

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST ANDREW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wolverhampton

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 132806

Headteacher: Mrs L M Murphy

Reporting inspector: Mr C R Phillips  
15941

Dates of inspection: 19-22 May 2003

Inspection number: 249008

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: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 3 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Coleman Street  
Whitmore Reans  
Wolverhampton

Postcode: WV6 0RH

Telephone number: 01902 558522

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Revd J L Smith

Date of previous inspection: N/A

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15941	Mr C R Phillips	Registered inspector	History	Information about the school How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
8992	Mr J Vischer	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?
2433	Mr I Bennett	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	
21056	Mr A Harries	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
24027	Ms B Kuty	Team inspector	Art and design English as an additional language Educational inclusion Special educational needs	
18340	Mrs M Phillips	Team inspector	Foundation stage Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
22790	Ms J Pinney	Team inspector	English Geography	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a larger than average voluntary-controlled school for boys and girls aged three to 11. It draws pupils from mainly rented housing, and is in an inner-city area of high unemployment. It was established in January 2001, following the amalgamation of neighbouring infant and junior schools, and its number of junior pupils increased when another local school closed. The school has 354 pupils currently on roll, 50 of whom are in the nursery class, which provides the equivalent of 30 full-time places for younger children. At the time of the inspection, there were 57 children under the age of five, who were in the nursery and one reception class. Almost all of the children in the reception classes have received some pre-school education, the majority in the school's own nursery. Overall levels of attainment on entry are very low. There is a very high level of mobility, with considerable movement of pupils into and out of the area each year, so the overall levels of attainment of year groups change constantly. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals (43 per cent) is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils currently identified as having special educational needs (20 per cent) is above the national average, and 28 pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. These figures are particularly high because the school draws pupils with moderate learning difficulties from a wide area into its special educational needs resource base. The percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language (34 per cent) is high, and 19 per cent of pupils are at an early stage of English acquisition.

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

This is a good school. Standards of attainment are well below the levels expected in English and mathematics at present, but there are clear indications of improvement in these and other subjects. The school is very well managed and all of the members of the teaching and support staff are fully committed to providing a wide range of educational opportunities for the pupils within the context of a caring and stimulating environment. The provision the school makes to ensure that pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are included fully in all aspects of its life is exemplary. Relationships throughout the school are very good, as is the pupils' personal development. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The headteacher provides very clear leadership and is well supported by staff and governors.
- It has established a caring ethos, within which very good relationships and the pupils' personal development are flourishing.
- The quality of teaching, learning and provision in the nursery and the reception classes is very good.
- The provision made for pupils with special educational needs, both in the main school and in the resource base, is very good.
- It has a thoroughly inclusive approach, so, for instance, pupils of all ethnic groups and those whose mother tongue is not English play a full part in all aspects of its life.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.

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

- Standards of attainment, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 1 and 2 and its use across the curriculum throughout the school.
- Arrangements for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress in subjects where these are not already in place.
- Attendance.



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

## **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	D
Mathematics	n/a	E*	E*	E
Science	n/a	E	D	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Overall results in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11 were well below the national average in English. In mathematics, they were in the lowest five per cent nationally, and in science they were below average. Since the previous year's results were the first available for the school, it is not possible to identify overall trends, but the results for both English and science showed improvement on those of the previous year. This is confirmed when the results are compared with those for schools of broadly similar intake. When compared with national figures, the overall standards attained in National Curriculum tests and assessments at the age of seven in 2002 were also in the lowest five per cent in reading, writing and mathematics, having been well below the national average the previous year, and were also well below the figures for schools of broadly similar intake. The teachers' assessment of science indicated standards that were well below the national average overall. The grades that compare results with those in similar schools should be treated with caution. Schools are compared solely on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals, and for this school do not take account of other measures of need, the number of pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is a second language, the high mobility rate, and the low attainment of pupils when they join the school. When these factors are taken into account, it is clear that pupils are making good progress overall to achieve what they do.

Inspection findings indicate that standards of attainment by the time pupils are seven and 11 are currently well below the level expected nationally in English and mathematics, but that standards in science and several other subjects are at or approaching the levels expected for these age groups. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the support they receive in the main school and in the resource base, and there are no indications of significant differences between the performance of girls and boys or between different ethnic groups. Children in the nursery and the reception classes make good progress overall and are approaching the levels expected at the start of Year 1 in their personal, social and emotional development. They are below that level in several other areas of learning, and their language and mathematical development are well below. The school did not meet its targets in English and mathematics in 2002, but expects to be closer to its revised targets this year. It faces particular difficulty in establishing meaningful targets for performance because of its frequently changing population.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils show good attitudes in all aspects of school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	They behave well, within and beyond the classroom, and work and play well together.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development and the quality of relationships throughout the school are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is still below average, but improving, and a few parents do not get their children to school punctually.

The quality of relationships and the personal development of the pupils are particular strengths.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall, with more than two-thirds of the lessons seen judged to be good or better, and almost all lessons satisfactory or better. Almost a quarter of the lessons observed were very good or excellent. The teaching of English is good overall, and teaching is satisfactory in mathematics. The skills of literacy and numeracy are being taught satisfactorily in other subjects. Good provision is made for the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and the higher attainers. The teachers' classroom management is good, as is their subject knowledge, and they expect all pupils to do well. They provide a good range of interesting and often stimulating lessons. In occasional lessons, intentions for learning are not sufficiently clear or the pace of the lesson is too slow. The teachers use assessment effectively in English, mathematics and science, enabling them to give useful feedback to pupils about the progress they are making, but this is not sufficiently developed in other subjects. All teachers know their pupils very well, in spite of the frequent changes as children join or leave the school, and they work hard to ensure that the pupils respond well to the experiences offered. Most pupils are becoming more confident and independent in their learning. Pupils of all abilities are keen to do well and are given much encouragement to do so.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, and the school provides a wide range of opportunities to enrich the pupils' learning through visits and extra-curricular activities.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs in the main school and in the resource base is very good. Their needs are identified and met, they are fully involved in the life of the school, and they make good progress against their own targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The needs of these pupils are met well, they are fully integrated into all aspects of school life, and their progress at least matches that of the other pupils in the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision overall for the pupils' personal development, particularly for their spiritual, moral and social development. They are encouraged to be responsible, to care and to be sensitive to cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Its arrangements for the identification and monitoring of the progress made by pupils in all aspects of their learning and development are satisfactory overall.

The school works hard to encourage parents to be involved in their children's education, but is not always successful in this. However, parents agree the school is doing a good job in encouraging their children to do well and to develop well, both personally and socially. They feel they are well informed about the work their children are doing and about the progress they are making. All pupils have a broad range of learning experiences within and beyond the school. All pupils are known and cared for well. They are treated with respect throughout the school and respond very well to being valued, becoming mature and responsible members of the school community.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership with the support of the deputy headteacher and other managers. The staff team makes an important contribution to the continuing development of the school and to its management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors provide good support for the school, are thoroughly committed to and involved in its continuing development, and have a very good awareness of its needs.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, governors and staff review the school's performance continuously and always look for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	All resources are used efficiently for the benefit of the pupils in the school.

Under the leadership of the headteacher, the school has a very clear educational direction and is becoming increasingly effective. It is well staffed. The teachers are very well supported by the classroom assistants and other helpers, and all adults working in the school make an important contribution to the quality of pupils' experience. The buildings and

grounds are well kept, providing a very pleasant environment for learning. This is enhanced by the quality of display around the school, and will be further improved when current building work is completed. The provision of learning resources is satisfactory overall, although outdoor provision for the youngest children needs further development, library provision for older pupils is inadequate at present and the school does not have its own playing field. The governors, headteacher and staff review all development priorities regularly, evaluating all spending decisions against clear criteria, and they apply the principles of best value well.

## **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>• The school encourages parents to play an active part in its life, handles complaints well and is approachable.</li> <li>• The school gives a clear understanding of what is taught and most parents feel they are well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• Their children enjoy going to school and are able to achieve a good standard of work.</li> <li>• The school encourages the children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons, and almost all parents are satisfied with the homework given.</li> <li>• The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children and it achieves high standards of behaviour.</li> </ul>	

There was a good level of response to the parents' questionnaire, with no significant concerns, and parents clearly have a high opinion of the school and the opportunities it provides for their children. This view is shared by the inspection team.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11 in 2002, overall results were well below the national average in English, very low in mathematics, and below the national average in science. The overall results in English and science showed improvement on those of the previous year, whilst mathematics remained about the same. Since these were the only two groups to have taken the tests since the amalgamation of the two schools, it is not possible to draw firm conclusions about trends in improvement. When compared with the results attained in schools of broadly similar intake, the overall results were above average in science, below average in English, and well below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics was well below both the national average and that of similar schools. In science, it was below the national figure, but above that for similar schools. However, the comparison with similar schools, which is based on the proportion of pupils claiming free school meals, takes insufficient note of the school's social context, the very low levels of attainment when pupils enter the school and the very high levels of pupil mobility. The figures are also affected significantly by the large number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need who attend the school from a wide area because of its resource base. When these other factors are taken into account, it is clear that the actual progress being made by individual pupils presents a much more positive picture of what is being achieved in the school than is shown at present in national tests. The school did not meet its published targets last year, but expects to be nearer to the revised figures for this year, although the setting of meaningful targets is particularly difficult because of the very high number of pupils joining and leaving after targets have been set.
2. When compared with national figures, the overall standards attained in National Curriculum tests and assessments at the age of seven in 2002 were very low in reading, writing and mathematics, having been well below the national average the previous year, and were also well below the figures for schools of broadly similar intake. The teachers' assessment of science indicated standards that were well below the national average overall. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was below the national average in science, and very low in reading and mathematics. No pupils reached this level in writing. There is no significant difference apparent between the performance of boys and girls at the age of seven or by the time they leave the school.
3. When children enter the school at the age of three or four, their standards of attainment are very low. By the time they are five, most children have had experience of nursery or other pre-school education, many of them in the school's own nursery. During their time in the nursery and the reception classes, now known as the Foundation Stage of education, the children make good progress in the various areas of learning, and begin to work and play well together in a variety of situations. They become increasingly confident in their relationships with each other and with their teachers. Present indications are that, by the time the children reach the end of the Foundation Stage, most will have attained the expected levels in terms of their personal and social skills, and will be approaching them in their physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their language and

number skills, although improved, are likely to be well below the level expected nationally for children of this age.

4. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of the oldest pupils in both key stages is currently well below the levels expected nationally in English and mathematics, but is broadly in line with the level expected in science. The attainment of both age groups is well below average in each of the main aspects of English, and overall standards of literacy are clearly below the level expected. There are some indications of improvement, however, particularly in speaking, listening and writing, which are being targeted by the school. In mathematics, the pupils become increasingly confident in handling numbers as they go through the school, and are making useful gains in other skills, such as mental mathematics, but many have difficulty with problem solving and the use of mathematical vocabulary. Their standards of numeracy overall are well below average. In science, pupils show satisfactory knowledge of the various aspects of the subject by the time they leave the school, and the understanding of scientific method shown by older pupils is developing well.
5. Standards of attainment in ICT are presently below national expectations by the time pupils are seven, but are in line with expectations by the time they are 11. There are clear indications of improvement, particularly for older pupils, as they develop their skills with the aid of the new ICT facilities. However, the limited evidence available for the work of pupils in Years 1 and 2 suggests that their skills are insufficiently developed at this age, and not enough opportunities for the use of ICT are provided in all subjects and year groups. In religious education, standards by the time pupils are seven are in line with the level expected by the local agreed syllabus, and, by the time they are 11, are approaching that level overall, although also showing clear signs of improvement through the key stage. In music and physical education, standards by the time pupils leave the school are in line with national expectations, but it has not been possible to judge the standards being achieved by younger pupils. Standards in art and design and in design and technology are in line with expectations for both age groups. In geography and history, standards by the end of both key stages are below the level expected. Since the levels at which pupils enter the school are so low, it is clear that they are making good progress overall to achieve the standards they do. In Years 1 and 2, progress is satisfactory at present, and it is good for the other age groups.
6. Pupils with special educational needs in the main school make good progress towards their targets. This is because the tasks they are given are matched well to their needs and the quality of support they receive in lessons is very effective. The progress they make is monitored carefully by class teachers and the co-ordinator for special educational needs. As a result, 12 pupils have been removed from the special educational needs register this year, and three were referred to outside agencies for extra support and guidance. About three-quarters of the pupils met their targets. The targeted support and the consistent monitoring of pupils' progress towards their targets are beginning to raise their attainment in Years 1 and 2. Their attainment in English and mathematics is better than the standards of attainment of Year 6 pupils. Pupils in the resource base also make good progress towards their targets. The combination of targeted small-group support in literacy and numeracy with the base teachers and support staff, and the opportunity to work alongside their mainstream peers for much of the time is having a significant impact on their language development and on their social, personal and emotional development. They achieve well. Individual education plans are used effectively by all staff. Pupils are included successfully in the main school most of the time. Most are confident to work alongside others, and in some lessons, such as art and design, and design and

technology, a couple of pupils take the lead by setting good examples to others in their work. Although they make good progress towards their targets, their attainment by the age of 11 is very low compared to the levels expected nationally in English, mathematics and science.

7. The recently-established systems to analyse and identify pupils and areas for targeted support is having a positive impact on the progress being made towards their targets by those pupils for whom English is an additional language. The majority of pupils who are more proficient in English language in both age groups attain standards that are in line with their monolingual peers in English, mathematics and science by the ages of seven and 11. One of the reasons for the good progress pupils make in developing their English language skills is the emphasis the school places on developing the speaking and listening skills of all pupils. In the nursery and reception classes, for instance, the well-planned learning and the careful support given by staff who have a good knowledge of how young children learn provide a very good start for children. This is extended effectively by the support offered by the specialist teacher and the support staff in Years 1 and 2. Although most pupils with English as an additional language make good and sometimes very good progress in their speaking and listening skills, the standards of attainment of the majority of these pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English and mathematics are well below those expected nationally of pupils of their age but are in line with those of their monolingual peers. The targeted support for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to improve their understanding in the use of scientific vocabulary is good. This is helping them all to make good progress towards their targets and many are set to attain standards that are in line with those expected by the age of 11. However, a significant number of pupils who are in the early and middle stages of English language acquisition still find it difficult to record their investigations independently. The standard of attainment of these pupils by the age of 11 still remains below and sometimes well below expectations at this age nationally. Pupils who are new to English language perform equally well. Discussions with a group of pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 indicate that they have the confidence to take part in discussions, although many of their responses were single words. Their attitude to learning is very good. What was especially noticeable in this situation was how the rest of the group helped these pupils and respected their views by listening to what they had to say, which is another indication of the inclusive ethos of the school.

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

8. Pupils' have good attitudes to school across all year groups. They are happy, self-confident boys and girls who work and play well together. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves are very good. These high standards, which are reflected in the extremely positive responses by parents in the pre-inspection questionnaire to 'my child likes school', are a strength of the school. However, this is not reflected in the attendance figures, which, although improving, continue to be below the national average, affecting the learning of a significant number of pupils.
9. Pupils settle quickly at the beginning of the day to the often brisk registration before going into assemblies. During the daily assemblies, pupils from the broad range of religious groupings participate well. In most lessons, their positive attitudes and enthusiasm help drive the lesson forward, even when they are occasionally unsure about what they are meant to be learning. They are proud of their achievements. They involve themselves well in lessons, but many are not yet confident about working independently. Most pupils take pride in carrying out their responsibilities in class,

from the nursery right through the school. They are also keen to earn house points and keep a close eye on their tally. Pupils in Year 6 are especially proud to play their part as monitors with the younger pupils at lunchtimes, and several would be glad to do more.

10. The pupils' behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school. The low number of temporary exclusions reflects isolated examples of poor behaviour, which are dealt with firmly. There were no incidents of bullying, sexism or racism noted during the inspection. Pupils play considerately in the spacious playgrounds. At the end of play, they all queue patiently to go to their classrooms and walk off sensibly. In the corridors, the well-established routines of walking in more or less single file and stopping to wait for a more junior class to pass in front at busy junctions are copied by pupils, even when teachers are not in the front of the line. The hall is tightly packed in whole-school assemblies, but pupils cope very well. They hold doors open willingly and let others through first. They behave well at lunchtimes, taking their turn in the dining hall and requiring little supervision.
11. The positive attitudes and behaviour of pupils have a natural, unforced quality, which stems from the high standard of relationships in the school. The quality of relationships between pupils, and between staff and pupils, is very good. Pupils also hold the headteacher in high esteem, responding equally well to her firm admonishments as to her gentle enquiries after their well-being. During lessons, pupils help others unselfconsciously, and often work co-operatively in pairs. Pupils are happy to include others of all abilities in their learning activities, especially during their circle discussions, which they thoroughly enjoy and in which they listen well to one another. The Year 6 monitors develop strong bonds with younger pupils in the playground, participating in and leading games, and just having fun together. These very good relationships lie at the heart of the very inclusive nature of the school.
12. This inclusive approach is illustrated further by the way pupils with special educational needs in the main school and the resource base are involved fully in all aspects of the school's life as part of the commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils. This helps them to gain self-confidence and they try to achieve their full potential. As a result, pupils with special educational needs throughout the school show positive attitudes towards their learning. They listen carefully to instructions and are generally enthusiastic about their work. The resource base pupils participate fully in lessons, often offering their views in whole class and small group discussions. The very good relationships help pupils with special educational needs to be active learners. Staff seek out specific opportunities to share pupils' expertise in particular subjects and aspects, and this instils a general sense of respect for each other. Behaviour in lessons is generally good, because expectations are usually made clear to pupils. When pupils with specific difficulties display inappropriate behaviour occasionally, this is managed well by the support staff, and the rest of the class are clear about what they are expected to do. This helps the lessons to continue with little disruption.
13. The school's commitment to raising the achievement of all pupils through educational inclusion is clearly evident in the organisation of the provision for those with English as an additional language. The school takes particular care to encourage the pupils' personal, social and emotional development alongside their academic achievement. This helps all pupils, including those who have recently arrived in this country, to become active learners, and they soon become happy and settled.
14. The attendance figures do not apparently support the positive attitudes identified above, but this is partly because the statistics are nearly a year old. The unpublished



figures for this year's attendance show a considerable improvement, although they are still below the national average. There are several reasons for the attendance being below the national average, one of the most significant being the high numbers of pupils that come to the school for a while and then move on, but necessarily remain on roll until administrative procedures have been cleared. The high percentage of pupils with unauthorised absences also reflects a lack of appreciation by many parents of the benefits to be gained from regular attendance. There are a few, but regular, daily latecomers who sometimes miss assemblies, but there are hardly any pupils who miss the beginnings of lessons regularly.

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

15. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Of the lessons observed during the inspection, almost a quarter were very good or excellent, nearly two-fifths were good, and almost all were at least satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. This pattern is reflected in the teaching of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, although there are examples of good and very good teaching in a wide range of subjects and for pupils in both age groups. In the Foundation Stage, the standard of teaching is very good overall, with several excellent lessons seen, and the teaching and support team work together to particularly good effect, providing learning opportunities that are of high quality for all children. Teachers throughout the school bring particular strengths to their work, and the pupils participate in an interesting and varied range of experiences.
16. Learning in the Foundation Stage is planned very well, and all adults in the staff team provide a secure learning environment for young children and teach the skills needed. The personal and social development of the children and their communication, language and literacy skills are at the heart of learning in each of the classes. The assessment of learning at this stage is very good and is used effectively to monitor closely the progress the children make. All of the adults understand how young children learn, and provide a wealth of interesting and valuable experiences for them.
17. Teachers throughout the school show good knowledge and understanding overall of the various subjects. The teaching and use of mental mathematics are developing well, although the pace of introductory sessions is sometimes slow. In science, the use of investigative and experimental work is developing well, as is the emphasis on the development of the necessary vocabulary. In English, the teaching of writing across the school and the development of speaking and listening skills are beginning to have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced satisfactorily. The quality of planning for subjects is good and takes account of the range of capabilities in each class, ensuring that pupils of all attainment levels progress well. Most teachers have high expectations of the pupils' involvement and behaviour, and communicate them clearly to the pupils. They also have the skills, classroom organisation and management to deliver lessons that motivate and engage pupils, and enable them to work hard. The teachers understand how children learn, and most are able to teach effectively in steps the pupils can manage, so that they acquire the required skills and knowledge, and their interest is retained. The teachers often praise the pupils' efforts, and all adults work well with the pupils, monitoring their progress effectively during lessons.
18. As a staff team, the teachers share a lot of subject expertise and experience. They are usually clear in their planning about the learning that is intended, share this with the pupils and review progress at the end of lessons. However, in some lessons, the

intentions for learning are insufficiently specific about what pupils should know, understand or be able to do by the end of the learning experience, so pupils are unclear about what they are learning, and the review sessions at the end of lessons do not always reinforce learning fully or help to identify the specific progress made. This is the key reason why some lessons are less than satisfactory. In some lessons, there is also a lack of pace, particularly when time is lost in controlling behaviour, and the interest of pupils is not maintained. The teachers usually provide clear explanations of the tasks required of the pupils, which take good account of the needs of individuals, in order for pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils, to be challenged by the work provided. Planning takes the needs of all into account, and materials used reflect gender, ethnicity and social background appropriately. There is an effective pace to most lessons, and the teachers are confident and motivate the pupils well. Most use a range of perceptive questioning skills. They know and manage their pupils well, in spite of the constant changes in their classes because of pupils joining and leaving the school. The teachers generally ensure that pupils develop good working habits, and the pupils respond well. They generally show attention to detail and complete their work carefully. They are always keen to learn. By the time they leave the school, most are developing an understanding of what they are learning and are beginning to be able to talk about it in a mature way.

19. In the best lessons, such as several in the Foundation Stage, some literacy, numeracy and science lessons, and lessons in other subjects, pupils are challenged to put maximum effort into their work. In these lessons, very good subject knowledge is evident, there is a brisk pace, and learning is stimulated and checked, using a wide variety of planned strategies. Language is reinforced carefully and the teaching of skills is generally of high quality. The teachers know when to intervene, and their questioning is particularly effective in clarifying learning for the pupils and in assessing what is necessary for them to learn further. In these lessons, the teachers have high expectations of both standards and behaviour, ensuring full attention, and these are reflected in the pupils' attitudes. The pupils' responses are handled very well.
20. Throughout the school, a good range of approaches to classroom organisation is used. A balance of class, group work, pair work and individual working is used effectively. The opportunities provided for working in pairs and groups are beginning to raise standards and improve progress, in addition to improving the pupils' confidence and motivation considerably as they engage in these more interactive approaches to learning. From their entry to the nursery, the children are guided and encouraged to show independence, but older pupils are not yet acquiring the skills of research and independent learning fully. There are good examples of helpful marking and self-assessment throughout the school, but there is sometimes a lack of precision in the use of targets.
21. The quality of teaching in the resource base is good overall. Some very good lessons were also observed in Years 5 and 6. In the very good lessons observed, the resource base teacher challenged and extended pupils' thinking through skilful questioning that helped them to work out their own strategies for solving the questions posed by the teacher. The resource base teachers in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6 make good use of resources to engage all pupils, some of whom have a very limited attention span. They prepare their lessons well, but the lesson outcomes identified are sometimes too broad and insufficiently specific about what teachers want individual pupils to achieve. Pupils with special educational needs in the main school are well supported in lessons. The quality of help offered by the support staff in these sessions is good. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and use this

knowledge effectively to consolidate and extend pupils' skills. They offer a wide range of activities and there is an appropriate balance between whole class and practical tasks.

22. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good throughout the school. The specialist and small-group support offered by the two teachers and the support staff makes a significant contribution to the good progress pupils make towards their targets. The use of repetitive actions and visual clues enable pupils, especially those who have very little knowledge of English, to tune in to the sounds, pattern and rhythm of English language. For example, in one such lesson for younger pupils, the teacher used visual prompts and actions well to enable them to learn the names of different fruits and key vocabulary such as 'cutting' and 'stirring' related to the making of a fruit salad. In another lesson, for older pupils, the teacher made very good use of resources and questioning strategies to extend their English language skills. The specialist teachers and support staff create a culture of learning together, asking pupils to name the objects in their home languages and helping them to gain confidence. The specific involvement of those who are new to English was less evident in whole-class sessions. Teachers in both key stages know their pupils well and use this information effectively to develop their language skills alongside their knowledge of the subject being studied. The class teachers, specialist teachers and support staff work well together as a team to cater for pupils' individual needs.
23. The school stresses the importance of involving parents in their children's work and this is understood from the Foundation Stage onwards. Homework is set regularly, and parents are satisfied with the provision. All pupils take reading books home on a regular basis and many parents share books with their children, but not all do. All pupils have spellings and mathematical tables to learn. Pupils are also given other work to do in English and mathematics, and sometimes tasks linked with their work in other subjects. They receive appropriate feedback, which has a positive impact on standards, progress and motivation.

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

24. The school's broad curriculum provides good learning opportunities for pupils. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, and meets statutory requirements. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, which is in accordance with the school's aims and is relevant to the needs of the pupils. The total weekly teaching time for pupils in Years 3 to 6, however, falls one hour short of the recommended minimum, causing some afternoon lessons to be rather hurried. The school plans to address this matter as part of a teaching timetable review.
25. Since the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools, curriculum planning has been revised carefully to achieve consistency between the key stages. Teachers now plan a clear progression of skills for pupils as they move through the school.
26. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage, which is based on six areas of learning and the national goals for early learning, provides a very good experience for all children in the nursery and two reception classes. The organisation of learning is very good overall, and is largely based on first-hand experiences, making good use of the children's natural curiosity and eagerness. There are some limitations at present in the opportunities provided for children's physical development outdoors.

27. The school is fully inclusive and pupils have equal opportunities to achieve well, whatever their difficulties, gender or ethnic background. It has recently undertaken an audit to check its own inclusiveness, and its policies on matters of educational inclusion are very clearly documented.
28. Satisfactory strategies are in place for the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills. The school's implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies helps significantly to overcome the many difficulties that pupils experience with basic skills. In Years 1, 2 and 6, pupils move from their class groups to be taught in mathematics and English sets based on ability, and there are similar arrangements at times in the Foundation Stage. This enables teachers to match tasks and activities more closely to the needs of the pupils. The school participates in several local and national initiatives to promote literacy and numeracy skills; for example, pupils in Year 5 are keen to be part of the 'Wolves Study Group', using computers to improve their writing and mathematics. Participation in the national 'Intensifying Support Pilot' helps teachers to set half-termly basic skills targets for each class to reach. Involvement in such initiatives is helping to give pupils greater determination to succeed, although this has not yet had time to affect standards of attainment.
29. There are many opportunities for pupils to strengthen their literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. For example, in ICT, Year 6 pupils write short factual accounts for 'PowerPoint' presentations, and in science pupils read finely-calibrated scales of temperature, force or mass.
30. The school offers a good number of popular extra-curricular activities, mainly for older pupils. Sporting clubs include football, tennis, cricket and rounders. There is also a computer club and a country dance group, but there are no musical clubs. Staff plan to increase opportunities for younger pupils next year. Most of the parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.
31. Provision for pupils with special educational needs in both the resource base and the main school is very good. They are given equal access to all areas of the National Curriculum and to extra-curricular activities. The school offers pupils from the resource base opportunities to work alongside their peers in the main school. Pupils with special educational needs in the main school are given opportunities to work in different ability groups in some of the core subjects and in many of the foundation subjects. This enables them to learn from one another and gain self-confidence. They are also given extra support through the many initiatives in which the school is involved. For example, occupational therapy has helped many pupils to develop their reflexes and physical skills, and increased their concentration. Although there is some evidence of pupils with special educational needs using ICT to develop their skills in various areas of the curriculum, the full possibilities of this resource to enhance pupils' progress further have not yet been exploited fully.
32. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are given equal access to all areas of the curriculum. The targeted small-group support enhances this provision. The support teachers and staff break down further the learning outcomes identified in the weekly planning, ensuring that pupils' learning is in appropriate steps. This helps pupils to refine their language skills. There are some good examples also of the use of ICT to develop pupils' language skills, but it is not yet used fully.
33. The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' personal, social and health education and is currently preparing a policy for this area of the curriculum. Pupils consider personal

and social issues regularly during their circle discussions and staff work hard to promote awareness of health and lifestyle matters. The school's policy on sex education states clearly how it is taught to Year 6 pupils with the support of the school nurse. Teachers are planning to introduce appropriate learning for younger Key Stage 2 pupils. The school does not have a written policy on preventing drugs misuse. The required elements of the science curriculum on the effects of solvents, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are taught, but there is no other teaching programme in place to encourage the pupils' awareness of the problems of drug abuse.

34. Very strong links with the local community help to broaden the curriculum. For example, coaches and players from Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club support school football training, and the school recently had a lively visit from Wolfie, the club mascot. The staff of Wolverhampton Music School lead composition workshops. Pupils undertake useful exchange visits with primary school pupils from Ludlow for a day and discover interesting features of another area. Year 2 pupils learn about events and people of the past at Shugborough Hall, and Year 4 pupils support their geography studies by visiting Shareshill village. Pupils from Years 2 and 5 visit residential outdoor activity centres at Kingswood and Dunfield. All of these activities enhance pupils' educational experiences significantly.
35. The school liaises effectively with pre-school groups and partner schools. This helps to ensure a smooth transition to the school and on to secondary school. Participation in the national Sure Start initiative helps to prepare very young children for school life, as well as advising mothers on health and diet matters. There are curriculum links with a nearby secondary school, through which pupils have use of a laptop computer for science and are taught by secondary school teachers in design and technology. Year 6 pupils spend a useful day visiting their new school and this helps them to look forward to the next phase of their education.
36. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall, and is a strength of the school.
37. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. Assemblies provide good opportunities for them to reflect on important aspects of life, feelings and personal beliefs. For example, pupils in assembly reflected on how people have to face up to their shortcomings. The art on display around the school promotes pupils' spiritual development very well, both through the raising of pupils' self-esteem and by displaying work with specific faith and cultural themes. Opportunities are used well by teachers to promote spiritual development and a sense of wonder in other subjects, as when pupils show their delight during imaginative learning experiences in subjects such as history. In religious education, as in assemblies and the general life of the school, pupils show an understanding of and full respect for other faiths.
38. Very good provision is made for the pupils' moral development. A high priority is given to providing them with a clear set of moral values and teaching them the difference between right and wrong. All staff, including support staff and midday supervisors, demonstrate the principles they promote, including fairness, integrity, respect for property and caring for others. When the school was formed two years ago, the headteacher identified the need to improve behaviour as a priority. Assisted by the local education authority's educational psychology service, the school introduced the Nurturing Programme that is based on the need for pupils to reflect on their own actions and to recognise the choices they can make about what they do. All staff, including midday supervisors, have been trained in the scheme. Parents are now being invited to be trained in the programme. Moral issues are featured in many

subjects, and circle discussions provide pupils with an open and safe learning environment where they can express their views and listen to those of others.

39. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school staff make strong efforts to build relationships with pupils, and between pupils. Most lessons are planned to encourage the development of social relationships. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibility and to reflect on the consequences of their actions on others. There are residential visits, clubs and school productions. All of these opportunities help promote pupils' self-esteem. Older pupils support younger pupils, and the social interaction between pupils and all adults in the school is very good. In all aspects of the school's life, pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful and considerate, and the positive ethos of the school means that pupils of all ethnic groups mix easily, and relate to each other naturally.
40. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. They gain insights into the beliefs and cultures of other people in a variety of appropriate and interesting ways. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of cultural heritage and show an appreciation of it. In religious education, they study customs and beliefs from a wide variety of cultures. The range of resources to support cultural understanding and development is good. Pupils gain useful understanding of many aspects of British culture through subjects such as history, but opportunities for them to be involved in cultural activities such as music-making are more limited.

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

41. The school takes good care of its pupils. Child-protection procedures are good, even though the school does not yet have its own written policy since it adheres closely to the local education authority's guidelines and has a strongly inclusive ethos. All staff are made aware of the importance of vigilant and careful monitoring, and know the pupils well. Weekly visits from the local education welfare officer (EWO), who knows and supports the school well, mean that very good links are in place. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory in the classrooms, and the condition of the fabric of the school is monitored effectively by the headteacher, the caretaker and the governors' premises committee. Satisfactory first aid organisation ensures that, in the event of accidents, pupils are treated effectively and their treatment is monitored. All incidents are recorded appropriately and standard procedures are in place to inform parents. More staff training for first aid is booked for the end of the inspection term.
42. The school offers good welfare and personal support for all pupils, because it is very clear that they take responsibility for their actions. The behaviour policy, with its emphasis on individual choice, is the key to this. It is supported fundamentally by the Circle Time programme, which is well integrated into the life of the school and emphasises an awareness of one's own feelings and those of others. Staff operate these two strands of personal development consistently. They are patient and listen well; as a result, pupils are ready to talk to them if a problem arises. Moreover, a culture of being open about one's feelings is an essential part of the school ethos. This approach is further supported by the weekly availability of two counsellors, to whom pupils may turn for advice or a friendly ear, and Year 6 pupils in particular find this very helpful. A simple yet effective system of individual improvement awards operates consistently across the school, and is based on a house system that pupils follow keenly. All pupils are encouraged to perform well or improve their behaviour through achievement awards, which are celebrated in weekly assemblies. Although included under the umbrella of the behaviour policy, the school's anti-bullying

approach does not yet have a written policy and sanctions in its own right. However, a discipline record for all forms of unacceptable behaviour is very effective because it is pupil-based, regularly analysed by the headteacher, and presented to governors.

43. The monitoring and the promoting of attendance are very good. Staff are conscientious in marking the register on time and noting reasons for absence. First-day calls home are guaranteed by the employment of an extra administrative assistant and further supported by the weekly visit of the EWO. The school not only offers weekly best-class attendance certificates with a cuddly-toy trophy, but also builds on the pro-active behaviour approach by celebrating improved individual attendance in the 'Good Work' achievement assemblies. Punctuality and good attendance are promoted in the school's prospectus. Punctuality itself is monitored carefully through the delegation of recording latecomers to the same teaching assistant, presenting a familiar face and ensuring continuity. Names are recorded on a separate sheet, which is then analysed further by the administrative staff as they update the registers.
44. Safe routines for lining up, going into the school buildings and moving around the school are good. The level of supervision in the playgrounds is satisfactory but well supported at lunchtime in the infants' playground by the Year 6 monitors. These monitors have to pass an interview and explain why they wish to be monitors, which has a good effect on their personal development and maturity and also helps ensure that the younger pupils are well looked after. The school makes certain that all pupils have equal access to school trips through financial support.
45. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment on entry to the school, identifying those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are very good. Very careful attention is paid to identifying and recording the progress children make in all aspects of their development during their time in the nursery and reception classes. The school has developed its own method of collating this information, in readiness for the introduction of the national Foundation Stage profile.
46. Assessment procedures are used effectively to identify early potential difficulties in terms of pupils' special educational needs and to target groups for specific support. The progress that all pupils, including those in the resource base, make towards their targets is monitored regularly by staff. The targets identified in the pupils' individual education plans are specific and measurable, and all staff who work with pupils with special educational needs in the main school and in the resource base are familiar with their individual needs. The targets are shared with pupils, and staff seek their opinions during reviews. However, there is little evidence of pupils using their knowledge of their targets to review their work themselves.
47. The school has just started analysing the assessment results in terms of specific ethnic groups and has identified groups for targeted support. The school has developed its own assessment scale by further breaking down the local education authority's language assessment material. These smaller steps are used by the support staff to set targets for individual pupils. This is used well by the specialist teachers and the support staff. They evaluate the progress pupils make towards these targets and discuss it with the class teachers in their planning meeting. However, some of the literacy targets in pupils' workbooks are too broad. These smaller steps are not always used consistently throughout the school so that pupils can check themselves the progress they make towards their targets.

48. In the rest of the school, good progress has been made since the new school was established to put effective procedures in place for English, mathematics and science. The results of national and non-statutory tests are analysed carefully to track pupils' progress and identify areas of weakness. In response to this, several initiatives have been introduced, such as the whole-school focus on improvement in writing. A computer program is used very well to identify specific areas of weakness in pupils' individual performance in mathematics, and the same program is shortly to be used in English. Data available is used well for the setting of pupils in Years 2 and 6, to establish support groups and to set individual targets in English and mathematics. These targets are shared with the pupils, although they are not always consistently reinforced in lessons. In addition, half-termly assessments measure individual attainment usefully against the level descriptors of the National Curriculum.
49. Teachers know the pupils well, but the school has already identified that assessment procedures are not yet used consistently to plan the next steps in learning and to ensure that all pupils are provided with work that is specifically suited to their individual needs. The school has rightly prioritised the establishment of good procedures for the core subjects and has correctly identified the assessment of other subjects as an area for development. Assessment in ICT is satisfactory, but there are no formal procedures in place for the other foundation subjects or religious education. This limits the information available with which to judge pupils' present attainment, to illustrate their progress or to help provide suitable work for the future.

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

50. Parents' views of the school are very positive. The return rate of the parent questionnaires is well above average, although there were only a few parents at the meeting before the inspection.
51. The school has satisfactory links with parents overall. The headteacher has established a tradition of being available to parents, whose access to class teachers is also good. This is reflected in the high level of positive responses to the questionnaire item about whether parents would feel comfortable in approaching the school with a problem. The school holds various half-termly, termly and annual events such as the celebratory assemblies, for which the school community has to be split in half by age to accommodate the numbers in the hall. The school makes certain that pupils have equal access to school trips by using the school fund to provide financial support when necessary. Notice-boards for parents around the school keep them up to date, especially in the nursery and reception classes. Attendance at parents' evenings is satisfactory and improving, as the school seeks ways to encourage even more to attend. For example, although an official translation service is not available, the school enlists the help of staff and previous pupils to provide immediate translations when necessary.
52. The school does not offer parents regular written information about the curriculum or about what pupils are going to be doing in lessons, so parents are not easily involved in their children's work, although this matter is being addressed. Parent consultation evenings are held three times per year, which is good provision. Successful curriculum workshops in literacy and numeracy have been held. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory. They are very clear on what has been achieved, but do not always provide sufficient information about what pupils need to do to improve. They contain a very useful self-assessment sheet, which helps pupils to acknowledge their own strengths and weaknesses. The school's prospectus is informative, and general newsletters are regular and give useful practical information. The annual governors'



report to parents offers a friendly and readable digest of the year's activities. Parents feel well informed and most feel that the school works closely with them. A very small minority of parents are unhappy with homework, but the inspection confirms that the quality and use of homework are satisfactory.

53. The school gives specific attention to the involvement of parents of pupils with special educational needs in the review meetings. Although the attendance at annual review meetings is fairly regular, many parents do not take the opportunity offered to be involved in other reviews. A number of pupils in the resource base come from other areas. The school sends the information about pupils' targets home to parents. Home-school diaries and reading records are shared between home and school for these pupils, especially for those who are in the resource base, as they are for all pupils in Years 3 to 6. Building further links with parents is one of the areas identified for more development by the school.
54. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. The Family Nurturing Programme, which requires a commitment to attend several sessions, has a reasonable uptake and ensures that parents are equipped with valuable strategies to support their children's learning and personal development. The school does not have a parent teacher association, although all parents are asked to make a small weekly contribution to the school fund. School events such as the celebratory assemblies and the sports days are well attended by parents. There are few regular helpers in the classroom and even the nursery finds it hard to recruit parents to participate in activities. However, parents make good links with the local temple and mosque, and pupils benefit from visits and events held by those communities. A good number of parents help on school trips. Parents also supported keenly the very successful girls' netball team at city fixtures.

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

55. The school has a clear sense of educational direction and is very well managed. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by the deputy headteacher and all teaching and support staff. The role of the subject co-ordinators is continuing to grow, and they play a key part in the school's management and planning processes. They have clear ideas about the continuing development of their subject, and support their colleagues well. There is a thorough monitoring programme. For instance, classroom practice has been monitored in detail for English and mathematics, and this is to be extended to the remaining subjects and areas as they are identified in the school improvement plan. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are also monitored regularly by all co-ordinators and by senior staff. This is proving to be effective in raising standards throughout the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher also undertake valuable monitoring of teaching and learning as part of the arrangements for performance management. The senior management team and the subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science compare the school's performance thoroughly with national and other statistics, and the outcomes of this monitoring are presented to the governing body. The school clearly has the personnel, systems and whole-staff commitment to ensure that it will continue to improve in line with its aims.
56. The resource base co-ordinator and the special educational needs co-ordinator work together to provide a very effective system where pupils are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The allocation of extra funding to support pupils with special educational needs in the main school and in the resource base is very effective and they achieve well. The very good provision of extra classroom support

enables the curriculum to be taught effectively to all pupils and thus enhances educational inclusion. All staff have received training on the revised Code of Practice. The school has established good links with outside agencies. There is good liaison between the specialist staff for special educational needs and the teaching of English as an additional language.

57. The commitment from the headteacher, the governing body and the senior management team to improving the standards and provision for pupils with English as an additional language is evident in the way the school has given a high priority to this area of development. The school has used specific grants effectively to give additional support at class level for particular aspects of the curriculum as well as more-targeted support for groups who are new to English. The headteacher and senior management team have the overall responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the provision. All staff have received training on delivering literacy to pupils with English as an additional language. The strategies in place to support the staff are good, as is the monitoring of their impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The resources to support pupils with English as an additional language are satisfactory. The school has made a good start in providing effective support for pupils who have English as an additional language and it has a very good capacity for continued improvement.
58. All members of the governing body are firmly committed to the support and development of the school. They are well informed about the relevant aspects of school life, the standards being achieved and the progress made by pupils. They discharge their duties effectively through a system of committees. All meetings of the full governing body are minuted properly. Responsibility for monitoring and supporting the provision for pupils with special educational needs, literacy, numeracy and other aspects of the school has been allocated appropriately to individual governors, each of whom provides a useful link with developments in these areas, helping to ensure that the governing body has a very good awareness of the school's needs. Several governors have regular contact with the daily life of the school. Statutory requirements for the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and other aspects of school life are met.
59. The quality of financial planning is good. The school manages its budget well, and spending is related clearly to the raising of educational standards. Careful records of expenditure are maintained. The minor issues raised at the time of the last audit are being addressed. The governors and headteacher monitor the school's financial position carefully, and are supported well by the school secretary. They are well aware of the need to ensure best value and to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of spending decisions. For instance, a helpful balance was carried forward from the previous schools and, through careful management of the funds available since the establishment of the new school, this has helped to maintain favourable staffing levels. As a result, the school is now able to appoint an additional teacher to support the release of subject co-ordinators for their monitoring role. This will be kept under regular review. All specific grants given to the school, including those for the support and training of teachers and for the raising of standards, are identified appropriately. The headteacher is successful in gaining further support from a range of sources, and good use is made of the various elements of special funding the school has attracted.
60. The school's improvement plan is a practical document, which is focused clearly on the raising of standards. It provides useful detail about the agreed priorities, with indications of costing and of criteria by which success can be measured. It is proving

effective in helping the school to meet its goals. Responsibility for the approval of the plan lies clearly with the governing body, and governors and staff are involved well in monitoring its progress and in its subsequent evaluation. There is an appropriate system of consultation during the preparation of the plan.

61. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. All the classrooms are spacious and well lit and therefore good for the delivery of the curriculum. Pupils also benefit from large playgrounds. However, there are three aspects of the accommodation that do not contribute to this positive picture. The school does not have a covered area for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage, which necessarily affects their creative and physical development. The current library for Years 3 to 6 has limited access for pupils because it is being used as a classroom for resource base lessons. This affects general library and research skills adversely, but a new library will be established once the current building work is completed. The school does not have its own playing field for outdoor sports. Although there is provision at a nearby school, practice sessions and after-school clubs do take place on hard surfaces at the school, which has an impact on pupils' ball-handling skills on grass. The buildings are clean, in a good state of repair and colourfully illuminated by interesting displays based on curriculum themes. These displays present work well from a wide range of pupils and reflect the inclusive ethos of the school.
62. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good overall, and is particularly good for the Foundation Stage, for pupils with special educational needs and for those for whom English is a new language. The school has a number of teachers on temporary contracts, and has experienced some difficulty in recruiting teachers to what is regarded as a difficult area. All procedures are in place for the professional development of staff and for performance management. There is a favourable teacher-pupil ratio in the school, which means that teachers generally have more time for each individual. Throughout the school, classroom assistants are deployed well and work well with teachers, enabling them to be more effective. Most are well deployed, are highly valued and work self-reliantly, giving good support, especially to pupils with special educational needs, enabling teachers to focus well on the rest of the class. The administrative staff are efficient and give good support to the work of the headteacher and the teaching staff. They, together with the caretaker and all other adults working in the school, contribute well to its smooth running.
63. Resources are satisfactory overall. They are good for some aspects of the school's work, such as English, science, religious education, English as an additional language, and special educational needs. Resources for design and technology are limited at present, since the school is awaiting the completion of building works before re-stocking. The lack of a covered area for the Foundation Stage for outdoor play is reflected in the lack of resources for these activities, even though the nursery and reception classes are resourced well overall. Resources for all areas are well organised in accessible storage facilities. Good use is made of loan services, visits to places of interest and visitors to the school to extend pupils' learning in several areas of the curriculum.

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

64. In order to continue to improve the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
  - (1) raise standards in English, mathematics and other subjects by:

- (a) sharing the good practice evident in the school in the identification of clear and specific intentions for all learning activities and the full involvement of pupils in the careful review of these and of their individual targets (see paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 18, 21, 47, 74-86, 87-93);
  - (b) encouraging pupils of all attainment levels to be more independent in their learning (paragraphs 20, 115, 119);
  - (c) continuing to develop the role of the subject co-ordinators, particularly in the observation of classroom practice (paragraphs 55, 105, 111, 116, 130, 140); and
  - (d) ensuring that the length of the school day for pupils aged seven to 11 is in line with national recommendations (paragraph 24);
- (2) raise standards in ICT by:
- (a) ensuring the careful and systematic teaching of ICT skills in Years 1 and 2 (paragraphs 121, 124, 126); and
  - (b) exploiting the full possibilities offered by ICT in all subjects and across all year groups (paragraphs 5, 31, 32, 83, 93, 98, 104, 110, 116, 119, 139);
- (3) develop and implement appropriate ways of assessing and recording the progress being made by pupils in those subjects that do not yet have them in place (paragraphs 49, 116, 130, 135, 139);
- (4) raise attendance levels by continuing to try to convince parents of the value of regular and punctual attendance for all pupils (paragraphs 14, 43).

**One other issue should be considered by the school for possible inclusion in the action plan:**

- Making the appropriate provision for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage in line with national recommendations (paragraphs 26, 61, 65, 72).

*Almost all aspects of the above issues have been identified by the school as areas for development in the school's improvement plan and its plan for raising attainment.*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	94
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	56

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	20	37	29	5	-	-
Percentage	3	21	39	31	5	-	-

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	304
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	117

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	28
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	74

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	107

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	53
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	41

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.3
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	24	18	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	15
	Girls	10	12	12
	Total	21	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	50 (71)	55 (80)	64 (82)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	14	15
	Girls	10	13	13
	Total	17	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	40 (78)	64 (82)	67 (76)
	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	25	25	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	11	21
	Girls	15	12	21
	Total	28	23	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (52)	46 (41)	84 (73)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	19
	Girls	20	14	19
	Total	32	26	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (59)	52 (57)	76 (73)
	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**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	64	-	-
White – Irish	1	-	-
White – any other White background	6	2	-
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	13	-	-
Mixed – White and Black African	1	-	-
Mixed – White and Asian	7	-	-
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Indian	51	-	-
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	65	-	-
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	-	-
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4	-	-
Black or Black British – Caribbean	31	1	-
Black or Black British – African	8	-	-
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	-	-
Chinese	0	-	-
Any other ethnic group	3	-	-
No ethnic group recorded	31	-	-

*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)	19
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.0
Average class size	23.4

### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	262

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.0
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	4.5
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	2001/02
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	£
Total income	861,028
Total expenditure	802,263
Expenditure per pupil	2,359
Balance brought forward from previous year	62,088 <sup>1</sup>
Balance carried forward to next year	58,765

<sup>1</sup> Includes £59351 carried forward from the previous schools



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	311
Number of questionnaires returned	120

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	25	1	1	-
My child is making good progress in school.	61	37	2	-	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	34	8	-	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	55	33	9	1	2
The teaching is good.	66	31	2	-	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	38	3	2	-
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	25	2	-	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	30	1	1	-
The school works closely with parents.	53	40	4	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	54	39	3	-	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	40	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	37	8	1	10

### Other issues raised by parents

Issues raised were all related to the items above.

## **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**

65. The Foundation Stage, which includes the nursery and two reception classes, is a strength of the school and provides a lively and stimulating environment in which the children discover that learning is fun. It is co-ordinated impressively and works well as a unit. The reception children work with both teachers from time to time, and are joined by the nursery for one day a week. The adults working in each class form a very strong team to support learning and harness the children's natural curiosity and eagerness, led with considerable skill and knowledge by the co-ordinator. The organisation of all learning opportunities and the teaching and learning in each area are very good, as are the attitudes of the children, who show constant enthusiasm and enjoyment, and often wonder. Learning is based on first-hand experiences, with emphasis placed on developing the children's communication and language skills in particular, and all adults have high expectations of work and behaviour. In each class, there is a joy in teaching and a delight in learning. The consequent progress made by the children is good and sometimes better, and their attitudes are of a consistently high quality. Learning is planned very well. The adults know precisely what each child needs to know, learn and understand, and provide interesting and important experiences at the right level in order for children to achieve well at this stage of their learning. The interaction between the children and the team of adults is impressive. The adults intervene well to develop learning and provide exceptionally good role models for the children, particularly in the way they use language. Very good provision is made overall for children in the nursery and reception classes, but the provision for physical development outdoors is a little limited by the facilities and resources available.
66. Most children entering the reception class have experience of pre-school education, the majority in the school's own nursery. The transition from home to school is made effectively and the school works very hard to involve parents in their children's learning at every opportunity, with a little success. Although the children's levels of attainment vary slightly from year to year, very few show average skills in the areas of learning. The levels of the majority are regularly very low in all areas on entry to the nursery. The children develop their skills significantly and make good gains in learning in all areas. By the time the present reception-year children enter Year 1, they are likely to be approaching the Early Learning Goals in personal and social education. They will be a little below them in their physical and creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world, but their communication, language, literacy and mathematics will be well below. A few children will be above those levels. Pupils with special educational needs, including those in the resource base, make good progress, as do those for whom English is not the first language.

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

67. All children make very good progress in the skills with which they enter the school. Although many are at the expected level, a significant number has difficulty in initiating ideas and speaking confidently. The team of adults in the nursery and reception classes provide very good role models and create a calm, happy and ordered environment where the children grow, secure in the knowledge that they are valued. Provision is very good. The adults listen to and value each child, giving regular praise and encouragement, and build up trusting relationships between the children, and with their parents. Special times are used very well, as when in the nursery the youngest

children smile to one another in a circle, and a few also offer a gentle touch. The quality of learning is shown when one says spontaneously, *'We are all friends with one another.'* Because of careful reinforcement, the children learn and understand the routines and what is expected of them, and respond well to the consistent expectations; they soon learn to share equipment and to take turns. The high quality of interaction between children and adults encourages the children to listen, participate eagerly and benefit from all activities. In the nursery, the children sit in small groups with an adult to share fruit and stimulating conversation, and so develop their social skills, communication and language. In each class, they are now sustaining interest for lengthy periods, as they do in the reception class when making their own, sometimes complex, patterns with objects or when making their own cress sandwiches in the nursery. They move around the nursery to use the activities with confidence, both when directed by adults and when choosing their own activities, and show increasing independence when using resources. In the reception year, they often use opportunities to work very responsibly at activities they have chosen, as when they use the florist's shop to order, arrange and sell flowers, designing cards to accompany their bouquets. Behaviour is very good, with the children developing a clear understanding of right and wrong and showing respect for their environment and for other people's ideas.

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

68. When the children start school, a few have satisfactory speaking and listening skills, but most need considerable support. There are very well planned and stimulating opportunities for children to talk and to listen in all classes, and a strong emphasis is placed on the acquisition of these skills. The adults share closely in the children's learning in groups, listening to them, questioning carefully and extending their language. They monitor the children's developing skills and work sensitively to build up confidence. In the nursery, all children are now responding well to adults. A significant number uses words and sometimes short phrases, and a few talk confidently in phrases or sentences and respond to questions. However, there are still many who do not speak readily. All, with encouragement, listen carefully and are usually able to follow simple instructions. By the time they are five, it is likely that, although a significant number of children will be confident to talk about interesting experiences, many will not be able to do so clearly. The ability of most to organise and clarify their thinking will still be limited. A few children ask questions confidently and explain their thinking clearly, as in mathematics, by saying, *'because I put three in my head and I counted on'*. All respond well to stories read expressively to them, and enjoy books. When children in the nursery share books, a few 'tell' a story as they turn over the pages and recognise the sounds of several letters, but most do not. However, all make good progress in the way they respond positively to books. A few children in the reception classes read fluently at the expected level, and use their knowledge of sounds to help with unfamiliar words. They use punctuation to help them in their reading. About half of the reception-aged children read simple texts with accuracy and growing fluency, although they have difficulty in remembering what happens. *'I'll read it and then I'll tell you'*, was one eager response. All try hard and their skills are increasing well. Although only a few reception-aged children are on target to reach the learning goals in reading, all are making good progress throughout the Foundation Stage.
69. In the nursery, half the children recognise their name, but only a few have a go at writing it and none manage it completely. A few children use emerging writing, with some recognisable words, in their 'Mrs Wishy Washy' stories. Fewer than half are making marks with some emerging shapes, but the majority is learning about print

and pattern, and their significance, as they are encouraged carefully to develop good work habits and use a pencil or crayon properly. Half of the nursery children have very little speech and do not use it spontaneously, even though they are encouraged and given an abundance of stimulating activities. A few speak in simple phrases or sentences, such as, *'They're growing'*, to describe their beans and about a third use labelling words. All listen to and look attentively at the book about 'Ten Seeds'. In the reception classes, a few children listen carefully to sounds and use them and some familiar words in their emerging writing about going on a bear hunt. A few others are showing improved independence as they write, but more than half need support, some considerable. The well-organised writing corners in each of the classes are popular and used regularly by the children. Children in the nursery find the sound that begins their name. The older children write invitations and lists, and all display their own finished work. The writing corners are linked usefully to role-play activities and ensure a clear purpose and strong motivation for writing. For instance, reception-aged children write orders for flowers and make cards to accompany them. The provision made for the children to develop their language skills is very good and a wide range of interesting and attractive books and other resources are used well. The recent introduction of a new system to encourage the learning of phonics is having an impact on progress.

### **Mathematical development**

70. Although only a quarter of the children will have achieved the Early Learning Goals by the time the end of the Foundation Stage, most are making good and sometimes very good progress in their mathematical development. Provision is very good, and teaching is exciting and has impressive pace, so that children are challenged and enjoy learning. However, most enter the nursery without the necessary experience, language and understanding of number and, although adults in each class work hard to ensure that all understand the necessary concepts and develop the language needed, there are still significant areas where many children find difficulty. In the reception classes, children are expected and encouraged to explain their mathematical thinking clearly. For instance, as the teacher explains that she wants them to make their own repeating patterns, they all chant that they have to *'be able to tell me about them'* and half of the year group can make and describe a pattern well. A few reception children can count on in twos as Freddy Frog jumps across the lily pads. They rectify their early misunderstanding and consolidate their knowledge of counting one and moving one during the activity. A group of less than half the children, supported by adults, count up to 100, celebrating each five with hands up and a joyous shout. A similar group show that they can count on, practically, in twos. The older nursery children enjoy counting to ten in Daddy Bear's voice, with one or two going beyond that. Many children watch and listen but take little part usually. A few can identify a missing number and the meaning of 'heavy' and 'light'. About a quarter of the reception children are likely to understand the process of addition by the age of five, when solving simple problems, but are less likely to grasp the concept of 'taking away'. A few are beginning to record their number facts as sums. There are stimulating opportunities for children to use their prediction and problem-solving skills to, for instance, decide how many jumps the frog would make to reach the number ten lily pad from number two. In spite of this, many children find difficulty with the language and most in developing their ideas to solve practical problems. Planned and incidental opportunities are used well and matched carefully to the children's needs in order to develop mathematical skills and concepts and to provide appropriate support. Skills are taught carefully, using imaginative and creative methods and good resources, and are consolidated well. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily. Programmable toys are used occasionally.

## Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. The children in all classes learn well and make good progress. They are regularly challenged, and show curiosity and wonder at the world around them, as when looking through a magnifier, seeing their finished bouquet, or watching the completed picture of a creature emerge from the printer. But they need a lot of support as they develop the communication skills needed to reach the early learning goals in each aspect. A few do so, but most do not and are below the level required. Many achieve the required level in ICT skills. They enjoy using the computer independently. The nursery children make pictures, showing developing control. Many of the reception-aged children have good control of the mouse to point, click and print their work. Most find it difficult to ask questions about why things happen or how things work. In the nursery, they look closely at toy elephants and make realistic models. They visit the library to find out more about elephants, and use information books and look at photographs and pictures. A few are able to say that elephants *'live in the jungle'* and that it is *'hot in a jungle'*. The children show curiosity about the giant African land snails they care for, and the nursery children observe Sid and Sidella closely. There are numerous opportunities to plant a variety of seeds and observe them as they grow. A few nursery children remembered that their cress and sunflower seeds were little at the beginning and that they needed water, soil, warmth and light, and, with support, remembered the words. There are regular opportunities to cut, stick, design and make, as when the nursery children build a wall for Humpty to sit on. Children in the reception class build three-dimensional models and a few explain how they *'stack up their bricks, line them up and put them on the top'*. A few are becoming confident in problem-solving techniques and are able to select suitable materials, but many are likely to need support. Bible stories, such as that of Noah, and activities such as the use of a Sikh doll help the children in each class to understand their own culture and beliefs and those of others. The reception children see the significance of God's promise to Noah, because of their own promises to obey rules in school and at home. The staff use the possibilities of the outdoor environment, and children observe and explore regularly. They follow prescribed routes to reach their treasure successfully and with pride. Provision is very good overall, even with the constraints of the outdoor accommodation, which lacks a suitable covered area, some resources, including large construction apparatus, and direct access for all classes.

## Physical development

72. The children's physical skills develop well and most attain at a level just below that expected by the time they come to the end of the reception class and join Year 1. A few attain above that, and there is good progress overall. There are ample opportunities to develop skills. Commercial construction kits and jigsaws of increasing difficulty are used with confidence. Tools, such as scissors, pencils and painting brushes, are handled in a range of interesting cutting and sticking activities in each class. The nursery children concentrate hard to spread butter on their sandwiches and to fill their flower pot with soil, handling tools carefully and safely. They move with confidence and good awareness of space in their familiar environment. Half of the reception-aged children show control and co-ordination in their movements when in the hall, and skip in and out of spaces to find an imaginary flower pot, but a few have difficulty in this. Most show imagination in matching their movements to music. They use side-to-side and lifting movements, and plant their seeds, but only a few show the heaviness of a pot they are pretending to carry. The children enjoy going outside and use the available outdoor space well, riding tricycles and enjoying using bats and balls. Access to this small outside area is possible for all

classes, but is not direct for two of them, and the surface is not suitable for all activities. The available resources are used well to provide opportunities outdoors, but there are gaps in the provision of climbing, crawling and construction apparatus and of wheeled toys, which are necessary to provide the same enriching experiences outdoors as indoors. Overall provision is good, however, in spite of the shortcomings of the outdoor accommodation, which have already been identified in the school's improvement plan.

### **Creative development**

73. Attainment in creative skills is a little below the level expected nationally by the end of the Foundation Stage. A significant number of children have difficulty in communicating their ideas or in retaining a sequence easily. But, since most children lack experience of creative activities, imagination and the necessary language for play when they enter school, this indicates good and sometimes very good progress. The children have stimulating learning experiences and develop their use of language beside their skills of imagination as they take roles in the story of 'The Runaway Chapatti'. A group of nursery children show independence and developing initiative in acting out activities in their realistic home-play area and talk together at times in their own home tongue when preparing food. In the reception class, they buy and sell plants in their garden centre, write down the price and count out money confidently. When playing purposefully in their flower shop, they concentrate well to write orders, design gift cards and make attractive floral decorations. There are some well-matched resources, which involve the children fully when they play, and the adults know when to intervene and when not to do so. The children express their feelings and ideas well through experiences in art, craft and music, and show pride in their achievements. In the reception classes and in the nursery, excellent sessions enable all children to be totally involved throughout, singing and clapping enthusiastically and making music joyfully. Along with others, reception-aged children from the resource base reinforce language relevant to their own lives as they sing and act out their song 'What's the best thing that I do early in the morning?' Each, in his or her own style, moves rhythmically and unselfconsciously to the music. The children in the nursery choose pencil crayons to draw sunflowers with some accuracy and many reception children show good appreciation of colour in their pictures of flowers. A few show very close and detailed representations of an onion bulb.

### **ENGLISH**

74. The school has rightly made literacy, in particular writing, a key point for improvement and, as a result of recent initiatives, standards are beginning to improve. Nevertheless, although there has been a significant improvement in some areas of the subject, standards currently remain well below average when pupils reach the ages of seven and 11. Standards continue to be affected adversely by the very high level of pupil mobility, the high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language and an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
75. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2002, the percentage of pupils who achieved the expected level of attainment in reading and writing was very low, and well below the average when for similar schools. Few pupils achieved higher than national expectations in reading, and none did so in writing. Recently, there has been a significant improvement in reading and writing, although standards remain well below average overall. In writing, inspection evidence indicates that some pupils could achieve better. Teaching and learning are good overall, as is the progress made by pupils.

76. In the national tests for 11 year olds, standards were well below average, and below the average for similar schools. Although standards currently remain well below average, the school's action plan for improvement is beginning to have a positive effect and there is evidence of higher standards in Years 3 and 4. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is good overall and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well against their prior attainment.
77. Standards in speaking and listening are well below expectations at the ages of seven and 11. Although pupils listen well in lessons, their oral contribution is limited. At the age of seven a minority of higher-attaining pupils express themselves articulately, using a broad vocabulary. This was evident when one pupil described a character in a story as feeling 'demoralised'. Many pupils, however, frequently give one-word answers to questions, rather than using well-constructed sentences. At the age of 11, a significant number of pupils need persuading to make a contribution in discussions, and their answers are not always clearly expressed. Many pupils speak in short and simple sentences, lacking the vocabulary to use language imaginatively, and are unable to express themselves articulately. For example, in a lesson for Year 6 pupils, all found it difficult to explain what is meant by 'personality'.
78. The school has recognised the importance of improving speaking and listening skills, and, as part of the drive for improvement, has introduced a daily story session for each class. In most lessons, teachers provide frequent opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills, and pupils' oral contributions are valued. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported and make good progress. Adults use gestures and expression effectively to help pupils to understand questions, and explain instructions in simple terms. They are themselves good role models in their choice of language. Early learners are helped by their peers, who translate for them. However, pupils generally are not always encouraged to be adventurous in their use of language. In some lessons, pupils are not asked to extend answers or questions, or rephrase them more appropriately.
79. Standards in reading at the age of seven are well below average, although there has been a significant improvement since last year in the proportion of pupils achieving higher than the expected standard. Pupils make sound progress and read with developing accuracy. They are beginning to use their knowledge of sounds to help them read unfamiliar words. Higher-achieving pupils explain confidently the difference between fiction and non-fiction, and understand the purpose of contents and index pages. Most pupils, however, are unable to interpret a story in detail and do not give their own thoughts and opinions about the characters. At the age of 11, higher-attaining pupils have developed a range of strategies to help them to decipher unfamiliar words and talk about a range of authors with enthusiasm. Most pupils read a range of texts with reasonable fluency but are not always aware when they read a word incorrectly. A significant minority lacks the general knowledge and vocabulary to understand texts, as was the case when Year 6 pupils did not understand the meaning of 'terrorised'. For more-able pupils, skills of reference and inference are weak. Pupils are not proficient at scanning texts to extract the main points and most are unable to 'read between the lines' to form assumptions or to conjecture. A lower-attaining pupil of this age who was asked to find information about parts of the body leafed through the whole book, rather than using the contents and index pages for reference. Because of limited language skills, many pupils are not proficient at assessing the author's use of language or in describing characters and plot.

80. The school is aware of these weaknesses and, where teaching is good, teachers bear them in mind in their lesson planning. Pupils then make good progress in their reading during literacy lessons, and in guided reading sessions, which some teachers have opted to teach outside the literacy lessons. Where these sessions have been observed, pupils have made good progress. For example, in one session Year 6 pupils were asked searching questions and given clear instructions on how to scan a text to find information. The library for pupils aged five to seven is well stocked and attractive, and enhances pupils' progress in the development of reading skills. The library for older pupils is not accessible at all times of the school day because it is currently used as a classroom for pupils in the resource base. In addition, some books are in poor condition, not clearly classified and outdated. The school tries to make up for this through the provision of a large supply of library books in each class, which pupils are able to take home to read on a weekly basis. Nevertheless, learning is affected because pupils do not have the opportunity to use an appropriate classification system regularly to find information through guided independent research activities. A new library is very shortly to be sited in one of the hatted classrooms.
81. Writing has been identified as a key area of weakness and an action plan has been implemented, including the setting of pupils in Years 2 and 6, and the introduction of support groups for identified pupils. Individual targets have been established and more opportunity is given for extended pieces of writing. Each pupil's writing is assessed every half term against the levels of the National Curriculum, so teachers have a firm understanding of individual ability and can plan work appropriate to their needs. However, these initiatives have not yet had sufficient time to affect standards, which remain well below average at the ages of seven and 11.
82. Pupils in all year groups engage in writing for a range of different audiences and purposes. They write in a variety of forms, including biography, poems, instructions and stories. A structured, well-planned programme ensures that most pupils make good progress in their handwriting and achieve at least satisfactory standards. In Year 2, handwriting is neat and legible, and by Year 6 pupils write fluently, developing their own style. Pupils demonstrate pride in their handwriting and work is well presented. Most use a variety of spelling strategies, including the splitting up of words into manageable chunks, and throughout the school they are given frequent opportunities for consolidation and practice of spelling skills. Nevertheless, standards in spelling are below average, because many pupils experience difficulty in retaining or applying their knowledge of spelling rules. Skills of punctuation and sentence construction are well below average. At the age of seven, about half of the pupils use full stops and capital letters and are beginning to make a considered choice of words to interest the reader, as when one pupil describes a character as 'marvellous'. A few pupils are beginning to understand the rules of direct speech and to use a joined script. At the age of 11, pupils complete a variety of appropriate short exercises to develop their grammatical knowledge and use of descriptive vocabulary, like adjectives, adverbs, similes and metaphors. However, pupils do not always apply their knowledge in their extended writing or when writing in other areas of the curriculum, and, in these cases, most pupils still use simple sentences and basic punctuation.
83. Pupils are given opportunities to draft and improve their writing through the medium of ICT, but most do not yet use it confidently as a tool to facilitate writing or as a medium for independent learning.



84. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is mostly good and, although standards remain well below average because of the barriers to learning mentioned above, all pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well against their previous attainment. A strength of the teaching throughout the school is the very good relationships that have been established. Teachers manage pupils very well, applying the school's code of behaviour consistently so that pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Pupils are treated with great respect and their opinions are listened to and valued. As a result, self-esteem is high and pupils are not afraid to make mistakes. Other characteristics of the good teaching are the lively, well-planned lessons that motivate pupils well and are conducted at a brisk pace. Resources such as whiteboards are used well to support and add interest to lessons. Pupils are frequently encouraged to work collaboratively by, for example, discussing in pairs. As a result, they have positive attitudes to learning and behave well in lessons. Learning intentions for the lesson are made clear and learning is enhanced because pupils know what they are expected to achieve and can judge for themselves whether they have achieved the objective by the end of the lesson. All staff have a secure knowledge of the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. This enables them to make good use of questioning to develop pupils' understanding and extend their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. They receive good support from well-briefed, competent classroom assistants and take a full part in lessons. In some lessons other than English, teachers make good literacy links, although the lack of language skills has an adverse effect on standards in other areas of the curriculum, notably geography, history and religious education.
85. Where teaching is satisfactory, there is still room for improvement in the provision of tasks for that part of the literacy lesson where pupils work independently. In these lessons, the tasks are too often the same for all pupils, learning objectives are too broad and, on occasion, teachers' expectations are too low. While teachers do allow for the differing needs of the pupils in the level of support they provide, there is little difference between the specific skills to be developed according to individual needs, linked to level descriptors of the National Curriculum. This limits progress and is leading to an element of underachievement, particularly for the more-able pupils in Years 1 and 2. Throughout the school, teachers' comments when they mark work only occasionally refer pupils back to their individual targets, and opportunities are missed across other areas of the curriculum for individual targets to be reinforced consistently in order to move pupils forward in their learning.
86. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and committed, and is clearly focused on driving standards upwards. Together with the headteacher, and with good support from the local education authority advisers and literacy consultants, teaching and standards have been monitored throughout the school and appropriate educational direction has been set in the school's plan to raise attainment. Assessment procedures for English are good. Useful data has been collected and analysed, and is used to identify areas for whole-school development, such as writing, establish support groups and set individual targets. Staff are well aware of the standards that pupils attain, but do not always use their assessments to plan work in lessons that is appropriate to individual needs. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' social and moral development, with good interactive learning taking place in all classes as pupils discuss their work together. It is well resourced, in spite of present limitations in library usage for older pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

87. National Curriculum test results for 2002 were very low for both age groups in comparison with those in schools nationally. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils' attainment is currently well below average at the ages of seven and 11. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
88. Although pupils start school with low levels of mathematical skills, they make satisfactory progress through Years 1 and 2. The younger pupils learn to add and subtract single-digit numbers and some begin to count in multiples of ten or five. They add two or three small-value coins. By the age of seven, some pupils use coins to find different ways of making 50 pence or one pound, and use such skills to solve simple shopping problems. However, many pupils cannot do these calculations with consistent accuracy or apply their mental skills to practical situations without help. Most take time to add or subtract by counting, rather than knowing addition and subtraction facts in their head. Pupils of this age also learn to identify simple two-dimensional shapes. They cut and fold shapes, leading, for some of them, to an understanding of halves and quarters. They measure lines in centimetres and read analogue clock faces to the hour and half hour. However, as with their number work, many pupils do not become proficient in shape and measuring skills or enjoy success without help.
89. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Years 3 to 6, and some make good progress. This is achieved largely by the way in which teachers provide tasks and activities that are matched well to the abilities of the pupils. In Years 3 and 4, pupils build on their mental mathematics skills, although many do not develop enough speed in answering questions. Many become reasonably confident with multiplication tables of twos, threes and fives, but the majority of pupils at the end of Year 4 are still unsure of the four-times and six-times tables. By the age of 11, most pupils can read five-digit numbers and many can 'round' numbers to the nearest ten, hundred or thousand. Few of them, however, approximate numbers to estimate answers. Pupils become reasonably accurate in using pencil-and-paper methods of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing numbers, and some handle decimal numbers confidently. They learn to express proportions of amounts using simple fractions, decimals and percentages, and most understand the relationship between them. However, pupils do not easily transfer skills to related contexts; for example, few can answer division questions by using multiplication tables, find 75 per cent of a number by adding 50 per cent and 25 per cent, or use 'doubling' to find the perimeter of a rectangle. This slows the pace at which they are able to work. Overall, pupils have too few experiences of solving word problems, considering the difficulties they find with such questions. In their work on shape and measurement, pupils handle units such as litres and millilitres, grams and kilograms fairly comfortably. They recognise acute and obtuse angles and measure angles using a protractor. Some use co-ordinates to translate shapes from one position to another on a grid, although many do not do this very accurately.
90. In both key stages, pupils use their mathematical skills to support other learning; for example, in religious education, Year 3 pupils represent in graph form the proportions of a minister's day spent on various tasks. Throughout the school, attitudes to learning are good; pupils enjoy their lessons and behave well. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language receive good support and this enables them to make good progress.
91. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall for both age groups. There are examples of good, and some very good, teaching, with a very small proportion of

unsatisfactory teaching in each key stage. Throughout the school, lessons are very well planned with clear learning objectives, which teachers share with pupils. Teachers manage pupils well, maintaining an orderly working atmosphere in classrooms. Lessons begin with mental mathematics sessions, although the pace of these is sometimes too slow. Some teachers make insufficient use of equipment such as digit cards and individual whiteboards and, as a result, a few pupils do not make enough effort to answer questions. This affects adversely the speed and standards of mental calculation. In the main part of lessons, pupils learn in ability groups where tasks challenge them at appropriate levels. A feature of the good teaching of older pupils is the effective use of resources such as 'number sticks' or 'number slides', which help considerably with the understanding of concepts. Computers, however, are greatly underused as a mathematical learning resource throughout the school and this impedes the progress that pupils make. The school is aware of this and plans to increase computer use in mathematics. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the pace of learning is too slow and pupils sit through prolonged explanations. Lessons end with a review session, which, in most classes, draws together successfully and in an interesting way what pupils have learned. In some lessons, however, these plenary sessions do not involve pupils actively in a practical way and their attention wanders.

92. The curriculum follows the National Numeracy Strategy and includes the full range of mathematical skills, although problem-solving skills are under-emphasised. Regular assessments of pupils' learning help to set meaningful targets for them to achieve next. Teachers analyse test results carefully to identify any areas of weakness in pupils' understanding, although they do not yet make full use of this information to ensure that these weak areas will be given greater emphasis in future lessons.
93. Mathematics is well co-ordinated across the school. The subject leader monitors carefully the teaching and standards of attainment in each class. She supports colleagues effectively in matters of teaching, assessment and target setting. Resources for mathematics are satisfactory, but few teachers are yet making full use of the computer software available to encourage pupils' learning.

## **SCIENCE**

94. The standards achieved by pupils in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11 were below the national average but above those for similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels was below the national average, but above the average for similar schools. Standards in science in 2002 were better than those achieved in English and in mathematics, and were also better than in the previous year. The teachers' assessments of standards for pupils at the age of seven showed that they were well below average. There has been no significant pattern of difference between the achievements of boys and girls. The school also monitors the attainment of pupils from ethnic minorities and this shows no significant differences in terms of the progress made.
95. Standards evident during the inspection indicate that seven year olds are currently below the level expected nationally, but that by the time they are 11 they are broadly in line with the national average. In both of these age groups, most pupils' achievements are satisfactory in most respects, and the skills of scientific enquiry of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are developing well. Pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress, especially where they are supported in lessons by learning support assistants. Those pupils with English as an additional language and who are

at early stages of language acquisition are supported effectively both in and out of class so that they have good access to the curriculum and achieve well.

96. Pupils in Year 2 could sort objects according to whether they were magnetic or non-magnetic. They could then record their findings and communicate them diagrammatically. They learn to plan a fair test, as when finding out which materials are attracted to a magnet. By Year 6, most pupils are secure in their ability to carry out a fair test in straightforward contexts and they develop a sound understanding of many scientific concepts, such as the properties of solids and liquids, the key features of life processes and the links between mini-beasts and the environment in which they are found. Most pupils are secure in their knowledge and understanding of key scientific principles, and have a good understanding of the necessary terminology, although many still have difficulty sharing their ideas in discussion, making predictions and drawing conclusions.
97. Pupils acquire a sound grasp of basic skills of scientific enquiry in Years 3 to 6, but this is less so in Years 1 and 2. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils investigating the links between mini-beasts and the environment in which they were found showed great enthusiasm and were able to use apparatus such as pooters and magnifying lenses well. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language were well supported and attained well.
98. Pupils enjoy science, particularly the practical work, where they work together well in groups. They apply their numeracy skills to measure carefully and tabulate results accurately, although sometimes units of measure are overlooked. However, as yet few opportunities for ICT are used to raise standards in science. This has been recognised as a priority by both the science and ICT co-ordinators and they are tackling it. For example, pupils are beginning to use data-loggers to capture data from experiments. However, they rarely process and display information using databases or spreadsheets at present.
99. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers have good subject knowledge and, as a result, use questioning skills effectively to consolidate learning from previous lessons to make pupils think and explain; for example, the criteria for a fair test relating the height of a pupil to the distance they could jump. Objectives for lessons are clear and are shared with pupils. Most pupils learn at an appropriate pace because teachers know and manage them well, relationships are good and resources, including support assistants, are used effectively. Teachers assess pupil progress effectively and the co-ordinator has introduced a process that allows for the tracking of pupils' progress against national levels of attainment. Homework is set regularly and extends effectively the learning in lessons. Teachers' marking varies in quality, with the best providing correction and comments to guide improvements, but some is rather cursory.
100. The curriculum, planned around a national scheme, provides a good basis for teaching key knowledge and concepts in science, and guidance is provided for teachers to develop pupils' scientific enquiry skills systematically as they move through the school. The subject co-ordinator, who has led the subject for some time, monitors standards and provision, including teaching, in a variety of ways and is well informed about strengths and weaknesses. She has put in place a comprehensive action plan to address identified weaknesses. Through a systematic analysis of test results she has identified areas of the curriculum where pupils' attainment is weaker and has taken steps to address these. This has led to an increased focus on

scientific enquiry and on developing pupils' understanding of scientific vocabulary and terminology. She has also recognised that attainment in science is less good in Years 1 and 2 than for older pupils, and this is an area for development identified in the school improvement plan. She is beginning to take action to address this. Resources are satisfactory and are used well.

## ART AND DESIGN

101. Standards in art and design are in line with those expected nationally by the age of seven and 11. Lessons were observed in several year groups, but it was only possible to observe one lesson for younger pupils. Additional evidence has been gathered from the scrutiny of pupils' work and portfolio collection, teachers' planning, the displays in classes and around the school, and from the discussion with the co-ordinator. The evidence indicates that pupils in both key stages make sound progress in developing their skills as they use different media and techniques. The majority of pupils with special educational needs, including those in the resource base, make similar progress. Two of the older pupils with special educational needs have particular talent in art and teaching and support staff extend their skills effectively. Their drawings and painting are of high quality compared to what is expected of their age nationally. Pupils with English as additional language in both age groups make sound progress and their attainment by the age of seven and 11 is in line with their monolingual peers.
102. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to explore different techniques and materials as they create their pictures and collages. For example, in the lesson observed, pupils who were learning about the qualities of materials could choose different kinds of paper and fabric to create their collage. They can use different techniques like folding, pleating and twisting effectively to create their pictures, using different shapes and structures they have observed. Pupils in Year 2 can use different shapes and colours to create patterns. Effective use is made of teacher demonstration so that pupils learn the correct skills and techniques. Pupils in Year 1 are learning skills in weaving. Year 2 pupils' drawings using computer graphics show that most pupils can select and use the appropriate tools to create pictures. A few pupils are beginning to use techniques like the use of lines, shapes and colour-fill tools to create the desired effect. There is also some evidence of pupils being given opportunity to look at work of famous artists and designers like Charles Rennie Mackintosh to gain ideas on how the artist has used patterns and colours to create the designs. Pupils make sound progress overall. The skills and knowledge pupils acquired in Years 1 and 2 are extended further in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 3 explore the use of shape, form, colour and pattern, and are beginning to explore the hot and cold qualities of colours. Pupils in Year 6 can choose the appropriate primary and complementary colours and use silhouette backgrounds to create different moods and feelings. They are building on what they have learned about patterns and colours in earlier years, using these and overlapping techniques to create pictures of movement, as in their good work showing the movement of fish. They can talk about the special techniques Australian Aborigines use to create pictures with dots and particular shades. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress overall.
103. The quality of teaching and learning is sound in both key stages. Pupils enjoy their lessons and concentrate well on their work. In almost all of the lessons observed, teachers ensured a proper balance between class discussions and practical tasks. Where teaching was less effective, the class discussions were too long, resulting in fewer opportunities for pupils to engage in developing their skills through practical work. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher demonstrated the techniques of cutting, shaping and joining the clay well to pupils, and this helped them to apply these skills effectively as they made their own clay pots. Teachers in both key stages use their questioning strategies effectively to extend pupils' thinking. They offer pupils the opportunity to evaluate their work. They use examples of good practice to offer others the opportunity to learn about different techniques and skills. For example, the pupils who have special educational needs and good artistic talents gain self esteem and

confidence as they share their work with the rest of the class. This is clear evidence of the inclusive ethos of the school. Art lessons are used well to learn about feelings, emotions and relationships. Although there is evidence of the use of sketchbooks to develop pupils' ideas, these are used less effectively to develop pupils' drawing skills in a systematic way. Teachers and support staff use art sessions well to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills.

104. All pupils, including those in the resource base, have equal access to different areas of the art curriculum. Art lessons are used effectively to consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge and skills in other areas. Although there are some examples of the use of ICT, such as the use of a digital camera, this is an area for further development. Pupils of both age groups are given opportunities to learn about the work of famous artists and designers. However, opportunities to learn about art from other cultures are less well developed. Teachers use the intentions of the lessons to assess pupils' progress, but there is no whole-school approach to the assessment and recording of pupils' progress in the subject. This is an area identified by the school for further development.
105. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over the responsibility for art. She has done a lot of work during this short period. The monitoring role of the co-ordinator needs to be further developed. Although she has had some opportunity to audit the planning, she has not yet had the opportunity to observe lessons or work alongside colleagues. The school is to be involved in an art project and plans are in hand to create an art room. The school has plans to use this opportunity to create further community links and extending this to develop pupils' understanding of art from different cultures. The resources for art and design are satisfactory and pupils and staff make good use of them.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

106. Although it was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection, it is clear from work completed previously and from the planning and records available that pupils achieve the standards expected nationally in design and technology by the time they leave the school. Most pupils achieve well. Pupils with English as an additional language and who are at early stages of their language acquisition also achieve well because they are supported effectively by learning support teachers in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs, both in the main school and in the resource base, make at least satisfactory progress where support assistants guide them.
107. Pupils acquire skills in measuring, cutting, shaping and joining when making products as they move through the school. For example, pupils in Year 2 make puppets with moving parts and design and make bookmarks using binca and coloured threads. In Year 3, pupils use papier-mâché to make containers that they then decorate using a range of media. Pupils in Year 4 make Tudor-style houses using recyclable materials and in Year 6 pupils had designed and built working models of windmills, many of high quality. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 plan their projects in their sketchbooks.
108. Pupils enjoy design and technology. They work productively and safely in group tasks, sustain their concentration and pupils from a wide range of social and ethnic backgrounds relate well to each other so that ideas are valued and exchanged freely as pupils' work develops. Pupils apply their numeracy to measure and estimate and they write for a range of purposes and audiences throughout their projects.

109. Insufficient teaching was observed in the week of the inspection to form a rounded judgement on its quality, but the teachers' planning and the evidence of work completed suggest that it must be at least satisfactory overall for pupils to achieve the standards they do.
110. The curriculum is broad and balanced in planning and communicating ideas, making a good variety of products and in evaluation skills, but the use of ICT to raise standards in the subject is underdeveloped. Pupils are not yet using computers to aid the design process sufficiently although, last year, links with the local secondary school allowed the Year 6 pupils to experience computer assisted design. Pupils' work is not yet assessed periodically in relation to national standards to help guide pupils' progress in the subject.
111. The co-ordinator is new to her post, and has not yet completed a review of the current strengths and weaknesses within the subject. Curriculum plans are based on a national scheme and the subject co-ordinator wishes to monitor its impact in a variety of ways; observing colleagues' teaching, sampling pupils' work and reviewing teachers' plans. As yet, these measures are not in place and the co-ordinator has not been able to monitor classroom practice. Resources for the subject are adequate, and the new building project currently underway in the school will provide a dedicated area for technology, greatly enhancing the accommodation for the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

112. It was not possible to observe many lessons during the week of the inspection and judgements are supported by evidence from pupils' work and display and discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards are below expectations at the ages of seven and 11. Attainment is adversely affected by the high pupil mobility in the school, the high number of pupils with special educational needs and the large proportion of pupils with English as an additional language. Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress in their geographical knowledge and understanding against their prior attainment. All areas of the Programmes of Study are covered sufficiently. However, standards remain below expectations overall because many pupils experience difficulty in retaining knowledge gained in lessons and in expressing their understanding in geographical terms, either orally or in writing. The school places high priority on the development of mapping skills. These are developed well and most pupils reach a satisfactory standard in these skills.
113. Seven year olds learn about the local area from walks, locating human and physical features such as parks and shops. They draw simple maps of their routes from home to school. Pupils understand in simple terms that different types of weather affect the environment. The continuous use of the unit, 'Where in the world is Barnaby Bear?' enables pupils to identify places on a map and to begin to understand, through looking at and discussing postcards and photographs, some of the differences between different countries. They begin to learn about the difference between their own locality and a contrasting area through their studies based around a fictitious island. However, in response to questions, pupils' knowledge of the United Kingdom is sparse and they have little knowledge of other countries.
114. Year 3 pupils have visited the local area and compiled individual booklets about it. Higher attaining pupils can pinpoint the location of their town on a map of the UK and write an account of their visit. Other pupils complete the same work but tasks given are matched appropriately to take account of their limited language skills and little writing is required. Year 4 pupils use their mapping skills effectively as they compare



photographs with maps to identify key features. They compare maps of different scales and demonstrate an awareness of symbols and keys. They begin to use co-ordinates to plot distance. In conversation, Year 6 pupils recalled with great pleasure an individual project they had completed in Year 5 on rainforests, but were unable to recount any facts they had retained from their studies. By the age of 11, pupils demonstrate limited knowledge of geographical patterns or different locations. For example, one pupil stated that Devon was 'next to Italy, isn't it?' Most pupils are unable to describe fully how human and physical processes can change places and people's lives and have a very limited geographical vocabulary.

115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some strengths. Teachers have sound subject knowledge. They build well on previous learning and share the learning objectives of the lesson with pupils, so all are clear about what they are learning. Lessons have a satisfactory balance between whole class and group work, although on occasion a slow pace inhibits progress, when pupils spend too long in sitting and listening to the teacher. When this happens, pupils begin to lose interest and some restless behaviour occurs. There is frequently no difference in tasks set for pupils of different abilities. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported in their work and make satisfactory progress through appropriate intervention by classroom assistants and the use of graduated worksheets. However, scrutiny of work and display indicates that higher attaining pupils occasionally cover areas in insufficient depth and are sometimes constrained through limited opportunity for independent writing. A strength of the teaching is the imaginative planning of tasks that challenge and stimulate the pupils. For example, Year 4 pupils responded very well as the teaching assistant took on the role of a council official announcing that a new motorway was being built across a nearby village. Pupils were keen to express their views for and against the proposal, although many experienced difficulty in engaging in the ensuing group debates, because of their limited language skills.
116. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and committed to the development of the subject. As yet she has no non-contact time in which to monitor the quality of teaching, but she has monitored teachers' planning and pupils' work to ensure standards are maintained. A national scheme of work has been adapted successfully to meet the particular needs of the school. The school is aware that assessment procedures are currently unsatisfactory and that there is limited use of ICT to enhance learning. These have been identified as areas for improvement when the subject becomes a priority on the curriculum development cycle. A good programme of visits, including residential experience for pupils in Years 2 and 5, makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning and their social and cultural development.

## **HISTORY**

117. Levels of achievement are currently below those expected nationally by the time pupils leave the school and at the age of seven. However, considering the low levels at which pupils enter the school, it is clear that they make good progress overall in the development of historical skills and satisfactory gains in knowledge of the periods they study to reach this standard. As they progress through the school, they begin to develop a useful understanding of the key people and significant events that have shaped history. In the topics they study, they learn to identify similarities and differences between their life now and life in past times. Because of the specific support they receive, pupils with special educational needs, both from the main school and the resource base, and those who are learning English as a second language match the general rates of progress of other pupils. Similarly, higher

attaining pupils respond well to the challenge to learn about the past by posing and researching their own questions, although limitations of language mean that pupils of all attainment levels find it difficult to share and record their ideas. Pupils throughout the school are introduced carefully to a range of historical sources and are encouraged to ask questions about the evidence they provide and about its reliability. They are also given the opportunity to experience things at first hand whenever possible. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, gained a good awareness of how familiar things have changed over time as they were introduced to household artefacts from Victorian times and compared them with their own experience. Pupils in Year 6 showed their increasing awareness of how we learn about the past as they examined a wide collection of artefacts from Britain in the 1950s, discovering with delight from photographs that even teachers were young once. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, are already familiar with the detective work that goes into the study of history, and have been introduced to some of the appropriate vocabulary for the subject. Their ideas of 'now' and 'then' and of how things change over time are stimulated by the work they do as they compare toys from the past with their own favourites. All of the historical topics the pupils study are linked carefully to a clear timeline for the period, and the pupils show a developing sense of chronology.

118. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. The teachers' subject knowledge is good, and often very good, and they convey well to pupils their own interest in the topics being studied. The pupils respond well, gaining considerable pleasure in the work they do and enjoying the things they learn about the past. Younger pupils, in particular, enjoy the opportunity to learn about significant people from the past, such as Samuel Pepys and Louis Braille. The teachers' classroom management is very good, and the learning experiences provided are very well planned and often imaginative. For instance, pupils in Year 5 showed great enjoyment as they learned about the work of the archaeologist as artefacts were recovered from their own 'dig'.
119. The work produced by pupils is well displayed, helping to create an interesting and stimulating learning environment and celebrating good work. Throughout the school, work in history is linked well to other areas of the curriculum, such as geography and art. The subject also makes a good contribution to the development of literacy through, for instance, opportunities for empathetic and extended writing, such as the descriptions of Queen Victoria's visit to Wolverhampton in 1866 or of what life was like in Britain after the Second World War. Pupils are encouraged to engage in some independent study or research activities of the kind that will extend learning, particularly for the higher attaining pupils, but full use is not yet being made of the opportunities available through access to CD-ROMs and the Internet, and the use of the library is currently limited. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to develop their familiarity with the appropriate vocabulary for historical study, and the subject also makes a good contribution to their social and cultural awareness.
120. The use and adaptation of the national scheme of work are supported by the school's own policy, but there are no arrangements yet in place for the identification and recording of pupils' progress in the subject in other than general terms. The co-ordinator provides useful support to colleagues and monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work. The subject is resourced well, and good use is made of loan services. Good use is also made of the locality and of visits to places of historical interest, such as Shugborough Hall, and the co-ordinator is planning to encourage greater use of visitors.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

121. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Insufficient recorded evidence of pupil attainment in Years 1 and 2 and the fact that timetabling arrangements did not allow for the observation of any lessons in this age group means that it is not possible to make a secure decision on standards at the end of Year 2. However, there have been recent rapid developments of the subject as a result of the provision of a new networked computer suite and staff training that is giving teachers growing confidence when teaching the subject. Many pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making good progress in the development of their basic skills, although the use of ICT within many subjects remains underdeveloped. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are supported well, particularly in the computer suite, where more able pupils are often paired with less able. Pupils show good support for their peers and this is of mutual benefit.
122. By the end of Year 6, pupils are able to perform all the necessary operations, locating and opening files, copying and pasting work from one application to another, checking their spelling, saving and printing work in different styles and most pupils take account of intended audience in drafting their work. They can access websites and use them to research topics they are studying. Year 6 pupils perform calculations with spreadsheets to determine the perimeter and area of rectangles. Pupils show good understanding of the benefits of ICT and how it is changing the world, which makes a useful contribution to their social awareness. They can also identify some problems the users of technology are most likely to encounter and many pupils are able to give informed accounts of how they have tackled and learnt to overcome such problems.
123. Good access to the new computer suite and increased focus on acquiring skills in using ICT in the curriculum are leading to improvements in standards. All pupils will soon have their own e-mail address when a new software support package is acquired, and many pupils are familiar with the application, some of them having their own address on computers at home. Teachers encourage pupils actively to share experiences and knowledge of applications and programs. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and they work together and support each other very well.
124. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, but no lessons were observed for younger pupils, so a secure judgement cannot be made for Years 1 and 2. However, evidence from planning indicates that there is appropriate coverage of the subject, although there is insufficient reinforcement of the skills being acquired by these younger pupils. The teachers of older pupils use the computer suite effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and skills and to support learning in some other subjects. Classes in Years 1 and 2 do not yet have a timetabled period in the computer suite, although they can choose to use it as there are free slots on the timetable. Planning for lessons is thorough and appropriate. Teachers encourage pupils to work together, sharing their expertise. Whilst assessments of pupils' skills are made within lessons, teachers do not yet evaluate pupils' progress from year to year or use the information gained to guide their planning. Pupils are well managed and teachers encourage active participation in the computer suite with pupils working co-operatively in pairs. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher prepared the pupils carefully for access to the autoshape tool and got pupils to add speech bubbles to digital photographs they had previously entered on a PowerPoint presentation. Pupils were managed well and engaged fully, and were interested in their task so that effective learning took place.

125. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator monitors and evaluates the subject and has a clear understanding of the steps necessary to build on the progress made. Appropriate controls have been established to ensure pupils are protected from inappropriate content and access to the computer suite is managed effectively. All staff have now completed the first stage of national training. A partnership with a local secondary school means that the school has access to a technician one day each week to maintain the systems in place.
126. While all classes have computers, they are not yet used effectively within subjects. The co-ordinator has identified the use of ICT in other subjects to promote improved standards as a high priority. He also recognises the need to ensure that ICT is taught and used effectively in Years 1 and 2. He has some release time and is currently using this to work with staff in the younger classes. Resources for the subject have improved considerably over the past two years. The computer suite has been networked and broadband has recently been installed, and all computers in classrooms added to the network. In some subject areas, resources have been developed. Data loggers have been purchased to support the teaching of science, but there are still gaps in the school's resources and provision, for example, in mathematics. The school's ratio of pupils to computers is now in line with national targets and plans are in place to replace some obsolete computers.

## **MUSIC**

127. At the age of 11, pupils' attainment is in line with the nationally expected standard. Since it was only possible to gain limited direct evidence for Years 1 and 2 during the inspection, mainly because of the lack of availability of the music room during building work, it is not possible to make secure judgements about standards, progress or the quality of teaching for younger pupils. The teachers' planning indicates that there is appropriate coverage of the subject. The one lesson observed for pupils in Years 1 and 2 included well-organised singing and percussion playing. This led to pupils combining musical sounds effectively and learning how written symbols can represent sounds. The teaching and learning were good, pupils showed positive attitudes and indicated standards that were broadly in line with expectations.
128. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 2. They explore the possibilities of a range of pitched and non-pitched percussion instruments and compose simple passages of music in picture notation. Pupils learn to make use of the musical elements of pitch, volume and timbre to create a specific musical mood to accompany particular story scenes. By the age of 11, pupils perform short melodies competently on pitched percussion instruments, using conventional notation. They play in time with each other, showing awareness of how the overall effect should sound. Pupils sing songs from a variety of cultures. Whole-school singing is in tune and has reasonably clear diction and expression. Pupils listen to a range of music from visiting musicians and in school assemblies, although few older pupils are able to discuss well-known composers or performers.
129. On the evidence of the few lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught by a specialist teacher. Teachers set clear learning objectives for each lesson and this helps to establish a sequential development of musical skills. Good use is made of the school's adequate stock of musical instruments, some of which originate from other cultures. Pupils have ample opportunities in lessons to play and express their ideas, although overall they have too few chances to evaluate each other's performances. Pupils enjoy music lessons and respect the contributions that others make to group playing.

130. The subject has a new co-ordinator, who is committed to its continuing development. There is a clear school policy for music to achieve consistency in teaching approaches, but the co-ordinator has not yet been able to monitor classroom practice. Carefully prepared curriculum plans, together with a commercial scheme of work, ensure that the National Curriculum is fully covered. However, there is no established system at present for assessing the standards that pupils reach in music or identifying the progress they make. The school makes good use of visiting musicians who enrich the musical curriculum with concerts and music workshops, such as that provided by the Wolverhampton Music School, when Year 3 pupils composed music on the theme of animals. There are no regular extra-curricular music activities at present. The subject is satisfactorily resourced, and there are plans to extend the range of recorded music available.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

131. By the time pupils leave the school their attainment is in line with the standards expected nationally. Discussion and general observation indicate that standards for younger pupils are probably similar, but it was not possible to observe lessons in Years 1 and 2 in order to make a firm judgement on the quality of teaching and learning, and there is a lack of recorded evidence of standards or progress for pupils of this age. Planning for the age group indicates an appropriate range of indoor and outdoor activities.
132. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Years 3 to 6. Younger pupils learn to move across the floor in different ways; for example, jogging, rolling or moving 'on all fours'. They make a variety of shapes with their bodies. Pupils progress to creating sequences of movements and perform these at different heights, often using the gymnastic apparatus in the hall. Pupils understand the importance of 'warming-up' and muscle stretching before exercise and of 'cooling-down' gently afterwards. Most are aware of the effects of exercise on their pulse rate. In dance, the oldest pupils select and combine creative movement ideas effectively to represent excerpts of music or poetry. Their well-considered dance responses show reasonable levels of control and a few pupils modify their performances to achieve greater precision and fluency. In games activities, pupils experience a full range of ball games. In rounders, for example, pupils strike and field the ball with satisfactory skill. They work well together as a team, respecting each other's different skill levels.
133. All pupils go swimming for half a year when they are in Year 4, but relatively few of them achieve the expected 25 metre distance award. Year 5 pupils benefit from taking part in outdoor activity challenges as part of a residential week in the summer term.
134. The quality of teaching and learning for older pupils is satisfactory overall, with some unsatisfactory and some very good teaching. Teachers usually make sure that their pupils are clear about what they are going to achieve and this helps gain their initial attention and enthusiasm. Where teaching is very good, the teacher controls pupils well by, for example, using a percussion instrument to gain quick attention, and pupils are frequently required to think of ways in which they might improve their performance. This results in effective learning and progress in physical education skills. In occasional lessons, however, activities do not follow on swiftly enough from each other, causing a slow pace of learning and some lack of interest. Most lessons include good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their learning and to demonstrate skilful performance. Staff provide a good range of extra-curricular sports activities,

mainly for older pupils, involving a large number of pupils and raising the profile of the subject effectively in the school.

135. The curriculum is planned carefully to include all National Curriculum activities together with a good balance of dance influences from other cultures. For example, Year 5 pupils base their dance programme on the Hindu festival of Diwali, and Year 6 dance work includes both African and South American influences. This exemplifies the school's educational inclusion policy in practice. Teachers assess pupils' attainment levels in swimming systematically, but do not record progress in other areas of physical education. The school has no playing field of its own, which, for example, limits opportunities for pupils to practise ball skills on grass rather than on the hard surfaces available in school. They have use of the grounds of a nearby school for football matches only.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

136. Standards of attainment at the age of seven are likely to be in line with the level expected by the local authority's current agreed syllabus, although those for pupils aged eleven are only approaching that level. This is partly because of progress in the past and also because the pupils' lack of language skills affects their ability to understand, communicate and link ideas, to gain full meaning. There are clear indications, however, of improvement in the subject and, by the time they leave the school, many pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of what it means to take a religion seriously. They acquire an appreciation of some of the practices and beliefs of Christianity and of the other principal religions in Britain, such as Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism, and become familiar, for instance, with places of worship, pilgrimages and important symbols. They learn about courage and faith from stories such as that of Rama and Sita, and from the examples of Gandhi and Jesus. They are helped in this by the encouragement given in all aspects of school life to the celebration of cultural diversity. A strength of the subject is that pupils increasingly show attitudes of careful consideration, respect for feelings, values and beliefs and an openness and appreciation of difference.
137. Useful work is going on in all year groups in developing each pupil's ability to reflect on what they learn and to respond thoughtfully to the ideas and experiences they encounter. Pupils in Year 6, for example, are encouraged to consider aspects of friendship relevant to each, and also as shown in the story of the 'Good Samaritan'. By the end of the lesson, the children have a good understanding and appreciation of both being, and having, a friend. In groups they have solved important problems, of relevance to their lives. In work on the Hindu story of creation, Year 5 pupils consider how they should treat the world, if they believe it is part of God's own body. They show clear understanding of the roles of the gods, but most find it difficult to express their own ideas. Year 4 pupils build up knowledge and understanding about Islamic rules for worship and all show respect for views different to their own. Younger pupils are introduced to a range of stories and practices from the various traditions and build on this knowledge as they go through the school. They study weddings, christenings and festivals and celebrations such as Eid, Diwali and Christmas. Year 1 pupils understand the special clothes and other items of a Sikh and show both curiosity and respect. Year 2 pupils learn about worship and the Holy Book as they prepare for a visit to the gurdwara. They develop an awareness of themselves and the world around them, and show sensitivity to the needs and beliefs of others.
138. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs in the resource base and the main school, develop an awareness of some of the key ideas,

people and practices of the various religious traditions. Pupils of all attainment levels, including higher attainers, are now making improved and at least satisfactory progress as they go through the school. Planning for the subject ensures that it meets the requirements of the agreed syllabus and provides a carefully balanced experience. The weekly planning of lessons is sometimes insufficiently specific and teachers do not always focus enough on exactly what skills are to be developed. So the pupils do not learn as much as they might. But planning generally helps to ensure appropriate development in the religious education skills, knowledge and understanding which the pupils need as they begin to form their own ideas. The teachers know their pupils well, but there is no formal recording of the progress of individuals in the subject at present.

139. It is evident from the lessons seen, from work in books and displayed in classrooms that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching at Key Stage 1 and is good overall with some examples of very good teaching in Key Stage 2. The teachers' subject knowledge is generally good, but some are not fully confident in some aspects of the subject, although well supported by the co-ordinator. In lessons, they give clear explanations and their questioning encourages the pupils to reflect. Sometimes, however, there is too much questioning, slowing the pace of the lesson because of too little other interaction. Teachers handle the pupils' questions sensitively and a range of interesting activities is now being used. Stories are used well to develop the pupils' religious understanding. The pupils' attitudes to their work are good. Pupils of all age groups show a willingness to be open-minded and to value a range of beliefs, and the teachers show sensitivity in encouraging them to be aware of differing faiths. There is occasionally some restlessness and lack of concentration if the lesson is insufficiently focused or the pupils are not involved enough. In some lessons, particularly for older pupils, they respond very well to stimulating lesson material. The teachers encourage the careful interpretation of difficult concepts through impressive groups work. Care is taken to simplify work and provide support where necessary, but also to extend the understanding of higher attaining pupils. Resources are good, including collections of religious artefacts. Good use is made of local churches and of visits such as those to a gurdwara, mosque and temple. The subject provides good support to the development of pupils' literacy, through, for example, the use of creative writing, and it clearly makes a substantial contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. Limited use is made of ICT and research skills at present and the school plans to develop this. Good use is made of displays in classrooms to create a positive atmosphere for learning by showing pupils' work and ensuring they are aware of the colour and variety of living religions. There are good examples in a few classes of work which is marked to assess and improve the pupils' religious education skills, concepts and attitudes, but this is not general. No formal assessment is made of the pupils' developing skills, in order that they can be built upon in future work.
140. Religious education has not been a high priority for development. A relatively new co-ordinator has had a positive impact on the subject in a short time, making significant improvements. Management is good. She provides very good support to colleagues, has improved resources and their use and the display of work in classrooms. She is helping to improve teaching and learning by the use of a greater variety of teaching methods, which involve pupils more. Therefore, the subject is becoming more interesting for pupils. Staff development in order to encourage further development of religious education skills is necessary. There has been no monitoring of teaching and learning by observing lessons, but work has been sampled usefully and teachers'

planning monitored. The co-ordinator is aware of what needs to be developed and has a clear action plan to carry this out.