents involve themselves directly with the school by running after school clubs, one for French and another for gardening. The continued development of such an effective partnership has a positive impact on the education of children attending this school.

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

44. The headteacher provides good leadership. She works closely and effectively with the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators. They set high expectations and lead by example. The headteacher, in particular, is much respected by the pupils, parents, staff and governors. She focuses and steers the work of the school to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Raising standards has been the main focus for development and, together with an effective senior management team, the headteacher continually re-appraises and evaluates the impact of the many initiatives that have been introduced since the school opened two years ago.
45. The personal commitment of the headteacher and her staff to the needs of the pupils is very good. All the staff and adults who have day-to-day contact with the pupils reflect the school's stated aims well, ensuring that they support the pupils and are committed to maintaining strong working relationships with both pupils and their parents. They also ensure that the pupils have good access to all activities and areas of the curriculum, including activities that take place outside school hours. This commitment to an all-round education that includes life skills, community learning and citizenship is clearly reflected in all the work done in the school.
46. There is an effective and coherent system of management. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators have a thorough grasp and understanding of how to measure and improve the effectiveness of the teaching. They assess how well the pupils are doing in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, as well as monitoring standards in other subjects. This enables them to measure the impact that the curriculum, planning and teaching are having on

standards. Senior staff monitor lessons and curriculum co-ordinators check teachers' planning as well as the pupils' work to assess how well they are doing in their respective subjects. Consequently, the school has accurate and realistic targets for improvement with every pupil being monitored closely. This now needs to be refined further so that more individual targets are set for the pupils that show the different stages and steps of the learning and progress. Teachers are certain about what they are going to teach and what they are aiming for.

47. Curriculum co-ordinators prepare action plans for their own subjects. These feed into an audit of resources and staff training needs which feeds into the school development plan. There is both a short-term and long-term plan which take account of the constantly changing school roll or, for example, the fact that a well above average proportion of pupils joining the school have specific learning needs or language needs. A thorough evaluation and analysis of all these factors informs the way the school groups the pupils and plans its teaching.
48. The governors are knowledgeable and experienced and very committed to the needs of the school and its pupils. They provide good support and help the headteacher to manage the school well. Formal and effective monitoring procedures ensure that governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and senior staff and, as a result, the governors have a good understanding of the school's needs, strengths and weaknesses. The governors visit the school and receive regular reports from senior staff. The headteacher prepares thorough reports to be presented at governors' meetings and each governor is linked to a curriculum co-ordinator which enables them to be kept fully informed. The school makes good use of information and communication technology to manage and support the school's organisation, finances and administration.
49. Well-qualified teachers and teaching assistants are effectively deployed, especially in supporting the large number of pupils who are in the early stages of English language acquisition. Structured professional development and continuing training are used effectively and this is reflected in the fact that the quality of teaching is good in most subjects. The deputy headteacher leads by her good example in the classroom and is trained in the techniques of classroom observation to help the headteacher monitor teaching and learning across the school. Subject co-ordinators are effective in their role and help teachers to be more rigorous in developing subject confidence and raising standards.
50. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has a good overview of special educational needs in the school. The school cares well for its pupils needing particular care and attention. The SENCO reviews all the pupils' individual education plans. Teachers and teaching assistants review the pupils' targets and progress towards these regularly and formally on at least a termly basis. Parents are kept well-informed of any changes made. The management of EMAG staff is good and ensures that the pupils learning English as an additional language receive appropriate resources and support, especially in English and mathematics lessons.
51. Resources are well managed by subject co-ordinators. The deployment of teaching assistants and support staff has been successful in helping them to provide highly skilled intervention programmes that involve teaching reading, writing and numeracy as well as inclusive support when working alongside the pupils with special educational needs. The school's finances are well managed. There are efficient and effective procedures to track spending and determine priorities for resources in the school's management plan. Specific grants are used well for their intended purpose and the headteacher and governors monitor spending closely. Governors and senior staff report on the effectiveness of spending and the priorities set in the



school development plan. In this way the school is clearly committed to establishing best value when committing resources. The new computer suite, for example, is well equipped and is having an impact on raising standards in information and communication technology across the school. The accommodation, recently refurbished to a good quality, provides a good learning environment. The classrooms are of sufficient capacity to provide for current needs; there are separate halls for dining and for other activities; there is good provision for external play, including an all-weather pitch, though lacking a grassed area. Access is difficult for people with mobility problems since the school is on two floors, though the school has so far been able to accommodate the needs of such pupils.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to build on the good education provided by the school, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

\* **Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 by:**

- focusing more attention in English lessons on developing the pupils' independent and extended forms of writing;
- providing work in mathematics lessons that makes greater demands on the average attaining and more able pupils;
- developing in science lessons the pupils' abilities to question, hypothesise and draw conclusions;
- improving the plenary sessions in lessons so that teachers enable the pupils to revise what they have learned.

(Paragraphs: 2-3; 16; 61; 75-86; 87-92; 93-98; 117; 125)

\* **Raise standards in information and communication technology (ICT) in the junior years so that by the end of Year 6 the pupils can:**

- use control technology to control events in a predetermined way and sense physical data using different systems;
- explore patterns and relationships with the aid of ICT systems and ICT-based simulations or models;
- exchange information and ideas with others in different ways, including the use of e-mail and a range of presentation software.

(Paragraphs: 5; 16; 127-132)

\* **Improve the way teachers use assessment information to monitor and track the pupils' progress by:**

- setting more individual learning targets for the pupils through systematic marking of work and the recording of pupils' progress.

(Paragraphs: 14; 17; 39-40)

\* **Improve attendance rates and, in particular, with the co-operation and support of the parents concerned, reduce the rate of authorised absence to bring it more into line with the national average.**

(Paragraphs: 11; 35)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	62
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	16	30	14	1	0	0
Percentage	2	26	48	23	2	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	238
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	81

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	45

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	180

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	72
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	84

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	7.2
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	17	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	15	16	17
	Total	29	30	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (60)	88 (74)	94 (76)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	12	10
	Girls	15	15	14
	Total	23	27	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (69)	79 (69)	71 (62)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	23	14	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	10	7	10
	Total	24	21	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (47)	57 (42)	68 (67)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15	17
	Girls	11	9	12
	Total	26	24	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (68)	65 (68)	81 (68)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	37	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	12	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	18	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	8	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	71	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	29	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	5	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	6	0	0
Black or Black British – African	9	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	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)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.7
Average class size	26.4

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

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	182

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	61
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.3

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	597,410
Total expenditure	620,240
Expenditure per pupil	40,118
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,288
Balance carried forward to next year	-5,542

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	263
Number of questionnaires returned	63

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	42	3	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	46	3	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	41	5	7	0
The teaching is good.	58	39	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	37	10	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	40	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	37	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	46	10	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	46	47	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	32	7	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	41	7	0	7

### **Other issues raised by parents**

The parents say they choose the school because it provides a positive and supportive environment for their children. Many believe that the school is now settled after the establishment of the new school and is becoming increasingly popular with parents. Parents believe that the school has an established reputation for providing a good range of activities outside school hours.



## **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**

53. The Foundation Stage is made up of a Nursery class and two Reception classes. The children are admitted to the Nursery in the September or January after their third birthday and attend part-time, either morning or afternoon. The main criterion for allocating children to each session is parental choice and there is no significant difference in the make up of each session. The children transfer to one of the two Reception classes after a year in the Nursery so that those children who transfer in September make up one class and those who transfer in January make up a separate class. Most, but not all, of the children transfer from the Nursery to a Reception class. A few children are admitted at the beginning of the Reception year who have not attended the Nursery class. There are currently 25 children attending the Nursery in the morning 24 in the afternoon session. Nineteen children are in the older of the two Reception classes and 16 in the younger class. When they start in the Nursery, the children's attainment is well below average and, in particular, their personal, social skills and their English language skills are at an early stage of development. Most children speak another language at home. For the majority this is either Panjabi or Urdu but several other languages are spoken.
54. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has an excellent understanding of how young children learn and of the Foundation Stage curriculum. She ensures that all the staff share her understanding and aims for the children, plan together as an effective team and that learning activities build systematically and logically and respond to the children's own ideas. The children are provided with a wide range of activities that interest them and instil in them a love of learning. There are particular strengths in all classes for developing the children's personal and social skills. There is a good balance between whole-class teaching, teacher-directed group work and free choice activities in the Nursery but the amount of whole-class and group teaching in the Reception classes, although getting more as the year progresses, is still quite small compared to what will be expected in Year 1.
55. Through their observations teachers are beginning to build a secure basis for the Foundation Stage Profile (the collection of evidence about the children's progress and attainment). This will be used, in the near future, to make judgements about the children's progress and attainments in each of the six areas of learning that make up the Foundation stage curriculum and for reporting to parents and the local education authority. The children with special educational needs are identified quickly and appropriate support is provided. Similarly those children at the early stages of English language learning have their particular needs taken into account. Each class in the Foundation Stage has a supporting nursery nurse who has expertise in working with English language learners and/or speaks one of the dominant home languages. Good links have been built up with parents and the transition from home to school is smooth. The children's progress is good. In most areas of learning, however, by the end of the Reception year, many children will not attain the early learning goals for children of this age. They are on course to achieve the targets in physical and creative development.

#### **Personal, Emotional and Social development.**

56. The children start in the Nursery with attainments that are low for their age. Many still need help with going to the toilet, are at first wary of other children and stick closely to adults. They have difficulty in expressing their needs often because of language difficulties. All the staff

keep a careful watch over the children's development and are sensitive to individual needs. Very good relationships develop quickly because adults are warm and responsive. The teaching is good and is particularly strong in the Nursery. Teachers provide good opportunities for the children to work together, to share equipment, to make choices about where they will play and what they will use. In the Nursery, the children are encouraged to handle equipment with care and to help to tidy up afterwards, for example, to check that all the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle are there before putting the lid on. The children are helped to become independent in their toilet needs, putting on and taking off coats, putting on aprons and washing hands. Adults have a small book of pictorial prompts to help the children with little or no English but these quickly become redundant as children learn to interpret gestures and body language expertly and then to pick up quickly the key words associated with the gestures. The children are expected to take turns and to say 'please' and 'thank you' and to indicate if they need help. There was great celebration one morning during the inspection when one boy, at an early stage of language learning, put together his first complete sentence in English. The children soon learn to find their own names when they come in each morning and help the adults to check who is there and who is missing. Adults explain patiently to children why they cannot always do what they want because other children need a fair share of the opportunities. They are firm where necessary and do not give in to pleading. The children are left to get over small disappointments and then drawn back into the play quickly at an appropriate moment. They soon learn what is acceptable behaviour and what is not and become familiar with the Nursery routines. There is an air of calm in the Nursery. The children play purposefully and with good levels of concentration for up to 20 minutes or so. There is no wandering aimlessly between activities and even the youngest children and those with special educational needs persist for a time and no longer shadow adults as they did at first.

57. There is a similar picture in the Reception classes. The children make good progress and respond well to the adults' increasing demands to help each other and to organise equipment. They are expected to do jobs within the classroom, for example, helping to look after the guinea-pig and jobs that take them beyond the confines of the classroom, as when taking the register to the office. In a lesson in the hall, the children helped to set up and put away large gymnastic equipment. They worked safely as four children carried each mat, knew the routines and co-operated well. During the activities, the children took the initiative to support an anxious child on the balance beam by arranging themselves one on each side to give support as necessary. Occasionally in the Reception classes, the children become boisterous and a little too excitable when free choice activities are not sufficiently well structured to ensure enough challenge but adults intervene quickly to redirect the play. The children sit quietly in whole class sessions, line up quickly when they leave the classroom and move about the school sensibly. By the end of the Reception year, although they have made good progress, the children's attainments are still below what is expected of children of this age. They still find it difficult to share ideas confidently especially when playing imaginatively. There is little conversation when children work together, although they try to co-operate.

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

58. In spite of their good progress, the children's attainments by the end of the Reception year are still well below those expected of children of this age. The children start in the Nursery with poor communication, language and literacy skills in English. The fact that most children speak another language at home and that there is no one dominant language is clearly a contributory factor in the difficulties they have in communicating with each other. A few children

occasionally talk in their home language but this is far from common. A significant minority has speech and language difficulties not associated with learning English.

59. All the adults in the Nursery and in the Reception classes make the most of opportunities to extend the children's language. The children are taught a range of rhymes and action songs and they join in enthusiastically. Even the youngest children have their favourites and ask for them by name. Whatever the activity, adults teach new words carefully and explain their meaning often with the help of gestures. For example, when the children in one Reception class were making sandwiches the nursery nurse made sure that the children knew the word 'spread' and could distinguish between raspberry jam and mixed fruit jelly. She asked questions that required different levels of skill to answer, for example, 'What colour is this jam?' so that a child with little English could answer 'red' confidently. She asked more fluent speakers how they were going to find some butter for the second slice of bread when they had used it all on the first slice. The children needed to respond in a sentence and replied, 'We could take some off one and put it on the other'. All the staff use a good standard of spoken language themselves as a model for the children. The children who are at the early stages of learning English become adept at using gestures themselves, for example, they point to things they need or take the adults hand and take them to see something. Adults encourage them to replace gestures with words and gradually they do so. All the adults use praise well to reward children's efforts and build self-confidence.
60. There are good opportunities to share stories in all classes and children develop an interest in books. There are well-structured activities for the children to explore stories further, for example, in the 'Jack and the Beanstalk corner'. The development of role-play and imaginative ideas in the Reception year is slow and adults do not involve themselves often enough with playing alongside children and taking a leading role either inside or during outdoor play. There is more regular support for this aspect of children's learning in the Nursery when, for example, adults play with children in the 'flower shop'.
61. The teaching is good overall and very good in the Nursery where children make big strides in their learning because adults make sure that the work builds on earlier learning. The children soon learn that story books written in English work from left to right and that the words mean something. Teachers in both the Nursery and Reception classes make sure that the written word features prominently in classroom displays in the form of instructions, questions, captions and labels. There are well chosen collections of stories and fiction books for children to choose and comfortable seating to encourage them to browse. There are areas in each classroom set aside for writing activities so that children can practise their developing skills. For example, each room has a table set aside with papers of different sorts, envelopes, a range of pencils and crayons, scissors, chalk boards and chunky chalk. At the beginning of each morning and afternoon session in the Nursery the children help the teachers to check who is at school and to find and put a tick against each child's name. In the Reception classes, the children record the weather and the date in words and numbers. Opportunities are sometimes made in Reception for children to record their ideas in writing during a free choice activity, for example, by predicting what is in each sealed box on the 'growing' table. Few children were observed doing this so that more could be made of these opportunities to encourage the children to write. This is also true of whole class sessions in the Reception classes. Teachers teach children to recognise letters and letter sounds, they draw the children's attention carefully to words when they share a big book. They encourage children to listen for words that rhyme and join in with parts of the story that are repeated but there are too few opportunities for some Reception children to practice reading and writing skills under the close guidance of an adult.

## **Mathematical development**

62. The children start in the Nursery with well below average mathematical skills. Although the children's progress is good the majority of children will not reach the early learning goals set for their age. The teaching is good overall and very good in the Nursery. In all classes, the teachers build into their planning good quality practical activities to give the children hands-on experiences that form a strong basis for the Foundation Stage curriculum. The children make good progress when they count, sort, order, match, compare sizes and measure. They sing number songs with actions which help to consolidate their understanding of the number words. They discuss with their teachers where hidden objects might be in an activity outdoors. They look 'under' the bushes, 'through' the leaves and 'up' the trees. Numbers are introduced into many of the activities led by adults in the classroom, for example, when children discuss how to cut sandwiches to make more. In the Reception classes, teachers extend the amount of direct teaching that takes place so that children are learning new concepts such as 'one more', in preparation for addition. Sometimes these whole class or teacher-guided groups are followed up with free choice activities that also build on new learning. For example, the children were asked to create a traffic jam in the construction and 'small world' area of the classroom. The teacher had numbered each of the toy vehicles so that the children could practise putting them in order up to 20. Another group played the 'Jackpot Game', which required them to recognise numbers to 30. These activities challenge the more-able children. These children are on course to attain the early learning goals for mathematical development by the end of their Reception year. They are ready to begin to record mathematical activities by writing symbols and words. In some Reception lessons there too few opportunities for children to work with an adult to play number games and to solve number problems. Free choice activities do not always make sufficient demands on their number skills.

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

63. Progress is good in this area of learning and, from a low start, the children will reach standards that are not far short of what is expected of children of this age. The planning for this area of learning is very good and teachers are adept at making relevant links with other areas to build on what the children already know. Teachers and other adults gain the children's interest and hold it because of the skilful and imaginative way they introduce new learning, for example, by using puppets. As a result, the children are quickly taken up with what they are going to do and to learn. They participate eagerly and with enjoyment. There are very good opportunities for the children to learn about how things grow. In every classroom the children have planted seeds such as beans, cress and grass. They have planted bulbs and flowers in the tubs in the outdoor area. They help to look after them by watering. The children are able to watch the growth of tadpoles and a helpful range of books adds to the picture of what happens as they grow. The children also help to look after classroom pets.
64. The work is enriched by visits in the immediate neighbourhood and further afield. The children have visited the local shops and looked at different buildings near to the school. They have visited the Bantock Museum to see the toys from times gone by. A few more able children have recorded their work in a simple sentence, writing 'I liked the train', and others have drawn pictures.
65. The children use the 'small world' toys to create their own model 'towns' and run small cars through the streets or set up a dinosaur environment with natural materials collected from the school field. The staff in the Nursery were quick to respond to the children's own ideas for

this activity. The children use the 'garden centre' recreated in a Reception class to put on rubber gloves, use trowels to fill pots with compost, choose the seeds they want to plant and water them in. There are other opportunities for role-play in each classroom. On the whole the children find it difficult to put themselves in different situations and act out a part. They tend to explore on their own what the adults have put out for them without initiating ideas for play and drawing in other experiences.

66. The children are becoming confident in using the mouse to control pictures and words on a computer screen and to use simple programs to support the work in many areas. They order objects by size for example and choose the letters they need to make simple words. The children are also learning how to control the classroom robotic toy, pressing the appropriate buttons to send it forwards or backwards, and estimating how far it will travel.
67. The children are getting to know about ways of life different from their own by trying different foods, sharing different festivals celebrated by other children in the class and listening to a wide range of stories.

### **Creative development**

68. By the end of the Reception year most children will reach the early learning goals. The teaching in this area is good and the planning provides many opportunities for the children to sing, listen to music, dance, paint and experiment with a range of art materials. In the Nursery, these opportunities form part of everyday activities. The children go to the music corner and switch on the tape. They choose instruments to accompany the music and move to the beat. They enjoy singing with their teachers. Nursery children know a range of songs, which they sing with enjoyment, clamouring for their favourites. This is helping many children to learn new words and to practise using them in an enjoyable way. They join in enthusiastically with the actions. In the Reception classes, the children have more formal singing lessons in the hall with their teachers and a piano accompanist. They are learning more complex songs and sometimes accompany them with instruments. Small groups of children perform to other members of the class. They are gaining confidence and respond well. The songs are well chosen to link with the 'growth' topic so that the children are extending their bank of words associated with growing things.
69. The children are beginning to recognise colours and patterns in the environment. They collect natural materials from outside for collage work and notice the changing season when they check the weather each morning. Reception children have made glove puppets with felt and thread. They have mixed paint to make different colours and painted portraits. They choose materials and tools well for a specific task.
70. Reception children re-enacted a story of 'The farmer and the crows'. They took it in turns to portray the farmer planting the seeds, the growing seeds and the crows that came flapping down to eat the seed. They practised and improved a range of different movements while the teacher gave a commentary of the story to remind them of the book language.

### **Physical development**

71. Children make good progress in this area of learning and are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. There are good opportunities for the children to take part in physical activities both inside the classroom and outside. Teachers plan well for the outdoors and make sure that the children have opportunities for energetic play. During the

inspection, Reception children used a wide range of wheeled toys to pedal, push and steer them around the playground with growing confidence. They co-operated with other children in the swing boat to set it in motion and keep it rocking. They invited other children to join them. They built towers with large blocks. Older children set up a small-sided game of football and began to think about rules. Other children used the playground markings to hop and skip.

72. Nursery children were observed taking part in activities using a 'parachute'. They learned to co-operate with others and to follow instructions. The teacher took every opportunity to extend their vocabulary. The children stood on different coloured spots, made waves, felt and described the materials, went underneath and over the top, moved slowly and then quickly, and played 'fishes in the water one, two three' to consolidate their knowledge of numbers and rhyming songs.
73. Reception children took part in a more formal gymnastics lesson in the hall. They balanced on a low balance bar and walked along it, climbed wall bars and ladders and moved along equipment. More confident children jumped down from a height of at least a metre and remembered to bend their knees. All the children worked carefully and safely. Teachers made sure that they warmed up properly and cooled down at the end so that they moved quietly and sensibly back to the classroom.
74. There are many well-structured activities to enable the children to explore and use a range of tools. These develop the children's manipulative skills very well. During the inspection the children moulded, rolled and cut play dough, used glue and glue sticks, spread butter onto bread to make sandwiches, threaded beads and used small construction sets to fix components together. They used brushes, flannels and sponges to bath their dollies when they got dirty outside and shampooed their hair thoroughly.

## **ENGLISH**

75. By the end of Year 6 standards in English are below the national average. Most of the pupils attain standards that are in line with those attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 in similar schools. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. By the end of Year 2 standards are below the nationally expected levels in speaking and listening, reading and writing. However, when compared to Year 2 pupils in similar schools, standards are above average in reading and average in writing. The girls attain higher standards than the boys in the national tests.
76. The pupils enter the Nursery with well below average literacy levels. They make good progress from this very low base and standards are rising steadily. The pupils enter Year 1 performing below the national expectations in communication, language and literacy. The good progress is built on effectively but due to the school's particular circumstances this is not yet having an impact on attainment by the end of Year 6. The school was formed in September 2000 from the amalgamation of two primary schools and few of the pupils have benefited from the National Literacy Strategy throughout their primary stage. There is also regular movement of families in and out of the area and this has accounted for just over half of the pupils during the past year. Eighteen languages other than English are spoken in the school. Two thirds of the pupils have English as an additional language and significant numbers are at a very early stage of acquiring English.
77. Throughout the school the pupils with special educational needs and those learning English attain standards that reflect their individual targets. They are supported well and make good

progress. These pupils benefit from a balance of whole class teaching, small group work and individual attention to their areas of difficulty. The teaching assistants play a significant part in this good provision. The school has used effectively the National Literacy Strategy intervention programmes such as the Early, Additional and Further Literacy Support materials and methods.

78. Standards in speaking and listening are improving but they are not yet in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. Some pupils have well-developed speaking skills and use interesting language with complex sentences. A significant number lack confidence in speaking. They do not use a wide vocabulary and are not articulate when explaining their ideas. The majority of them make good progress in listening carefully to their teachers and the other pupils and they begin to gain the confidence to talk about matters that interest them. The more able pupils make relevant contributions when discussing books during the literacy lesson. Most of the pupils think carefully when they answer questions, some explain their point of view and a few justify their answers and opinions in a mature way. Some can express their opinions about the style and effectiveness of the language the author uses to create a particular mood or atmosphere in a book. The more able pupils know that the words on the pages begin as ideas in an author's mind. During a good lesson, Year 5 and 6 pupils demonstrated their understanding of this when they contributed their ideas about the poem 'My Mother saw a Dancing Bear', and discussed the words and phrases used to create the mood of sadness. At the end of a good Year 5 lesson the pupils listened to other pupils reading their written explanations of the construction and use of every-day objects such as a torch, a drill and an egg-timer.
79. Standards in reading are below average but improving in both infant and junior classes. The pupils are introduced to a structured reading programme supported by the systematic teaching of phonic skills and they make good progress. By the end of Year 2, many pupils can respond to books by re-telling the stories and describing the characters and events. The more able infant pupils read accurately although their fluency varies and is often affected by a limited vocabulary. Some pupils' limited knowledge of English affects their ability to apply knowledge of syntax and comprehension. By the end of Year 6, the more able pupils read fluently and expressively and they are independent and enthusiastic readers who can use inference to discuss the meaning. They enjoy the popular modern fiction available in school but reading appears to be school based and they have difficulty in explaining why certain books appeal to them. Many explain the range of strategies they use for dealing with unfamiliar words and for checking that the text makes sense but too few of the pupils have the skills necessary for this level of independence. Even when they can read the words they cannot always explain their meaning. Most of the junior pupils know how to use the library catalogue system and many of the older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are confident about using the index and glossary of reference books. Throughout the school, the pupils use books and computer programs for research and to support their work in other subjects such as geography and history. The school is keen for the pupils to enjoy reading and there is a home-school book which is used by the teachers and some of the parents. This could be usefully extended into a diary to provide teachers and parents with information about progress, suggestions about how the children can be supported with any difficulties and with guidance for the next stage.
80. By the end of Year 6 standards in writing, including spelling, are below average. However, the National Literacy Strategy has influenced the organisation of lessons and this is having a positive impact on the development of the pupils' knowledge of grammatical structures and the processes of writing in different styles for different purposes. The pupils make good progress with spelling as there is a structured spelling programme with direct teaching of rules and

patterns. The spelling is regularly tested and standards are improving. The younger pupils look for familiar spelling patterns. They try to spell out the words or follow the rules such as 'the magic e' or 'the lazy k'. The older pupils become more familiar with the rules, conventions and irregularities of spelling. They learn about prefixes, suffixes and how to change the order of words to make their sentences grammatically correct.

81. From learning to write simple sentences beginning with capital letters and ending with full stops, the more able pupils in Year 2 sequence events in a story. Some develop their ideas into a sequence of punctuated sentences and are beginning to use connecting words effectively to join ideas. Many of the younger junior pupils find it difficult to produce a piece of sustained writing with the variety of language and accuracy expected nationally at this age. By the end of Year 6 the more able pupils organise their writing and use appropriate grammar and punctuation. They enhance their work with adjectives and adverbs identified during the shared reading section of the literacy hour. They are able to define what makes a good start to a story in order to capture a reader's attention. They prepare an initial draft of their work and the higher attaining pupils can edit it to clarify their thoughts through their writing. They write narrative, arguments, factual pieces and poetry. However, there is a lack of fluency in much of the writing. Overall it lacks imagination, characters and plot are not developed sufficiently and spelling and punctuation are inaccurate. There is evidence that the pupils are given a range of opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects but much of this is based on work sheets, which restrict the opportunities for the pupils to organise their own work. The quality of handwriting is variable. Some infant pupils' writing has well formed letters of consistent shape, size and spacing. In the junior classes there is some inconsistent formation and joining. Presentation is sometimes very good but teachers' expectations of this are variable.
82. The majority of the pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and they enjoy their lessons. They are very well behaved and try to do their best at all times. During discussions, they are attentive, make relevant contributions and respect the ideas and opinions of others. They are clear about what they are expected to do and settle quickly and concentrate on their work. The majority work independently or co-operatively as required by the teachers. The subject makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as they begin to understand the power of words to create moods and atmosphere, to pose questions, create arguments and encourage empathy.
83. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They celebrate the pupils' knowledge of languages other than English. The teachers plan the work carefully and in the best lessons they explain clearly what they want the pupils to learn and set targets with them. These features were present in the very good Year 4 lesson where the teacher used the pupils' ideas about 'The Hobbit' to explain the use of adjectives, similes and alliteration to help them write their own descriptions of fantastic creatures. The planning was detailed and the skilled questioning kept the pupils focused on the individual and group tasks. Overall, the lessons are well organised and there is good deal of purposeful activity. There is no wasted time, the lessons generally move at a brisk pace and are well managed and organised. The teachers use their questioning skills effectively to establish the pupils' understanding and then use the answers effectively to support and extend the learning. These strengths were evident in a Year 1 and 2 lesson when the teacher planned imaginative ways to introduce the pupils to the use of rhymes and spelling patterns. At the end of lessons the pupils are sometimes given opportunities to discuss what they have been doing but the



teachers rarely involve them in discussing or reviewing their learning. This means that opportunities are missed to develop their speaking and listening skills.

84. The teachers make great efforts to know the pupils well and gather information about their strengths and weaknesses. They mark the pupils' work regularly and usually offer praise but not all the teachers are implementing the marking policy. The best marking has comments about how the work might be improved. Most of the teachers give good oral feedback about the work in hand. In the best lessons they encourage the pupils to identify their own mistakes and think about how to correct them. Where the marking is good the teachers use their daily assessments of the pupils' progress to plan future work for all ability levels. The weakest marking is where the teacher has not provided any guidance to the pupils about how the work might be improved or where the teacher does not refer to any targets or objectives for the learning. The school sets group targets but does not yet involve the pupils with this process. Overall the targets are too general with an emphasis on what needs to be done rather than on precise guidance about how specific areas of weakness can be improved. Not all the teachers ensure that the targets for reading or writing consistently reflect what is needed to help individual pupils to improve or give guidance about the next steps in learning.
85. The school's resources are satisfactory, with a suitable collection of reading scheme books. The library and class collections have a satisfactory range of reference books. The pupils are taught library skills and pupils use books for independent research. Throughout the school, the pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology for research and by word processing to enhance their written work. The contacts with a school in another part of Wolverhampton are providing the pupils with opportunities to exchange e-mails.
86. The co-ordinator is at the end of her second term at the school and has yet to make an impact on the management of the subject. The school is aware of the need to ensure that standards of attainment are raised and the co-ordinator has had opportunities to check the quality of teaching and learning by observing lessons, looking at the teachers' plans and the pupils' books. The headteacher provides a wealth of assessment information by analysing the results of tests and assessments to establish a tracking system to record the pupils' progress and begin to identify the value that has been added to their learning. She is aware of the need to refine this system and to provide more precise information for all the pupils and particularly for those who enter at various stages throughout the school year. She acknowledges that strategies and structures need to be put in place so that the teachers can identify precisely what needs to be done to raise standards and enable more of the pupils to attain higher levels in the tests. Now that the information is available the co-ordinator is well placed to develop her role in using it to support the pupils and her colleagues and influencing the quality and standard of work.

## **MATHEMATICS**

87. Inspection evidence confirms that, although national test results show low standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6, standards are rising. Although standards in 2003 may still be below average, there is an indication that they will have improved upon those of 2002. Progress for all the pupils is good. This takes into consideration three main factors. First, over two thirds of the pupils have English as an additional language and many of these pupils are in the early stages of English language acquisition. Second, a high percentage of pupils have special educational needs. Thirdly, there is a well above average turnover of pupils of approximately 50 per cent.

88. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced and is having a positive impact in raising standards. However there are some occasions when the introductory mental sessions lack the necessary rigour to sharpen pupils' knowledge and response. Work is suitably differentiated, although work prepared for more able pupils does not always have sufficient challenge to move them on.
89. Throughout the infant years the teachers' detailed planning and careful preparation results in the pupils enjoying mathematics and they approach it with enthusiasm. Good practical tasks are set and consequently, the pupils are able to remember different ways of recording information, for example, tallying, pictographs and block graphs. They are now looking at segregating articles in Venn diagrams. They quickly understand that some articles fit in to one or other category and some into both and enjoy sorting soft, hard, and soft and hard toys in this way. Other pupils building up block graphs of pets are soon able to extract information, for example, they recognise how they can tell there are more hamsters than cats. When adding mentally the majority can add three numbers to make 10 or 20. Teaching assistants work hard to explain questions to pupils who are at the early stage of acquiring English and are unable to verbalise concepts like taller or longer and this encouragement aids their progress. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that all the attainment targets are covered satisfactorily and the work set progressively develops concepts.
90. At the beginning of the junior years, the pupils are able to transfer information they have collected to block graphs and spreadsheets using information and communication technology skills. More able pupils have produced a frequency table of different amounts of money and this work builds well on their previous lessons. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils are divided into three ability groups. Aware that pupils have had differing early experiences, teachers work hard to consolidate mathematical vocabulary and develop and reinforce early number concepts. The pupils understand that a graph 'tells a story' and are able to build a picture around the facts presented to them. However, when drawing their graphs, few concentrate on precision or accuracy and teachers do not always draw attention to this. Similarly, when working on shape or area, diagrams in their books are untidily drawn, angles are not precise and lines for graphs are sometimes drawn inaccurately or untidily. Moreover, by the end of Year 6, the pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to take advantage of the opportunities to use information and communication technology for graphs, charts, spreadsheets or databases. The scrutiny of pupils' books shows that a wide variety of work is covered. However, when concepts are revisited, they are not always presented in progressive tasks to further challenge more able pupils. Suitable provision is made for the pupils who have special educational needs to make good progress. Similarly, opportunities are made for a 'gifted' pupil to move ahead of his peers in his mathematical learning.
91. Seven lessons of mathematics were seen during the inspection period. The quality of teaching was at least satisfactory but more often good or very good. Teachers are continually aware of the varied educational experiences of their pupils and make every effort to reassure them and encourage their progress. Teaching assistants play an important part. They compliment teachers well consolidating language and skills and exhibiting much patience and understanding when the pupils have specific difficulties with language or concentration. Although group targets are set, teachers do not consistently set pupils individual targets to aid progress. Moreover marking systems are not consistent nor do they always follow the school marking policy. Although almost all of the pupils' work is marked, and there are some positive comments, there are few developmental comments to help the pupils understand their mistakes or move their work on to the next stage.

92. The mathematics co-ordinator has worked hard to produce a new policy and scheme of work and unite teachers in their mathematical approach. Teaching, planning and standards of work are regularly monitored and feedback is given. Statutory test results and Year 3, 4 and 5 optional test results are thoroughly analysed and discussions held to consider how they can be improved. When necessary, in-service training for teachers is arranged. The pupils' attainment is tracked year on year and this information is currently been entered into a new computer program. There is a good range of resources and these have been audited and replenished as necessary.

## SCIENCE

93. Standards in science are below those expected by the end of Year 6. Although the national test results show low standards in 2002, standards have been rising. Over the last two years the school has rightly focused its efforts on improving literacy and numeracy standards so that, during this time, science planning has not received as much attention and the teaching has had less impact on standards in science than it has in English and mathematics. Standards by the end of Year 2 are below those expected and this is reflected in teachers' assessments of the pupils' attainment in science. Standards in science are greatly affected by the high proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language and the high turnover of pupils (up to 50 per cent) that join or leave the school at times other than at the time of usual admission in Reception or of leaving at transfer at the end of Year 6.
94. Though standards are below average by the end of Year 2 the teaching is satisfactory and well planned. The key area for development for the whole school is in improving the way the pupils ask and answer key questions about their investigations and experiments. Language difficulties act as barriers to learning, particularly as the pupils are required to explain what they are doing and to draw conclusions from their hypotheses. In Year 2 for example, the pupils were observed learning to distinguish between pulling and pushing forces. During a 'show and tell' session, the teacher asked the pupils to recognise familiar household items, such as a lawn mower, and to decide whether this was to be 'pushed' or 'pulled'. The pupils understood the key concepts in spite of their limited language because the teacher had prepared good illustrations and captions as prompts. However, it was difficult for the pupils to articulate their thoughts, particularly when choosing items in the classroom that could be both pushed and pulled.
95. The majority of pupils across the school make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment but find it difficult to describe observable changes to substances or draw conclusions from their scientific investigations. Year 5 and 6 pupils enjoyed observing how water changes from liquid to a gas in the form of steam and the majority know that the process of evaporation is reversible as condensation. However, when asked to describe the conditions that lead to these changes or to give similar examples that are familiar to them, the pupils find it difficult to articulate. In the two lessons observed in junior classes, teachers rightly concentrated on key questions by attempting to broaden the scope of questions to include familiar situations, such as boiling water in a kettle, or condensation on windows and drying clothes on a clothes line. The pupils make satisfactory progress acquiring knowledge and understanding but when faced with questions that are more indirect or those that are aimed at testing their understanding, the pupils' limited language affects how they are able to explain ideas, concepts and changes to, say, properties of materials or the effects that forces have on objects.

96. The pupils show good attitudes towards learning and are interested in science. The teaching is satisfactory and ranges from at least satisfactory to good. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. The pupils' workbooks show that teachers provide good demonstrations and that the pupils are given time to record their evidence. However, there are differences in the way teachers prepare the pupils' tasks. In the most effective lessons, such as in Years 5 and 6, the pupils were provided with some challenging questions that evoked thoughtful discussion and explanation of ideas about the conditions that effect condensation and evaporation. In Year 5, the teacher set out clear learning objectives accompanied with the appropriate scientific language, which helped the pupils to explain their ideas and start to draw sensible and plausible conclusions. In satisfactory lessons, the planning is appropriate for the pupils but it is not always clear from teachers' questioning what conclusions the pupils are going to draw from their investigations or from observed demonstrations.
97. The pupils with special educational needs are fully included even when withdrawn for literacy or numeracy support because teachers provide time for these pupils to re-integrate into the lessons when they return. The large number of pupils learning English as an additional language are provided with support and time with teachers to consolidate what they are learning. In Year 5 for example, the teacher sat with a groups of pupils to explain further what they are doing and to check that they understood.
98. Leadership of the subject is good. In the short time since the school was formed the co-ordinator has made a good start in providing a balanced curriculum with consistent lesson planning. This includes the development of resources and programmes of study to support enquiry-based learning. He recognises that there is much work to do to ensure that the pupils perform better in national tests and in this respect the teaching is responding to the challenge by focusing on improving the pupils' methods of enquiry and recording to help them explain their ideas more clearly. This is a difficult task given the language difficulties that the large majority of pupils face. The curriculum also carries a strong focus on health education, supporting learning in aspects of personal and social education. The use of information and communication technology is improving to include science lessons, with an increasing use of computers and other resources to support and enhance the pupils' learning. For example, in Year 4, the pupils have recorded information about their favourite foods as block graphs, tables and pie charts and Year 2 pupils are making good progress using a branching program to sort key characteristics of habitats, materials, birds and animals. There is good use of community resources, for example, learning is supported by good quality educational visits including a residential visit for older pupils to Mid-Wales where the pupils study rivers, landscapes and natural resources as part of combined geography and scientific topics. The on-going assessment of pupils' progress, with its potential for finer tuning of learning opportunities, is not yet sufficiently developed but the school makes good use of optional end of year tests in the junior years to track how well the pupils are doing and whether they are likely to achieve their attainment targets. This analysis of results has helped the co-ordinator and the headteacher to identify areas for further development.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

99. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. The school is making good use of national guidelines to plan a curriculum that provides a sufficiently wide range of work although three-dimensional work is under-represented. Teaching in both infant and junior classes is satisfactory. The pupils are taught a satisfactory range of skills and become interested and enthusiastic about the work they do.

100. The art and design co-ordinator has a good level of expertise in the subject. She has ensured that there is a satisfactory range of resources and supports colleagues as necessary. She has high expectations and achieves good standards from her class of Year 4 pupils. These pupils have, for example, studied the work of the Norwegian Expressionist Edvard Munch and produced pictures using a similar technique and range of colour. The artist's work is well observed and the pupils have used oil pastels effectively to replicate the bleak mood of his work. More able pupils have achieved a good sense of perspective. The pupils in Year 6 also achieved work of good quality when they painted townscapes. They explain how they studied a range of photographs and looked at buildings in the area. They have used an effective range of colours and many have shown good composition skills and an eye for detail, for example, in the pattern of brickwork.
101. In the Year 1 and 2 classes, some of the best work is based on line drawing. The pupils have used chalk, pencils, charcoal and wax crayons to record patterns they have observed around the school, for example, in railings and brickwork. They have taken samples of rubbings to add to this information. The pupils have also painted self-portraits that show reasonably accurate proportion and detail. Their sunset pictures show that they can mix paint to achieve graded tones. More able pupils do this well and depict the sky getting lighter towards the horizon.
102. It is clear from the range and quality of work that teachers have a good grasp of the skills and techniques required to teach the pupils. They also endeavour to draw on the pupils' backgrounds, for example, when they experiment with the buta and buti motif found in traditional Indian shawls. This engages the pupils' interest and makes them feel valued. Other current work in Years 3 and 4 draws on Aboriginal art. The pupils have painted pictures of snakes and crocodiles with small dots of colour typical of this style of work. This also contributes well to their cultural development. In lessons, teachers encourage those who find the work difficult and give them ideas and make useful suggestions that build the pupils' confidence. They expect the pupils to choose what they need and to help with the clearing up process afterwards. The pupils respond well.
103. Although older pupils have sketchbooks, teachers do not make the best use of these. The pupils use them to record what they see from time to time but there is little evidence of gathering information from a range of sources, the exploration and development of ideas and experimentation with different media. There is evidence of the beginnings of this with some pencil work in Years 5 and 6 but the lack of information in the form of titles, dates, and notes of what pupils did or found useful for future reference, limits the use pupils can make of the work. Teachers miss opportunities to contribute to the development of the pupils' ideas by noting in their sketchbooks what pupils do well or how they could improve their work. There are a few occasions when pupils have used the computer, especially in Years 1 and 2, to contribute to their artwork. Opportunities are missed, however, to develop this work further using information and communication technology.
104. Teachers provide good opportunities for the pupils to work together. The pupils have enlarged their individual drawings by using acrylic sheets on the overhead projector to transfer images of pencil lines to the dining room wall. They have painted them with acrylic paint in bold colours to produce a carefully finished decorative mural. The after-school art club provides further opportunities for the pupils of different ages and a particular interest in art and design to extend their skills further. Visits to the Black Country Museum in connection with history

and to Wolverhampton art gallery have inspired a range of other work and made further contributions to the pupils' knowledge of the cultural heritage of the area.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. Standards are broadly in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school is making good use of national guidelines to plan work that builds year on year. The teaching is satisfactory in both the infant and junior years, enabling the pupils to learn the skills they need in preparation for making things.
106. The subject's co-ordinator has significant expertise in the subject and has established a well-equipped design and technology room. A wide range of materials, tools and small components are readily accessible and there is space to store work in progress. This arrangement contributes well to the efficient organisation and teaching of the subject.
107. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 made model houses from reclaimed packaging. They covered the outside with plain paper so that they could add their own designs. They achieved an apex roof by cutting and folding paper and fixing it with staples. The children know how to create an opening door because they have previously practised a scoring technique to ensure a precise fold. They associate this with the 'spine' of a book but have forgotten the word 'hinge'. The finished models were made to a reasonable standard. Many pupils achieved a decorative finish with careful attention to detail because they had previously collected information about pattern in the built environment, as part of their work in art and design. The fact that the teacher had also assembled and displayed a range of photographs of the school and neighbouring buildings for them to refer to, contributed to the success of the work. The teacher has high expectations of pupils working independently, sharing equipment and helping each other. The pupils respond well to this and, although the lesson observed necessitated a lot of movement and talk, the atmosphere was business-like and calm. Although the class is made up of pupils from two different year groups, all the pupils did the same work. There was no extra challenge for older pupils to move the learning on further, for example, by investigating a range of door openings and choosing one to put into their models.
108. The pupils in Year 5 were observed making moving vehicles with built in cam mechanisms. They had previously studied a range of different cams, used the technical terms explained by the teacher and understood that the cam transfers rotary into linear movement. They have made informed decisions about which is best for the model they have chosen to make. The lesson proceeded smoothly and pupils were absorbed in the task because it provided a good level of challenge and the teacher had high expectations of their behaviour and the precision of their work. The teacher's expertise in woodwork has enabled him to teach these pupils a range of skills so that they handle tools competently and pay good attention to finish and detail. The work in progress is above the standards expected for pupils of this age. The most able considered their models as they progressed and modified them as necessary. One boy, for example, discovered that the cam was catching on the floor so made a smaller one to replace it. Two girls worked together to check the accuracy of their measurements because the teacher had emphasised that materials are expensive and must not be wasted. 'Measure twice and cut once' is a well-established maxim in the design and technology room. The teacher's interventions were well judged, both in response to requests and to help those who were in difficulties. He has excellent relationships with his pupils and draws out what they need to improve or do next by patient questioning. His support is discrete so that the pupils gain confidence. The pupils with special educational needs respond particularly well to his approach and make good progress.

109. There is other work of good quality in Years 3 and 4 where pupils have taken digital photographs of themselves and made frames with stands to display them. This is a good example of using information and communication technology to support the work done in design and technology but in other respects in junior classes there are too few opportunities for this. Older pupils have worked together on 'activity afternoons' to design and make small wooden toys for younger children. They have considered the needs of the 'customer' and know that the finish must be smooth. Finished models are completed to a high standard and show that pupils can measure accurately, drill, saw, sand and fix efficiently.
110. The pupils in both the infant and junior classes make design drawings and plans that become more complex as pupils get older. They show the materials needed, how models will be assembled and in a few cases measurements are illustrated. The pupils' designs for pizza packaging are examples of good work in Years 5 and 6 but on the whole the planning element of the work is done less well than the model making. There is room for improvement here. The pupils find it difficult to evaluate their work. They say what they do and do not like but give few reasons and little detail in their responses. They try hard but below average spoken and written language skills are affecting standards in this element of the work.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

111. During the inspection no infant geography lessons were observed. Further evidence was gained from talking to the pupils, looking at their work and the teachers' plans. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are below those expected nationally. There is regular movement of families in and out of the area and this has accounted for just over half of the pupils during the last year. Eighteen different languages are spoken in the school. Two thirds of the pupils have English as an additional language and significant numbers are at a very early stage of acquiring English. A significant number lack confidence in speaking and are not fluent writers and this affects the recording of their knowledge and understanding in geography. However, the evidence indicates that most of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
112. By the end of Year 2, the pupils know some of the features of their locality. They learn about globes, find the routes to places and study different journeys. They learn to identify the different geographical features of their own locality and make a detailed study of the area around school. Some develop skills of map making and map reading. They know about the types of houses, places of worship and commercial premises in the immediate area. As a result of their visit to the Black Country Museum as part of their history studies and an overnight stay at the Kingswood Centre, they learn about the features of areas further afield.
113. By the end of Year 6 the pupils have increased their knowledge of countries and places around the world such as the South Pacific and South America. In Years 3 and 4 they study the journeys of the Severn and the Orinoco and life on the island of Kiribati so that they learn about the differences in physical features, daily life and climate.
114. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils are given opportunities to consider the issues surrounding weather forecasts. They keep their own records of the weather in the local area and collect newspaper articles and contrast this with videos they have made of national television forecasts and bulletins for the period. In this way they learn about the factors affecting weather changes, the criteria used for predicting and the limitations of forecasting. They also

become familiar with the correct technical vocabulary and symbols and the teachers stress the use of correct geographical language.

115. Throughout the school, the pupils are interested in geography. They have positive attitudes, are very well behaved and are keen to learn. They listen carefully to the teachers and to other pupils and settle quickly to their tasks. The pupils come from twenty different countries and the school makes good use of their knowledge and experiences. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as they are made aware of the wonders of the natural world and human achievement as well as issues such as pollution and conservation.
116. The teaching of geography is good overall with no unsatisfactory teaching seen. The lessons are well planned and prepared. The teachers explain the purpose of the lessons so that the pupils know what is expected of them. The teachers are skilled at questioning and they use the pupils' answers effectively to assess their understanding. At the end of lessons they miss opportunities to develop the pupils' speaking and listening skills as they do not provide them with opportunities to discuss their learning.
117. The subject is well managed and has a satisfactory range of resources. Residential visits to Kingswood, Beaudesert and Wales, as well as day visits to places such as the Severn Trent Educational Centre and visits from their representatives are used to enhance the pupils' experiences. The co-ordinator has written the policy from the National Curriculum guidelines and the pupils' work is assessed termly against these expectations. He has observed lessons in all the classes and checks the quality of teaching and learning by looking at the teachers' plans and the pupils' work. The evidence of the work shows the progression in skills but the pieces are not annotated. The co-ordinator is aware of the need for a more detailed assessment system so that the development of skills can be tracked and the pupils provided with information about how their work might be improved.

## **HISTORY**

118. During the inspection only one lesson was observed so judgements are made from talking to the pupils, looking at their work and the teachers' plans.
119. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards are below those expected nationally. There is regular movement of families in and out of the area and this has accounted for just over half of the pupils during the last year. Two thirds of the pupils have English as an additional language and significant numbers are at a very early stage of acquiring English. A significant number lack confidence in speaking and are not fluent writers and this affects the recording of their knowledge and understanding in history. However, the evidence indicates that most of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
120. Through the varied activities the pupils learn about aspects of the lives and experiences of people in past times. This extends their knowledge of the facts and deepens their understanding of the emotions of those involved. They begin to appreciate why people acted as they did and the results of events. This makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
121. By the end of Year 2, most of the pupils understand that artefacts can give clues about life in the past. They begin to use a wide range of evidence, including books, photographs and computer programs, to compare their lives with times beyond living memory. They know



about some famous people from the past and some are able to describe some of the main events of their lives. They talk about Mary Seacole and her nursing skills in the Crimea and the changes that have taken place in hospitals since then.

122. The visit to the Black Country Museum introduces the pupils in Years 1 and 2 to houses, shops and school life during Victorian times. They find out about writing on slates, copperplate handwriting, sewing, cooking and rag rug making as well as the use of dolly tubs, wash boards, mangles and flat irons. This gives opportunities for good links with geography and science as the pupils realise the changes that have come about as a result of the building of railways and the uses of electricity.
123. By the end of Year 6, the pupils learn about different times and some describe the reasons for the Roman invasion of Britain and the effect of this on the family and military life of Celts and Romans. They learn about the programme of road building and defensive walls as well as religious beliefs and practices. Some extend their writing skills by writing as if they were a Celtic warrior following Boudicca. The pupils in Year 5 and 6 are currently studying Ancient Greece and learning about the education, laws and language of that time.
124. When learning about famous people or other historical themes the pupils write about them but much of this is done by answering questions on work sheets which restricts their opportunities to organise their own writing and develop their writing skills.
125. The teaching was good in the history lesson observed. The teacher used the slides of the recent visit to the Black Country Museum to revise what had been seen and to extend the pupils' understanding of school and domestic life then and now. In this lesson the pupils were lively but well behaved. They were excited at seeing themselves on the computer screen but settled to the discussion. They were interested in the tasks of looking at photographs and recording what they had seen. However, opportunities were missed to develop the pupils' speaking and listening skills as there were no opportunities for them to discuss their learning.
126. The subject is well managed and has a satisfactory range of resources. Visits to places such as National Trust properties and museums are used to support and extend the pupils' understanding of the times past. The co-ordinator has written the policy from the National Curriculum guidelines and the pupils' work is assessed termly against these expectations. She has not yet had any opportunities to observe lessons but she checks the quality of teaching and learning by looking at the teachers' plans and the pupils' work. The evidence of the work shows the progression in skills but the pieces are not annotated. The co-ordinator is aware of the need for a more detailed assessment system so that the development of skills can be tracked and the pupils provide with information about how their work might be improved.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

127. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below the standards expected by the end of Year 6 and in line with those expected by the end of Year 2. In the short time since the school opened there have been significant improvements to resources and to the teaching so that all teachers are able to provide a good programme of learning for the pupils. The good management of ICT and a systematic and co-ordinated programme of staff development and training has led to standards improving year on year, although there are some strands of the ICT curriculum that need improving in the junior years in order to raise standards further. The most effective ICT is evident in Year 2, due mainly to the higher standard of teaching evident there and the confidence of the staff who are more inclined to

use ICT as an aid to learning. Other aspects of the ICT curriculum in other parts of the school are lacking or covered in piecemeal fashion and this is largely influenced by the individual competence of staff and the confidence in using ICT across a range of subjects.

128. By the end of Year 2 standards are in line with those expected and the pupils have made good progress. They continue to make good progress, including word processing and some graphics, in the junior years, but more could be done to improve opportunities for the pupils to learn graphic modelling, data handling and control technology. The use of the Internet is developing well but the pupils have not yet had enough opportunities to use new technologies such as electronic mailing (e-mailing) and basic web designing using hyperlinks. In the infant classes the pupils make good progress using word processing programs and can combine pictures and words to make labels, diagrams and pictures that tell a story. In the junior years, the pupils make good progress in word processing and graphic work but only satisfactory progress in other aspects of ICT which are more complex and require the pupils to use ICT to link with control technology. The school recognises that this is an area for further development and improvement.
129. Year 1 and 2 pupils can use simple word processing and graphics programs to produce text and pictures. They can save and print their work with support and understand that the computer can be used to change text and re-organise information. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 can control a pointing device and manoeuvre a cursor or prompt around the computer screen, sometimes searching for symbols or words. Year 2 pupils can print and save their work independently and computers are used well during independent or group work to help them improve in confidence or familiarise themselves with basic skills. In an excellent lesson in the ICT suite, Year 1 and 2 pupils were observed using the interactive whiteboard and EMAG staff were on hand to support groups of pupils to sort key words when sorting the attributes of shapes that can then be sorted using a data handling program. Another group of more able pupils in Year 2 could use the 'Branches' program to ask key questions to sort numbers, shapes and other objects.
130. In the junior years the pupils are making good progress in word processing and graphics programs but the lack of experience of using control technology, e-mailing, and the capability of graphic modelling affects their progress in the more challenging strands of the ICT curriculum. The pupils have less understanding of turtle graphics, desk-top publishing techniques such as importing text and pictures from peripheral files and the use of hyperlinks using the Internet, but this is largely related to the teachers' own confidence and competence in the skills required to teach these more advanced aspects of the ICT curriculum. In Year 3, the pupils are beginning to use a range of word processing and graphics skills using the computer so that by Year 4, the pupils can experiment with fonts and editing tools using word processing skills. Throughout the school, the pupils can print their work using colour and different fonts to produce some imaginative writing and also use a simple data handling program to present information in a variety of forms. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are starting to use simple data handling programs to support their mathematics and science work.
131. The teaching seen was good but the school must improve the range of ICT provided for junior aged pupils in order to raise standards further. Teachers and support staff are developing their understanding of how computers can be used to enhance the work that pupils do across a range of subjects and activities, but the more advanced skills using control technology, information handling, modelling, modifying and evaluating as well as the increasing technologies that utilise electronic mailing and the use of hyperlinks are in the early stages of development.

132. The co-ordinator and headteacher provide good support to colleagues, together with focused training to ensure that the staff and pupils have access to new software and can experiment with computers together with their pupils. The support currently being provided is good with very good technical support employed by the school which helps the staff and pupils to cope with problems or computer breakdowns.

## MUSIC

133. Four lessons of music were seen during the inspection period, two in each of the infant and junior classes. Other evidence was gained from listening to singing in assembly, looking at teachers' planning and the pupils' work and talking to the pupils and teachers. Overall, standards attained in music are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
134. Because of the interesting lessons prepared for them all pupils enjoy music and take part in lessons enthusiastically. In both infant and junior classes the pupils are composing their own music. For example, compositions include tasks to create the sounds of weather. In Year 1 they have learnt about short and long notes and loud and soft ones and are able to clap and copy increasingly complicated short rhythms. The pupils are aware of the importance of the teacher as a conductor and because of her excellent relationships with the pupils, their eagerness to please her and the knowledge and understanding they have already gained, they follow her directions quickly and accurately. Their attitudes and achievement are commendable. This very sound musical foundation is built upon well in Year 2 so that pupils are now able to conduct their own small groups. The pupils have listened to the Grofe's Grand Canyon Suite and recognise the effect instruments have to paint musical pictures. They show an awareness of dynamics, choosing suitable percussion instruments and effectively introducing long and short and loud and soft sounds. Each 'conductor' appropriately brings in each instrument as they see fit. They relate the musical sounds to the sound of weather, rain, wind, sun, thunder and lightening, well.
135. By the end of Year 6, the pupils are working with the class teacher and a peripatetic percussion teacher to compose music to replicate a storm. They have spent time discovering and discussing the musical attributes of each of the percussion instruments and have selected those which give the appropriate effect. They are aware of the need for three stages to their composition, introduction, middle section and closure. In three groups they practise an individual section. They work hard discussing the musical effect building in crescendos, drum rolls and trills. When they come together to play the whole piece they demonstrate good performance disciplines. Their music flows well with no awkward gaps between sections. The result is a very effective composition. The pupils are caught up in the emotion of their music and wait in silent, expectant anticipation to hear the recording of their work. In assembly all the pupils sing in tune with good diction and an awareness of pitch and tempo. In class lessons their singing becomes much more enthusiastic as they enjoy songs from other countries. Evidence indicates that pupils thoroughly enjoyed participating in the Hosanna Rock Concert at Christmas. By special invitation, the school choir has visited a recording studio. Here they have joined with other groups and a solo singer to make a splendid CD entitled 'Chemical Children' which they are selling for the National Comic Relief Charity.
136. The quality of teaching seen was at least satisfactory or good and more often very good. Where lessons were very good, this was because teachers had planned their lessons well and not only had a sound knowledge of the subject but also a clear understanding of the knowledge and abilities of the pupils. Their encouragement made lessons enjoyable. They are aware that

because this is a new school the pupils have not built a progressive musical knowledge and take every opportunity to consolidate musical vocabulary and build on practical experiences.

137. Over half of the pupils have English as an additional language or some specific special educational need. The music coordinator has worked hard to produce a policy and scheme of work that takes this into account and builds on the diverse experiences of the pupils. She supports teachers well by monitoring teaching, planning and standards and ensuring in-service training is available when needed. She is replenishing the existing stock and is introducing a splendid range of instruments familiar to pupils who originate from other countries.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

138. Standards in physical education are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in swimming by the end of Year 6 are below those expected as the majority of eleven-year-olds are unable to swim 25 metres unaided. Swimming provision is good and has been kept up so that more pupils are provided with opportunities to learn to swim. The large majority of pupils do not participate in swimming activities outside school and the very first experiences of visiting the local swimming baths is when they are taken by the school. Additional provision such as after school clubs, and the adventurous activities including a residential weekend contribute substantially to the overall standards achieved.
139. The pupils enter Year 1 with appropriate co-ordination and the ability to control bodily movements with confidence, imagination and safety. In Year 1, they demonstrate their ability to travel in different ways on benches, across mats and developing links between movements to form a sequence. By the end of Year 2 the pupils become familiar with the need for 'warm up' and 'warm down' activities and know the effect that exercise has on their bodies. In a very good Year 2 lesson the pupils were able to hold a balance with increasing control as they practised. All the pupils make good progress because they are well taught and supported, including those with special educational needs who receive very effective support from teaching assistants.
140. Year 5 and 6 pupils were observed making good progress developing games skills. The pupils engaged in activities which demonstrate the skills required in ball control, such as throwing and catching, with appropriate accuracy. Standards achieved in swimming by the end of Year 6 reflect the fact that a substantial proportion of pupils have no experience of swimming other than what the school provides. The pupils make good progress as the large majority are non-swimmers from Year 3 and by the time they complete Year 6 more than half are able to swim with reasonable confidence and independence. Although swimming standards are below those expected overall, the pupils have made good gains in their confidence and experience of swimming skills. In Year 6, teachers' planning indicates that games skills, techniques and ideas are further developed to include passing, shooting, attacking and intercepting. Learning objectives include a requirement for pupils to combine and perform skills more fluently to apply a range of tactics for attack and defence and to be able to pass, stop and shoot accurately within the context of a small game. Older pupils benefit from their participation in adventurous and team-building activities as part of the annual residential visits.
141. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers successfully develop the pupils' confidence and skills. In dance, the pupils improve in confidence as they use their imagination to improvise movements using musical stimuli which contribute positively to their cultural development. In swimming, skilful intervention ensures the pupils make good progress in the limited time available. In Year 1, bi-lingual support is used effectively to ensure that the pupils learning

English as an additional language participate fully in lessons. Similarly, pupils with special educational needs also participate fully and are well supported. In some lessons observed the pupils were required to evaluate the work of others and make suggestions about how to improve their performance. This could usefully be employed more systematically in all lessons as an assessment tool to raise standards further and make the pupils more aware of their performance.

142. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall. Most enjoy physical education lessons and co-operate when required to work in pairs or groups. They respond positively to the expectation to dress appropriately, for the activity being undertaken. The co-ordinator provides good support to colleagues. The nationally recognised scheme of work is in place, and records are completed each term which outline observations and comments about the pupils' progress. The quality of accommodation is good with a particularly good outdoor area which was provided as part of the refurbishment programme when the school was formed. The school has its own all-weather outdoor pitch which is secure and easily accessible to the school. The hall is large but also acts as a thoroughfare for other classes. The floor is suitable for dance and gymnastics but the school needs to take steps to seal off part of the flooring which houses an old heating system to make the floor area completely safe. Resources are good with suitable apparatus available for gymnastics. There are good links with the local Secondary School as part of the school's development of sporting activities.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

143. Three lessons of religious education were seen during the inspection period. Other evidence was gained from observing assemblies, scrutinising teachers' planning and the pupils' work, looking at displays and talking to the pupils and teachers. Overall, standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2 and are in line with expectations by the end of Year 6.
144. In Year 1, the pupils are learning about prayer. They have identified types of prayer, for example, for forgiveness or to say thank you and are able to say what things they pray for. They think about this carefully and thoughts range from the beautiful countryside to relatives in Iraq. They ponder on the war that they have seen on television and say they are sad when people die or have no food. The teacher reassures them saying that they will pray for food and water for Iraqi people. Questions arise about God. The teacher acknowledges all stories told and gives them respect. Through sensitive discussion and explanation she imbeds the understanding that whatever their religion their God is all around them to love them and care for them. She emphasises He is there for everyone. The pupils then settle to write their own prayer thanking God for their Mum or a pet and asking for help for poor people and children in Iraq. The scrutiny of work reveals that infant pupils have learned about a wide diversity of religious festivals and beliefs. They have celebrated Christingle, Hannukah, Divali and Eid. In an infant assembly they listened with great interest to an explanation of the impending Sikh festival of Baisakhi. The teacher drew well on the knowledge of Sikh pupils in the school and displayed and handled costumes and artefacts with respect. Because of this there was much consolidation of knowledge and understanding and total involvement. The pupils showed their enjoyment by spontaneously clapping. Throughout the school, where there are religious artefacts, these are displayed sensitively and given due respect. There are many good cross-curricular links for example in art and design where the Paisley pattern is linked to the patterning on Hindu shawls.
145. By the end of Year 6, the pupils are looking at the Christian festival of Easter and its religious significance. Because of the teacher's own sound knowledge and the very good use of

overhead transparencies, the pupils were able to begin to understand the development of the events of Holy week and examine the resulting emotions of the people primarily involved. Although junior pupils have learned of the customs and practices of other faiths as well as their own, the pupils have few opportunities to record work independently or in extended forms. They are too frequently required to answer questions and this limits the thoughts and acquisition of knowledge of the more able pupils. Moreover, where there are classes with a mixed age range, work is not always suitably differentiated to take into account the development of the pupils of different ages.

146. The quality of the teaching seen in religious education was almost always good. Teachers were well prepared and provided interesting and challenging tasks for pupils to ponder on. Due respect was given to their ideas and suggestions and they were encouraged to examine their own thoughts carefully. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen the teacher's own knowledge and understanding was insecure. Religious significance of situations and events was missed and the tasks set did not challenge the pupils sufficiently or consolidate their knowledge and understanding of the events under discussion.
  
147. The co-ordinator has worked hard to produce schemes of work, which guide teachers through a progressive programme of work. She is acutely aware of the wide diversity of religious practices of the pupils in school and aims to ensure that all of these are given due attention and respect. A suitable stock of religious artefacts, books and posters has been built up to aid teachers. The co-ordinator welcomes the input of visitors from different religions and encourages teachers to take full advantage of the opportunities for the pupils to visit places of worship in the surrounding community. All of this is enabling a very mixed religious school community to work and play very harmoniously together respecting each other's opinions and beliefs.