

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLLY GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Burntwood

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124212

Headteacher: Mrs. M.J. Jones

Reporting inspector: Peter Belfield  
21661

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> March 2003

Inspection number: 251104

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Holly Grove Lane  
Burntwood  
Staffordshire

Postcode: WS7 8LU

Telephone number: 01543 278620

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. A. Howship

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21661	Mr. P.Belfield	Registered inspector	Information Technology Physical Education	What sort of school is it?  How high are the standards?-The school's results and achievements.  How well are pupils taught?  How well is the school led and managed?  What should the school do to improve further?
9446	Mrs. H. Griffiths	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?
17686	Mr. G. Simpson	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology English as an additional language.	
20301	Mr. P. Isherwood	Team inspector	Music Religious education Special Educational Needs.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22884	Mrs. S. Sutcliffe	Team inspector	Science Foundation stage.	

32318	Mr. N. Beech	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	
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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Holly Grove Primary School is situated in Burntwood, Staffordshire. There are 395 pupils on roll comprising of 154 boys and 180 girls including sixty-one nursery children who attend on a part-time basis. This is larger than most primary schools. In the infants, the pupils are taught in separate year groups in six classes. In the juniors there are three Year 3/4 classes and three Year 5/6 classes although for English and mathematics additional teachers are employed so that the pupils can be taught in single year groups formed on the basis of their prior attainment. Almost all of the pupils are of white ethnic backgrounds. Seven pupils are learning English as an additional language, and two of these at an early stage of language acquisition. Cantonese and Gujarati are the two languages spoken by these pupils .

Ten per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, which is below average. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Seven per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. The results of early assessments confirm the inspectors' views that the attainment of most of the children on entry to the school is below average. The school has had significant staff changes during the past year with four teachers joining the school in September 2002. The accommodation is cramped and three classes are taught in temporary classrooms.

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

This is an effective school. The standards in English, mathematics and science have been rising steadily over the past three years and the quality of the teaching has improved since the last inspection. The school is well led and managed by the headteacher. It provides good value for money.

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

- The majority of pupils achieve well and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment
- The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and, together with the governors, there is a strong commitment to improvement.
- The provision for special educational needs is very good. Learning support assistants are well deployed and make a very effective contribution to the pupils' learning.
- The school promotes the pupils' personal, spiritual, social, moral and cultural development very effectively. The pupils have very good attitudes to school and they behave well.
- The school provides a good start for the children in the nursery and reception classes.
- The school works hard to attract additional funding and uses this money well to bring about improvement.

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

- Raising further the quality of the teaching and ensuring, in particular, that the work planned for the more able pupils is more challenging.
- The use of assessment to provide more regular information about the pupils' progress.
- The time allocated to the foundation subjects in the juniors.

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

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

The school has made satisfactory progress since it was last inspected in 1998. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved and the pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Teaching the pupils in literacy and numeracy groups that are formed on the basis of the pupils' prior attainment has helped to raise achievement, but the work provided for the more able pupils could be more challenging. Much has been done to improve the curriculum and lesson planning and the headteacher carefully monitors what is taught. The pupils' cultural development is promoted well.

Assessment procedures have been improved but they need to be used more effectively to plan work for the more able pupils and to provide teachers with more up-to-date information about pupils' progress. Opportunities for the pupils to learn independently have increased but there is still a need for the pupils to be given more time to plan their own work and carry out independent investigations, particularly in subjects like science and mathematics. The school has improved the way the limited accommodation is used. Two new teaching spaces have been created for the teaching of information and communication technology and the standards have risen in the subject. A library has been created enabling teachers to provide opportunities for the pupils to improve their research skills. There is a clear educational direction for the work of the school and this is shared by all of the staff and governors. The capacity for further improvement is good.

## 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	
English	C	C	C	D
mathematics	C	C	B	C
science	E	C	A	A

**Key**

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

The work seen during the inspection indicates that standards by the end of Year 6 are average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Standards in the main are sufficiently high by the time the pupils leave the school. Progress overall is good, but there is some underachievement for the more able pupils. This is particularly evident in English in both the infants and the juniors, and in mathematics in the infants and Years 3 and 4. By the end of Year 2 inspection evidence confirms that the standards in reading, writing and mathematics are currently below average. This fall in standards is due to the higher than normal number of pupils with special educational needs and learning difficulties in this year group. The standards are above average in science, art and design technology by the end of Year 2 and in history and music by the end of Year 6. The standards in science are a little lower than last year as fewer pupils are working at the higher Level 5. In all other subjects the pupils attain standards that are expected for their age. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress and attain the early learning goals in all of the areas of learning and exceed them in their personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. They are prepared very well for the next stage of their education.

There is very good provision for those pupils' with special educational needs and they make good progress and achieve well. The school sets suitable targets for the pupils' performance in the national tests, and meets them, but the targets for the most able pupils have lacked challenge and there is some underachievement among these pupils.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils are eager to come to school and keen to learn. They co-operate with their teachers and other adults and concentrate and persevere with activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils are familiar with and respond appropriately to the school's behaviour rules. There is little bullying or rough play and the pupils are polite and help each other.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships. The pupils have a clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Many opportunities are provided for the pupils to take responsibility and they grow in confidence and self-esteem.
Attendance	Satisfactory. There are sound procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The teaching is variable across the school and ranges from excellent to a small amount that is unsatisfactory. It is satisfactory overall. It has generally improved in the juniors since the last inspection. The better lessons meet the needs of all pupils and learning objectives are shared with the pupils in such a way that they are clear about what they are going to learn. Planning is good and teachers control behaviour and motivate the pupils. Support staff are clear about their role in lessons and provide a good blend of support and challenge to the pupils. The school has satisfactory strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy and some of the best teaching seen was in some of the single year groups in the juniors. In mathematics and science the teaching has improved markedly since the last inspection, but more demands could be made on the more able pupils. Other subjects which benefit from good or better teaching are music, ICT, history and physical education. The pupils with special educational needs are taught well and their individual education plans provide a good steer to their learning. There are areas for development. More effective use could be made of marking and there is a need to accelerate the pace of learning in some lessons. Homework could be provided more consistently across the school. In some classes and in some subjects, the pupils could be given more opportunities to think for themselves, explore their ideas and use their initiative to solve problems. This is particularly so in subjects like science and mathematics.

The teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes. The quality and range of learning opportunities for the children is very good. The staff plan the work effectively and there is good continuity between the nursery and reception classes. A strength of the provision is the way in which the staff work hard to provide stimulating learning activities for the children. They teach the children

new skills that carefully build on what they already know and understand. At times the more able children in Reception could be provided with more challenging work in writing and mathematics.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The quality and range of learning opportunities, including extra-curricular activities, is satisfactory. Too little time is allocated to the teaching of ICT and some foundation subjects in the juniors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The pupils are well taught, in line with the targets set out in their individual education plans. Special needs assistants are deployed effectively and provide a good blend of support and challenge to the pupils they work with.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The staff provide good support for pupils so that their use of English within lessons is developed effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's procedures for child protection and welfare are good and there are effective systems in place to promote the pupils' attendance, good behaviour and well-being. The assessment of the pupils is satisfactory, but better use could be made of the information to plan work for the more able pupils and to provide more regular information about the pupils' progress.

The school has very good links with parents and this has a positive impact on the pupils' achievements.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The leadership provided by the headteacher is good and she manages the school very well. Subject leaders generally provide very good support.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors are fully committed to improving the school and are appropriately involved in shaping its future direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and governors evaluate the school's performance rigorously to improve the quality of education provided.
The strategic use of	Excellent. The school is very successful in obtaining additional grants and these funds and other resources are carefully matched to the

resources	school's priorities.
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The co-ordination of subjects by key staff has been effective in identifying priorities for development although more needs to be done in science to implement agreed assessment procedures and to monitor the quality of pupils' learning. The accommodation although cramped is adequate to deliver the national curriculum. Resources are satisfactory and the school applies the principles of best value to all areas of expenditure.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children enjoy school.</li><li>• The progress that their children make.</li><li>• The standards of behaviour.</li><li>• The school expects children to work hard and to try their best.</li><li>• The way the school is led and managed.</li><li>• The good teaching.</li><li>• The ease in approaching the school staff with questions or a problem.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of activities provided outside of lessons.</li><li>• The level of homework that is provided.</li></ul>

The inspectors endorse all of the positive views expressed by the parents. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Homework is not set consistently in all classes and there is a need to clarify for parents the levels of homework that they can expect their children to be given.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The children in the nursery and the reception classes make good progress and most of them are likely to achieve or exceed the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development, in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development by the time they start in Year 1. They are likely to achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical and physical development. The work in the reception classes builds very well on the pupils' prior attainment and the children successfully learn the basic skills. The average and more able children could be given more opportunities to work independently and to accomplish more demanding tasks in literacy and mathematics.
2. The most recent test results in 2002 show that the pupils' performance in the Year 6 national tests in English was average, in mathematics above average and in science well above average. When compared with similar schools, the pupils' performance was below average in English, average in mathematics, and well above average in science. The trend of improvement over the past five years has been broadly in line with the national trend. The pupils' performance in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002 was below average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. The inspection evidence largely confirms this picture. The majority of pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment by the time they leave the school. Standards in English are average, and in mathematics and science they are above average. Standards by the end of Year 2 are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. This is largely due to a higher percentage of pupils with learning difficulties in these groups in recent years. The evidence from lesson observations and from the scrutiny of the pupils' work indicates that the more able pupils could be given more challenging work in English and mathematics and provided with more opportunities to plan and carry out their own investigations in mathematics and science. The school is tracking the pupils' progress carefully, but there is a need to make better and more regular use of assessment information to set more challenging targets for those pupils of average and higher ability. Overall, however, the careful analysis of the national test results by the school, combined with improvements in the planning, teaching and the introduction of ability sets in the junior classes has led to a rise in standards for the majority of the pupils since the last inspection.
3. The pupils enter the school with below average standards in their speaking skills. They make good progress and although standards in speaking are below the expected level by the end of Year 2 they improve steadily and by the end of Year 6 they are average. Listening skills are developed effectively across the school and standards are good by the end of Year 6. The teachers use a range of strategies to improve the pupils' speaking skills but need to plan more specific activities such as within *circle time*, in discussion sessions and assemblies to extend vocabulary levels. The school was disappointed with the reading results in the Year 2 national assessments and has changed the approach to guided reading and this is beginning to have an impact on standards. The majority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoy books and read regularly at home and the teachers maintain appropriate records. The rate of progress could be quickened if teachers targeted specific areas for improvement that are identified within assessment. As the pupils move through the juniors they grow more confident when discussing character, plot and setting and by the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average. The school has improved the library provision and, although the pupils carry out

some independent research, more could be done to develop this aspect of their independent learning.

4. The school has concentrated on improving the standards in writing and the profiles that have been introduced clearly show the progress that the pupils make over time. Standards are rising and most pupils achieve well in relation to their prior learning. By the end of Year 2 pupils are using literature as models for their writing but they do not transfer the complex sentences used into their everyday writing. There is a programme of writing skills that is taught across the school, but not all teachers ensure that the pupils have the opportunity to use and apply these skills in other subjects. By the end of Year 6 standards of writing are average, but they could be higher if the expectation of the more able pupils was greater. More use could be made of the computers to improve the quality of writing.
5. In mathematics in the infants the pupils can use their knowledge of place value to order two-digit numbers and they can use a range of calculation strategies for addition and subtraction. They have a basic knowledge of shape, can use a variety of measures and can recognise simple fractions. By the end of Year 6 they have made good progress and have a good understanding of the four rules of number and are able to solve a range of problems. They are less certain in carrying out investigations, explaining their findings and using the computer to handle data. Groups of more able pupils, particularly in the infants and the lower juniors, need a greater level of challenge in the work that is planned for them.
6. The pupils cover a wide range of work in science and achieve very well. The teachers ensure that all of the elements of the science curriculum are covered. The pupils are taught how to carry out experiments systematically from the time they start in the school and they make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a good knowledge of physical and natural science, but they have fewer opportunities to solve problems by themselves, to devise their own investigations and to select their own materials. Too much of the work in Years 5 and 6 is limited to enhancing the pupils' knowledge, at the expense of developing their skills in setting up experiments and recording their findings.
7. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with the expectations for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The resources for information and communication technology have been extensively developed since the last inspection. The pupils' word processing skills are developing well as is their ability to use a range of software. All classes use the computer suite at least once in a week and their ICT capabilities are developed well and they make good progress. Computers could be used more to support the work in other subjects, particularly in mathematics and science. In religious education the pupils reach the appropriate levels for their age. They gain a sound knowledge of the major faiths that has led to a deeper understanding of religious issues.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their individual educational plan targets because of the high quality of support they receive from teachers and support staff. They have positive attitudes and concentrate well on their work. The very small number of pupils speaking English as an additional language achieve well and make good progress.

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

9. The pupils' attitudes to learning are very good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. They behave well and their personal development is good. Nearly all parents feel that

behaviour is good and that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.

10. The school aims in its ethos statement to enable children to develop into mature, responsible, confident, sensitive, respectful and trustworthy individuals. It also aims to value individual achievement and promote mutual care and respect. Pupils' attitudes reflect the school's aims very well. They are keen to come to school and nearly all are punctual. They know right from wrong and are thoughtful of others. Participation in extracurricular activities is good.
11. The pupils show very good interest in their lessons and concentrate very well. For example, in Year 5 and 6 physical education lessons, the pupils concentrated very well throughout, discussed possibilities of dance routines and showed a real pride and pleasure in their achievements. The youngest pupils in the nursery can take turns and become engaged in very purposeful activity. Very occasionally, some may chatter unnecessarily if explanations are too long, but in general, pupils work well and are keen to put forward their ideas. They value their teacher's praise and encouragement. They know how to respond appropriately in assemblies. They are capable of working independently when given the opportunity and work very well together in groups.
12. The pupils know the school rules well and feel they are treated fairly. They keep their own records of rewards as part of their Record of Achievement. They respond well to their teachers' expectations of good behaviour and, as a result, behaviour is good in assemblies, lessons and at play times. Lunch times are pleasant social occasions. Pupils are open, friendly and polite to visitors. The teachers offer good role models of courtesy and fairness. Relationships are consistently very good between teachers and pupils and among pupils. Bullying is rare and parents and pupils are confident that it will be dealt with quickly and effectively. There was one exclusion last year and the procedures were correctly followed.
13. The pupils' personal and social development is very good. There are frequent opportunities for them to take responsibility which they take seriously. They value the rewards system. They understand the values of other cultures through subjects such as art, music, religious education and geography and show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others.
14. Attendance is satisfactory and authorised absence figures are in line with national averages. Unauthorised absence is below the national figure.

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

15. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There is significant variation in the quality of teaching across the school and it ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory. It is good in the foundation stage, and satisfactory in the infants and the juniors. The general improvement in the quality of teaching in the juniors since the last inspection has been the key to raising standards by the time the pupils leave the school.
16. The observation of lessons during the inspection indicates that almost half of the teaching is good or better. This is confirmed by the standards of work in the pupils' books. In these lessons the teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and performance. The pupils respond well and work hard. The teachers identify the learning objectives in their lesson plans. These are displayed for the pupils to refer to throughout the lesson. The approach works well and the teachers build successfully on previous work and all the pupils make good progress during lessons. The less successful teaching does not have the same level of challenge for all pupils, particularly the more able who are often set tasks that are too easy. The pace of these lessons is sometimes too slow and the rate of learning is not fast enough. The variation in quality is evident in lessons in both the infant and junior classes and the challenge for the school in improving further the pupils' performance is to raise the quality of the teaching so that it is consistently of a higher standard across the school. Since

the last inspection the support for teachers has improved and there has been regular monitoring of lessons by the headteacher and subject leaders. This work needs to continue with greater emphasis being placed on ensuring that pupils' assessments are used consistently by all teachers to plan the work for different ability groups. In addition to this teachers need to set homework on a consistent basis so that learning can be further consolidated and to ensure that all marking informs the pupils of what they need to do to improve.

17. A weakness identified at the time of the last inspection was teachers' planning. This has been improved with the introduction of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The strategies have been consistently implemented and the detailed planning of what is to be taught in English and mathematics has led to steady improvements in the standards achieved in the two subjects by the end of Year 6. In the infants, English is taught in mixed ability class groups and mathematics in year groups that are set by ability. In the juniors the pupils are taught both English and mathematics in groups set by ability and age. Two additional teachers are employed to reduce the number of pupils in each teaching group in the junior classes. These changes of organisation are working well and they are having a positive impact on the standards achieved by the pupils.
18. The teachers have a thorough knowledge of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. The teaching in English is satisfactory overall and teachers are well prepared and organised. The basic skills of literacy are generally taught well in all of the classes and great thought and care is given to providing resources and activities that build the pupils' confidence and engages them in the learning. The teachers are competent in teaching phonics and the word level work is taught systematically in all classes. Good use is made of the teaching assistants and other adults to support groups and individual pupils. All of the adults provide a good balance of support for the pupils. In the most effective lessons the teachers ensure that the pupils learn systematically at a brisk pace and they are skilled at asking questions that promote discussion and develop understanding. This was evident in a very good lesson in Year 5 when a group of less able pupils improved their skills in using complex sentences to write reports. The three groups within the class had work matched to their ability and the special needs pupils in the class were taught very effectively through the support provided by the learning assistant. All pupils made good progress during the lesson. In two less effective lessons in Year 2 and 3, the more able pupils were not sufficiently challenged. In the infant class the pupils spent too long identifying the number of syllables in words when they already had this skill; in the junior lesson the use of a text book to cover work on suffixes and the lack of probing questioning slowed the pace of learning for the pupils.
19. A similar picture is evident in numeracy lessons and the teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall. Almost all teachers make effective use of the three-part lesson structure recommended in the National Numeracy Framework. The teachers generally have a good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it and they use appropriate vocabulary and open-ended questions to extend the pupils' understanding of the mathematical topics. In some classes, however, the work is not as demanding as it could be for the more able pupils and in these classes they make slower progress than they should. This was the case in a Year 1 class when a task involving the subtraction of money was completed very quickly by the pupils and the teacher had not planned an extension activity. Similarly in a Year 5/6 lesson when all of the pupils were given the same task to interpret data and construct a graph. The most successful teaching makes good use of the pupils' assessments and is characterised by careful planning that identifies what different groups of pupils are to learn, very good relationships and effective management of the pupils. This was evident in a very good lesson in Year 6 when the teacher set very challenging work involving the multiplication

of decimals. She supported all groups effectively whilst focusing her teaching on the more able group.

20. The teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics has a number of strengths. The work in history and music in the juniors and art and design technology in the infants, for example, is good. All of the teachers and the support staff have completed their ICT training and they are confident and competent users of computers. They make good use of the computer suite and the pupils are taught new skills to consolidate learning in English. In science the work provided covers a broad range and interests the pupils but there are too few opportunities for practical and investigative work and for the pupils to carry out their own lines of enquiry.
21. The quality of teaching for children under five in both the nursery and reception classes is good. The nursery is well organised and provides a very good range of practical activities for all of the areas of learning. The nursery staff work very well as a team to ensure this quality. There is close liaison and interaction of staff between nursery and reception. A confident and positive atmosphere exists that allows the children to flourish. The planning is very thorough throughout the whole foundation stage, giving all staff clear indicators of the learning objectives and content for each lesson. All staff take responsibility for areas of teaching and show good knowledge of how young children learn. Children are well managed and kept very busy throughout the school day with a varied range of stimulating activities. There are areas for development in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics in reception. Whilst the teaching of basic skills is very effective, there is too little challenge and expectation of many of the average and above average children to work independently and to accomplish demanding tasks.
22. There is early identification of special educational need. There are very good quality individual education plans. Targets are clear and measurable, for example being able to read a certain number of words or work with particular numbers in mathematics. The individual education plans are linked very effectively to both the English and mathematics aspects of the National Curriculum. In lessons pupils with special educational needs are very well supported both by teachers and support assistants. This support ensures that these pupils make very good progress in their learning. The pupils with English as an additional language are supported effectively during lessons.

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

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school is satisfactory overall. In the previous inspection weaknesses were identified in the planning. The school has addressed this issue and planning is now satisfactory. There is regular detailed monitoring of planning to ensure consistency across the school. All staff share a commitment to equality of opportunity. They work conscientiously to ensure that the pupils understand what is happening in the classroom and this helps all of the pupils to take a full part in the full range of activities.
24. The school teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum is broad but weaknesses in the co-ordination of the curriculum in the juniors has resulted in a lack of balance. Present timetable arrangements for afternoon sessions result in very short sessions in a number of subjects, for example in physical education and this impacts upon the teaching of skills. In design and technology, the subject is organised in such a way that older pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop skills they have acquired earlier.

25. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are having a good impact on the pupils' learning, but opportunities to develop literacy across the whole curriculum are not always exploited, for example in religious education. The school has recognised that there are too few opportunities to use information and communications technology across the curriculum and is addressing this issue.
26. The provision for personal, health and social education is very good and underpins the whole curriculum. Younger pupils have opportunities to talk about things that are special to them in group sessions (called circle time). Older pupils follow a special course, which includes topics such as bullying and relationships. Pupils are given opportunities to learn about citizenship and this helps them prepare for later life. Provision for sex education and drugs awareness is very good. The school nurse and a visiting former policeman make good contributions to this area of the curriculum.
27. The provision for children in the nursery and reception is good. It follows the curriculum guidance for children in the foundation stage providing a good introduction to the national curriculum. There is a wide, varied and stimulating range of subjects and activities all well linked together under imaginative themes. The flexible staffing arrangements between nursery and reception ensure good adult support for all groups.
28. The pupils with special educational needs have access to the full curriculum and are included in all aspects of school life. This has a very positive effect on the progress made both in academic and social development. Most of the support is given within the classroom so pupils do not feel that they are different from their classmates. When pupils are withdrawn, it is part of a very well planned programme aimed at improving their skills, for example in literacy.
29. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils. These include physical activities for younger pupils and physical and musical activities for older pupils. The activities for older pupils observed during the inspection were of very good quality and developed physical, musical and social skills very effectively. Visitors to school including musicians, puppeteers and an Islamic visitor enhance the curriculum. Visits out to local churches, a farm, Cannock Chase, Lichfield and other areas have a positive effect on developing pupils academic and social skills.
30. There are very good links with the local secondary school. There are regular liaison meetings between staff from the school and colleagues in the secondary school. The local secondary school gives support in information and communications technology and this helps to further improve the pupils' skills. The school has recently started to offer placements to trainee teachers from the University of Central England. Nursery nurse students from a local college are also offered placements.
31. The school continues to have good links with the community in a variety of ways. Strong links have been established with the local church where many pupils attend clubs and the out of school care club. The vicar visits regularly and takes assemblies and school productions take place in the church. Local businesses advertise in the prospectus and give prizes for the annual raffle. Pupils from the school visit a local home for the elderly and the school chooses a charity each year resulting in good sums of money being raised.
32. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall and is a strength of the school. The school presents a deeply caring and reflective ethos for the pupils. In the previous inspection issues were raised about cultural development; the school has successfully addressed these issues and provision for cultural development is now good. The school has made good improvement in the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development since the previous inspection.

33. The provision for spiritual development is good. Adults and pupils have a mutual respect that underpins everything that goes on in the school. The pupils are given opportunities to think and reflect on the beauty of the world. They see the effects of light on the recently constructed garden. The pupils are given time to listen to music and reflect as they enter the hall for the collective act of worship. In music there are many opportunities to listen and think about feelings, for example in Year 3 and 4 when listening to Mendelssohn's 'Fingals Cave Overture'. The 'buddy bench' is used to allow pupils to sit outside and have quiet times to think and reflect. In lessons such as science in Year 2, a pupil completes a simple electrical circuit and is delighted to see the bulb light up. Visits to the nearby St. John's church and visits from the minister have a positive effect on developing pupils' spiritual awareness.
34. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good and has a very significant impact upon life in the school. The teachers and other adults act as good role models for the pupils. Expectations of the pupils' behaviour is high in all classes. Adults are encouraging and pupils respond well to this by showing very good attitudes and behaving well. Pupils are taught right from wrong from an early age. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour, for example in a Year 2 lesson a pupil clearly understands that he is responsible for his own behaviour when talking to the teacher about a minor misdemeanour. All pupils follow the school's code of conduct. The teachers and other adults reward good behaviour and pupils respond well to this. On the small number of occasions when behaviour is not satisfactory pupils are asked to think about what they have done, why they did it and how could they have handle the situation better. Older pupils are given opportunities to discuss moral issues such as bullying and being left out of activities. This gives them very good opportunities to develop an insight into the thoughts and feelings of others.
35. The provision for social development is very good. The teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included in all activities. There are opportunities in almost every lesson for pupils to work together in pairs or groups. The pupils, from a very young age, carry out tasks in the classroom. Older pupils are given jobs around the school, for example looking after games at lunchtime. They carry out office duties effectively during the lunch break. Younger pupils develop their social skills through their links with a home for the elderly. The pupils are encouraged to raise money for charities, for example a group of pupils made and sold cakes for Comic Relief. The pupils enjoy and benefit from the good quality extra-curricular activities offered by the school.
36. The provision for cultural development is good. The school arranges visits to places of artistic and historical interest to develop pupils' awareness. The pupils are provided with a wide range of literacy works to improve their cultural development. Religious education makes a very strong contribution to cultural development allowing pupils to study the customs and rites of major world religions. The pupils from minority ethnic communities are encouraged to celebrate their cultures within the school. The pupils in Year 6 talk with enthusiasm of the knowledge they have gained about Islam from a fellow pupil. In history, the pupils learn about the great civilisations of the past and in geography they study cultures from other parts of the world. The personal, health and social education course and the recently introduced citizenship course give the pupils an opportunity to look at issues raised in living in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic community.

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

37. The school is a caring community, which has a warm and friendly atmosphere. Good policies ensure the health, welfare and safety of pupils. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Arrangements for child protection are effective. The headteacher is the designated person and has been recently trained. Her deputy and all other staff receive short training and have good guidelines. Area guidelines have been adopted. The links with social

services are good. The headteacher is also responsible for looked-after children, who have personal education plans.

38. The school has effective health and safety procedures, with all statutory measures in place. Five members of staff have been fully trained in first aid. The arrangements for dealing with pupils' medical conditions are very good. Accident books are properly kept. Risk assessments take place regularly and fire and electrical equipment is checked annually. Teachers follow good practice in science, physical education and design technology. The Internet safety policy is in place. Supervision at play and lunch times is good. A number of security concerns has been notified to the governors. The school has recently undergone a health and safety audit. Attendance is monitored effectively. Registration takes place quickly and effectively and ensures a calm start to sessions.
39. Comprehensive policies underline the good procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying. School rules are clear and the code of conduct is displayed on the parents' notice board as well as in the home/school agreement and the prospectus. Classroom rules are devised by each class at the beginning of the year. Good behaviour and hard work are rewarded by a variety of stickers and certificates, as well as postcards that are sent home to parents. At *Special Mentions Assemblies*, the pupils are chosen for particular acts of hard work or achievement. Lunchtime supervisors can also nominate pupils. Sanctions are appropriate and parents are closely involved in any behaviour difficulties.
40. The pupils have very good opportunities for taking responsibility and their personal development is monitored very effectively. Personal development is recorded very well, through pupils' own Records of Achievement. These are monitored each year as part of pupils' annual reports.
41. The procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs are good. The school identifies special needs at an early stage. A wide range of different tests and assessments to determine how the pupils can be supported in their learning. The pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning by being given their own learning targets. The special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers regularly review the individual education plans to ensure that the pupils are making at least good progress towards their targets. The school has good contacts with outside learning support services and uses their advice effectively. The pupils with sensory difficulties are particularly well catered for. The teachers provide special resources including larger copies of materials and an electronic magnifier is used to ensure that a pupil with a visual impairment makes progress in line with the rest of the class. The small number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language are provided with a good level of support enabling them to make good progress.
42. The use of on-going assessment to inform planning, particularly in relation to the higher attaining pupils was a key issue identified at the last inspection. The assessment of pupils' work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has improved, leading to higher standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. However, there are weaknesses in the way this aspect of the school's work is co-ordinated. Detailed pupil tracking records are in place, but the information they contain is not easily accessible making it difficult to use the records for the purpose for which they were intended. Assessment information could be used more effectively if it were brought together in a more accessible and simpler format. This would enable the headteacher and subject co-ordinators to monitor more closely the pupils' progress across the school. The impact on teaching and learning would be greater if assessments were carried out on a more frequent basis in order to determine whether pupils were on track to achieve their targets. This would provide clearer information for teachers when planning lessons. Assessment information about the higher

attaining pupils is not used effectively by some teachers to inform planning. This results in the pupils being under challenged in some lessons and under-achieving. Assessment needs to be more carefully monitored to ensure that the agreed procedures are consistently applied across the school. The school has not yet agreed procedures for assessment in the foundation subjects.

43. Standards in English have not risen to the same extent as those in mathematics or science and the school has focused attention on developing the assessment of writing. In Years 1 to 5 pupils have a profile book in which they complete a piece of writing each term. This piece of writing is carefully assessed for style, purpose, organisation and punctuation. The strengths of the work are recorded and the teacher sets targets in order to build on previous success. The targets are shared with pupils and their parents both of whom have their own opportunity to comment on the writing. This procedure is comprehensive, works well and is already having a positive impact on standards. It would be even more effective if it was repeated half-terminly rather than terminly. The teachers in Year 6 are to adopt this system in the next school year.
44. The standard of marking is variable and overall the pupils need to be provided with clear feedback on what is good about their work and how it could be improved further. Less effective marking seen in the pupils' books is characterised by short phrases such as "Good" or "Well Done". Some marking in Years 5 and 6 is inappropriately critical in tone.

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

45. The good numbers of parents who responded to the questionnaire and attended the meeting were very supportive of the school and all that it does for their children. Nearly all responses were very positive. Parents were particularly pleased with teaching, the leadership and management of the school and with their children's progress. Nearly all felt that their children liked school, that the school expected their children to do their best and that it was helping their children to become mature and responsible. They all felt comfortable about approaching the school with any problems and nearly all felt well informed about how their children were getting on. A significant number of parents were dissatisfied with the range of activities outside lessons and with the amount of homework provided by the school.
46. The findings of the inspection largely support parents' positive views. The number and range of extracurricular activities, together with trips, visitors and visits, were satisfactory. Homework, however, is not given consistently to support classroom learning.
47. The school has very good links with parents, as it did at the time of the last inspection. The information it provides for them is good. The governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus are clearly written and comply with statutory requirements. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator interviews all parents and there is a good introductory booklet on preparing children for school. The reception teachers run a monthly club for parents. A transition meeting is held each year for parents of children in Year 2. Newsletters are frequent and well-presented. The parents at their pre-inspection meeting requested advance information on what their children are to learn each term. The school has quickly responded and this information is now provided. The school issues questionnaires every two years to ask parent's views on a variety of topics and the response to these is good. Workshops have been run on Numeracy, Literacy and Behaviour, although parental response was not strong. A maths club is run each week for a small number of parents of infant pupils.
48. The parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. An appropriate number of consultation meetings are held each year and parents feel free to consult their children's

teachers informally at any time. Reports are clear and full, although all do not include targets or offer opportunities for comment by children or their parents. Homework diaries and reading records are a useful means of dialogue between school and home. The home/school agreement has been signed by all parents. Teachers inform parents at an early stage if there are problems with a child's learning. They are kept very well informed about their child's progress. Individual education plans are sent to the parents but they could be more specific in ways parents can help their child at home. The parents are not yet involved in reviewing individual education plan targets as recommended in the recently revised Code of Practice for special educational needs.

49. Parent governors are active members of the governing body and there is a home/school partnership committee. A small number of parents help in school on a regular basis and good numbers help on visits. Support for school performances is good. The School Association runs a good range of social and fund-raising events each year and raises funds to help the school to buy equipment to enhance pupils' learning.

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

50. The leadership of the school by the headteacher is good. She shares a common goal with staff and governors to improve the quality of learning. There is a clear direction for the school's work with a focus on raising standards. The success of this work is seen in the standards attained by pupils in national tests at the end of Year 6, which have improved steadily over the past five years. The school has a very strong ethos that respects the values and beliefs of others. There is an effective policy for promoting fairness and equality and this is reinforced by the school rules.
51. The governing body is very supportive and committed to improving the school. They are closely involved in determining the school's priorities and in the drawing up the school improvement plan. An example of this was their determination to improve the information and communication technology (ICT) facilities by converting areas of the building to ICT suites. They are well-informed by the headteacher of the school's results in the national tests and the overall performance of the school.
52. The school is managed very effectively. The headteacher and subject leaders monitor the teaching and learning in English and mathematics and this has helped to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards. There are systems in place for evaluating the standards achieved by of pupils in the national tests in Year 2 and Year 6. Subject leaders monitor the curriculum provision and the headteacher monitors the teachers' curriculum planning. The school improvement plan is a very useful management tool. The priorities have arisen from a careful and accurate analysis of the school's performance, and the plan clearly identifies appropriate actions to address these priorities. The need to provide greater challenge for the more able pupils has been recognised by the school and a teacher has been recently given responsibility for the work of gifted and talented pupils. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in 1998 and has worked hard to address the key issues raised in the last report. These improvements, combined with the headteacher's clear vision of what she wants for all of the pupils at the school, both academically and socially, places the school in a favourable position for sustaining these improvements. A key area for development following the last inspection was the need to make better use of assessment to inform curriculum planning. Since then, the assessment procedures have been revised and are used more effectively to identify pupils' weaknesses. However, there is still need to further refine the process by assessing pupils' performance more frequently so that action can be swiftly taken to address weaknesses. Also a simpler, easily accessible overview of the pupils' on-going assessments and performance predictions would help to trigger more timely support and intervention by the headteacher and subject leaders. This would help

teachers to make better use of the pupils' assessments to ensure that the work planned matches the different abilities of the pupils, particularly the more able.

53. The special educational needs co-ordinator performs the role very effectively, meeting all the recommendations of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. There are very good systems to identify and review the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Careful monitoring of individual education plans by the special educational needs co-ordinator ensures all teachers produce very clear targets that are easily measured. Good progress in the provision for pupils with special educational needs has been made since the last inspection. The school supports the few pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English very well by ensuring that classroom assistants provide appropriate help.
54. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. The provision of extra teachers, which enables ability sets and single age classes to be formed, is having a significant impact in driving up standards. Well-trained and able support staff are deployed effectively throughout the school and have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. They make a particularly good contribution to the achievement, progress and self-esteem of the pupils with special educational needs.
55. The school has a good strategy for appraisal and performance management. The school achieved an *Investors in People* award in 2001 as a recognition of the way both individual and school needs are taken into account when programmes are developed. Training is linked to priorities in the school development plan and is also linked to performance management profiles, which exist for all members of staff. Induction procedures are good. All staff new to the school are well supported. Good guidelines are available to inform staff of procedures. Newly qualified teachers are supported appropriately, so that they are given guidance, advice and training necessary to introduce them to the profession and to make them better teachers.
56. Control of the school's finances is very good. The headteacher carefully draws up the educational priorities of the school in terms of staffing, buildings and resources based on asset management data, curriculum analysis and discussion with a wide range of personnel. These are linked closely to the school's improvement plan. Every month a detailed analysis of spending is carried out and any variances or staff changes that will have a financial impact are identified. Reviews of the effectiveness of money spent are constantly undertaken and best value sought from different service providers. The headteacher is very effectively supported by a keen and informed governing body finance committee. They meet frequently and monitor expenditure in all areas. The principles of best value are rigorously applied and strategic planning is excellent. A Local Education Authority support officer visits five times a year to give expert financial advice. This is especially beneficial as the financial management computing system has some limitations.
57. The headteacher is very skilled in attracting extra grants to benefit the school such as the Home School Partnership Fund which has greatly improved resources in the foundation stage for many years. Other grants are used to improve the building and provide an extra teacher in the juniors. This has enabled the school to teach pupils in smaller, single age classes and raise standards. The day-to-day financial procedures within the school are smooth, efficient and very effective. The few recommendations made in the last audit report have all been acted upon.
58. There is an appropriate range of resources. The accommodation is adequate to deliver the National Curriculum but it is cramped, particularly in one class in Year 3/4, and this limits the range of teaching strategies that can be adopted by the teacher, particularly science, art and design technology. The outside play areas are of a good size. Attractive flowerbeds were created for the Queen's Golden and the school's Silver Jubilees last year from money raised

in a sponsored event. The sensory garden is an attractive feature. There is a good dedicated play area for the foundation stage but there is a shortage of outdoor learning equipment which places limits on the pupils' physical development.

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

- (1) Raise further the quality of teaching by:
  - ensuring that all lesson planning takes better account of the pupils' varying abilities, particularly in offering greater challenge to the more able pupils;
  - providing more opportunities for practical and investigative work;
  - planning more opportunities in lessons for the pupils to develop their independent learning skills;
  - ensuring that marking is used consistently to identify the next step for pupils' learning;
  - ensuring that the homework policy is consistently applied.

(Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 52, 61, 63, 64, 65, 74, 78, 80,85,88,91 and 92)

- (2) Review the assessment arrangements for English, mathematics and science so that:
  - assessments are carried out consistently and on a more frequent basis in order to determine whether pupils are on track to achieve their learning targets;

- on-going assessment records present assessment information in a simpler format that allow teachers and subject leaders to more easily monitor the pupils' progress;
- the school's assessment writing profile is implemented in Reception to Year 6.

(Paragraphs 16, 42, 44, 52,77 and 93)

- (3) Revise the time allocated to the foundation subjects in the juniors so that sufficient time is made available to complete the planned work within the lesson.

(Paragraphs 24, 97, 98, 120, 127 and 132)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	13	23	39	4		
Percentage	2	16	29	49	5		

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

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

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	31	333
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	15

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	36

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### *Attendance*

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.4

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	29	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	26	27	27
	Total	42	43	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (90)	96 (92)	96 (84)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	27	23	29
	Total	43	39	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (90)	87 (84)	100 (98)
	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	16	26	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	16
	Girls	24	19	26
	Total	36	33	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (82)	79 (76)	100 (90)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	12	12
	Girls	20	20	21
	Total	28	32	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (76)	76 (78)	79 (76)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	269	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	5	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	1	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

### *Teachers and classes*

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	28

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

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	150

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	81

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.1
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	734,350
Total expenditure	701,758
Expenditure per pupil	1,800
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,300
Balance carried forward to next year	24,143

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	375
Number of questionnaires returned	124

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	28	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	39	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	50	2	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	46	13	1	3
The teaching is good.	67	32	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	41	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	25	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	29	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	48	48	4	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	56	43	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	38	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	37	16	2	7

## **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**

59. The children enter the nursery on a part time basis from the age of three and then complete their Foundation Stage education in a reception class. When children start in the Nursery their attainment is below average. They make good progress in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development, where the majority of children are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Satisfactory progress is made in communication, language and literacy, mathematical and physical development where most children are likely achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is similar to findings at the last inspection. The co-ordinator ensures that planning across the nursery and reception classes is detailed and covers all of the areas of learning. The staff work well together, planning the children's work in teams. They provide a particularly stimulating and varied curriculum through exciting topics such as the *Bears* in the nursery and themed weeks such as *Castles* and *Hansel and Gretel* as part of the houses project in reception. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and satisfactory for pupils with English as an additional language.

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

60. Good relationships are established between the children, their families and the staff. Parents are made to feel welcome and are invited to spend time in school, with their child, prior to entry to the nursery. Children come into school happily and settle quickly. They are developing a good understanding of what is expected of them and learning the difference between right and wrong. Very good routines and clear, consistent expectations in the nursery ensure that the children know what is required of them and they respond very well. Particularly impressive is 'tidy away time' where much independent social collaboration and responsibility is evident. As soon as a certain piece of music is played, all children zoom into action. The children share carrying heavy boxes to store away; a large number swoop on a messy part of the floor to pick up the paper whilst others help each other complete jigsaws so they can be put away intact. They then sit silently ready to begin the next activity. All this is done in approximately three minutes without an adult saying a word. Procedures and rules within reception further develop their understanding of the organisation of the school and the wider community. The children listen quietly to the teacher and each other. In reception longer tasks are helping extend the children's abilities to concentrate and persevere. Most activities in reception are supported by an adult, however, and this occasionally limits the children's opportunities to work independently at their own pace, particularly the more able children who are capable of completing and extending much of their work alone.
61. Throughout the foundation stage all adults act as good role models. The children are confident in approaching adults for help. Throughout all sessions staff and volunteers are on hand to ask appropriate questions and extend children's thinking. They focus on creating a secure and caring atmosphere where the contributions of all children are valued. All of the staff have a sound understanding of the children's needs and use much encouragement and praise in a positive manner. This contributes to the growth of the children's confidence, self-esteem and commitment to work. Those children with special needs are provided with work matched to their ability and much adult support. The child with English as an additional

language is fully included in all activities with staff making a point of stressing language skills throughout each task.

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

62. The teachers' planning emphasises the development of children's language and literacy in both the nursery and reception classes and the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Most children are likely to reach the expected levels by the time they reach Year 1 but few will exceed them. Planning clearly identifies many opportunities for children to practise and extend their speaking and listening skills. The children learn to talk to each other and with adults and are encouraged to join in class discussions such as the very animated one following one child's birthday party held in the local 'Snow Dome'. Many are gaining confidence and are able to talk to large groups such as those children sharing their Mothers' day cards in the foundation stage assembly. The children are asked to make comments about much of their work and teachers scribe these statements and attach them to displays. On a river display, children had experimented with language such as 'thick, oozy, gooey, squelchy mud' and 'splashy, sploshy water'. The reception children are taught to negotiate when exploring different games to play in the playground. In imaginative role-play discussions, reception children dress up as a king or queen, soldiers, sentries and cooks. Nursery children enjoy dressing up as the three bears and acting out the story. Nursery children are able to express emotions of sadness or happiness when listening to Vivaldi's '*Four Seasons*'.
63. Early reading skills are developed through the sharing of books and stories. The teachers use a variety of strategies to enliven story telling such as the use of puppets or going on a pretend picnic like the bear in the story. All children have a good attitude to books with one little girl from reception confirming her view by simply saying "Reading is fun". All of the children in the foundation stage regularly take home a book to share with their parents and in the nursery 'story sacks' provide further activities to extend enjoyment and discussion. They understand print goes from the top to the bottom of a page and from left to right. They are aware of both fiction and non-fiction books and are able to make some predictions during the reading of a story. There are a good range of Big Books which are used effectively in reception to help the children identify initial sounds or recognise and spell rhyming words. 'Jolly Phonics' are taught to nursery children through a series of 'fun activities' and these are continued in reception. Effective assessment procedures ensure good progression and most children are expected to know all their sounds and many blends by the time they enter Year 1. However, whilst the teaching of basic reading skills is good the children need more opportunities to apply these skills to read independently. Further provision is needed to ensure most children are offered progressive reading material much earlier in the reception year.
64. The children have many opportunities to watch adults write with scribed writing of children's comments being a strong feature of the nursery. 'Bessie Bear' goes home with a reception child each weekend. They then watch and help their parents write Bessie's daily diary over the weekend and this is shared with everyone back in school. Many children in reception are able to use their knowledge of phonics to spell simple words of three letters. Formal handwriting is taught to help correct letter formation from the beginning. Whilst writing areas are provided to enable children to experiment with early writing, more opportunities could be provided for capable children to write independently within a clear progressive framework. The children have writing books and are able to see their own improvement but the more able could make quicker progress if there was a greater level of challenge.

### **Mathematical development**

65. Teaching is satisfactory and most children are likely to reach the expected levels by the time they reach Year 1 but few will exceed them. Good use is made of registration time to count the numbers of children having a hot dinner, for example. The children in the nursery can identify the numbers on a dice from the pattern they make and many are confident in counting and ordering to 5. Mental 'warm' up sessions before numeracy lessons in reception help children explore number and develop their counting skills with some children able to count up to 50. They are introduced to such concepts as 'What is one after 49?' or 'Count back from 11 to 7'. Some average ability children are able to count in two's up to 32. The children are able to order size from long to short and use terms such as longer, shorter, longest or shortest. Whilst these basic skills are very well and imaginatively taught, the group work does not always challenge the average or better child. Adults work with each group but this does not always encourage children to think for themselves and work at their own pace. Extra challenging activities are not provided for those children who quickly accomplish the given task. For example, many pupils are able to buy 'goods' from the castle shop to the value of the 5p in their purses but few further challenging problems are set to extend and explore the pupils' capabilities and thinking skills. There are limited examples of written notation for the children to extend their visual perceptions of recorded number.

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

66. The children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and the teaching is good. A particularly rich and stimulating programme of learning is in place within both the nursery and reception classes. Effective planning links a wide range of areas of learning. Geography, science, history and technology are taught each week as part of an ongoing topic. ICT is effectively taught to support all curriculum areas and is a strong feature of the work. An interesting outdoor education programme provides opportunities for activities such as walking to post Mothers Day cards, planting and caring for spring flowers and feeding the birds.
67. During the theme of the 'bears' in the nursery, children follow a simple map to help them find their way through the play area and locate the missing bear. They look at old types of lighting which may be used to light a house in the wood or use a computer programme to hide a bear somewhere within a room. The story 'Whatever Next' about a bear visiting the moon results in the children making rocket shaped shakers from tubes, sticky paper, glue, cones, a variety of pastels and lentils and colourful stars that extends their skills of cutting, gluing and manipulating very small shapes.
68. In reception the topic of homes is also very well developed. A large castle has been 'built' in the quiet room and this is a centre for mathematical and speaking and listening activities. The children explore waterproof materials and try to make a suitable roof for the three little pigs house. They compare the relationship between the weight of an object and the strength needed to blow it down by making the three pigs houses with different materials. The children are able to identify and label the roots, petals, stem, leaf and bulb of a plant. In technology they cook gingerbread houses and learn that heat can change materials. They design and make a spout with a simple string device to enable Incy Wincy spider to climb up. In ICT robots are dressed as Hansel and Gretel and children programme their route through the wood to the witches house. Similarly the crooked man follows a crooked route to reach his crooked house. The children can use a mouse to drag and paste and are familiar with such programmes as *ColourMagic*.

### **Physical development**

69. Progress in physical development is satisfactory overall. Manipulative and co-ordination skills are being developed through using a range of pencils, pens and brushes, handling jigsaws, sticking on tiny stars to decorate their rocket shakers, or using a mouse to control a computer programme. Constant practice with scissors, such as when cutting out circles to make stick puppets, ensures that all of the children soon become skilled and safe in handling equipment.

Children in the nursery are able to change for physical education lessons with a great degree of independence and leave their clothes neatly folded.

70. There are planned physical development sessions both out-of-doors and in the school hall. For example children spend one half term developing their ball skills by investigating several ways to throw or roll balls and catching or holding balls with different parts of their body. They experiment with several different types of balls extending the work in to squeezing, twisting, flattening or squashing them and describing how they feel or look. They move to rhythms and try to express themselves in dance. The outdoor facilities for the nursery are satisfactory and include some large soft play apparatus, several wheeled vehicles and a range of small apparatus such as rings and hoops. The children play imaginatively and use all the space well whilst respecting each others safety. The reception children also have access to the *sensory garden* for play. The area is inadequate, however, for all foundation children to use and the children should benefit greatly when the newly proposed adventure area with textured walkways and more physical activities is completed.

### **Creative development.**

71. The children make good progress in their creative development and the teaching is good. The children are provided with many opportunities to experiment with colour, shape and texture and are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the time they reach Year 1. They can mix paints, choose colours and paint with confidence such as interpretations of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* in mood pictures. In the nursery they make observational drawings and those of flowers 'seen' through a magnifying glass are particularly impressive in terms of detail and fine motor control. A range of soft toy animals with patterns of stripes or spots is used well to help children design their own quilt cover for one of the three bear's beds. In reception there is a very attractive relief of Hansel and Gretel's house made from sweet packets and sweet wrappings of all colours and textures.
72. The children listen to music and make their own. Almost all children respond well to music and join in with actions and rhymes. They have many opportunities to play and investigate many instruments, clap rhythms or sing songs. Music is used to help children act out stories and most know Vivaldi is a composer. Music is also used as an integral part of curriculum delivery. For example children enjoy trying to march to the beat of the Grand Old Duke of York and this effectively combines music with physical education. Musical instruments are used in mathematics lessons to help children count at different speeds. They make musical instruments in technology and learn to compare loud and soft sounds. Appropriate music is played in assembly, used for tidying up or for listening and discussing. Music is used for 'scared bear' to be passed around the circle. When the music stops the child holding the bear describes how he or she feels.

### **ENGLISH**

73. Standards in English are below the national average by the end of Year 2 and in line with the national average by the end of Year 6. This is similar to the levels achieved in the 2002 national tests, when standards were below those of similar schools. The pupils enter the school at a below average standard in speaking and listening, reading and writing and achieve satisfactorily. However, the overall standard remains below the national average in the current Year 2 because there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and too few pupils attain the higher level 3. The pupils make good progress between Years 3 and 6 where they are taught in ability sets and additional literacy groups. Girls tend to perform better than boys, but not significantly so. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and these pupils also make good progress.

74. Improvements since the last inspection include the creation of an accessible library as well regular visits to the local library. This has resulted in the pupils developing better retrieval skills. More opportunities are provided to develop speaking skills, although the school recognises the need to plan these across the curriculum. Works of literature are used effectively as a focus in lessons. Literature is also well used to promote the cultural development of the pupils. The school has targeted weaknesses in reading and writing by introducing a new reading programme and regular assessments of writing. These measures are being effective in raising standards, but have not yet had time to show in the end of key stage tests. The introduction of ability sets and extra teachers has had a significant impact on improving standards by the time the pupils leave the school. There is a closer match of work to ability, but there is still a weakness in the challenge to more able pupils throughout the school. Regular handwriting practice is improving the presentation of work. Although the National Literacy Strategy has been introduced effectively, its implementation is not consistent throughout the school.
75. Given the limitations of pupils' language skills on entry to the school, standards in speaking are below the expected level by the end of year 2. Speaking skills are developed during discussion activities, and pupils respond confidently. However, although they have good ideas to express, they are limited by their narrow range of vocabulary. Sometimes discussions are too generalised, or too teacher dominated, which limits the progress of the pupils. Good opportunities are given in lessons to engage in 'talking partner' discussions. These encourage pupils to work collaboratively, but, unfortunately, do not develop vocabulary sufficiently. By year 6, the higher achieving pupils are articulate and expressive. When talking about school they describe their likes and dislikes with appropriate expression. For instance, they enthuse about the use of videos as a writing stimulus. All pupils enter willingly into discussion with both adults and their peers. They learn to use appropriate language to generate ideas in brain-storming sessions. Pupils respond best, when teachers ask supplementary questions following initial answers and give them time to develop their ideas. Overall standards are in line with national expectations and progress is good. Many opportunities are given to develop speaking skills, both in English lessons and in other subjects. The school recognises a need to plan these more specifically, so that lessons are more focused. Teachers expect pupils to listen well from the very beginning of school. They are successful in achieving this and the standard of listening remains good throughout the school.
76. Standards in reading are below average at the end of Year 2 and average by Year 6. The majority of pupils in years 1 and 2 enjoy books and read regularly at home and school. Individual pupil progress is recorded in home/school record books, in which both teachers and parents write regularly. There is scope to use these more diagnostically and to address specific areas for improvement. Group records are also maintained and are used effectively to track progress. Younger pupils employ a range of strategies to help them read. These include using picture clues, sounding out words and gauging meaning from surrounding words. Punctuation is ignored occasionally when reading aloud, which adversely affects fluency and expression. Higher attaining pupils sometimes re-read sentences, which is a good strategy to achieve complete understanding of the text. Although all pupils express preferences in their choice of books, their reasons lack clarity and are sometimes immature. A recent adjustment in the way reading is taught is resulting in more focused lessons and greater progress is being made. Some pupils become confused when defining fiction and non-fiction, but all are familiar with the location and function of a contents page and an index. Older pupils make good progress, so that by the age of eleven, standards are in line with national averages. As pupils progress through the school, they grow more confident when discussing character, plot and setting. Higher attaining pupils draw upon a wider range of vocabulary and use appropriate technical language, such as simile and metaphor, as they

discuss poetry by Benjamin Zephaniah and Vernon Scannell. When comparing 'A Case of Murder' with 'Danny Lives On', they demonstrate a growing facility for making deductions from the text and establishing their own hypotheses, which they express confidently.

77. Writing has been a major focus in the development of English this year. Very good pupil profile books have been developed and conscientiously completed by teachers, pupils and parents. The pupils' progress is evident in these books. The system has not yet been used throughout the school, so measurable success in national tests at eleven is not yet possible to identify. By seven, pupils are writing in simple sentences, usually punctuated accurately. More complex sentences are beginning to emerge as pupils model their writing on examples from literature. However, these complex sentences are not yet transferred into everyday writing. Pupils also show a greater flair for using descriptive words in their writing, when they follow story guides or write plans. On these occasions, good, expressive vocabulary is used, such as, 'the wood was spooky and creepy,' or, 'Oliver's whole body was buzzing.' Teachers also give frequent opportunities for pupils to work in pairs or groups to develop complex sentences together, but care needs to be taken to provide a good range of vocabulary, with which pupils can experiment. As enthusiasm for writing grows, the care taken with spelling and punctuation can decline, so teachers need to raise expectations of finished work. By eleven, pupils write with greater ease. A systematic programme of skills acquisition taught through the school results in better punctuation, spelling, grammar and sentence structure. Sometimes these skills are not successfully transferred to their writing, e.g., writing in paragraphs. Using published works as a focus for writing is proving to be successful in raising standards and pupils are guided to a range of writing styles in connection with a particular study, such as letter writing. Higher attaining pupils need to be challenged further, by taking greater control of their writing, from initial concept to finished article. They are, too often, directed step by step. Pupils throughout the school are taught to write in a range of formats and for a variety of audiences. Writing is well used in all subjects, as a very good display on 'rivers' exemplifies. The school has identified a need to improve handwriting and has introduced a new programme, with regular lessons. This is making an impact, but improved handwriting is not yet consistently transferred from practice to work in progress. Pupils successfully use computer programs to write their finished work and experiment with font and style.
78. The quality of teaching and learning during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good and was satisfactory overall. Fifteen lessons were observed. Of these four were very good, four were good and seven were satisfactory. The use of extra teachers to create ability sets and reduce class sizes is very effective and pupils respond to activities planned, in most cases, to meet their needs. Learning is also enhanced by teaching pupils in single age groups. There are times when the progress of the more able pupils in top sets, is hindered by a lack of challenge. However, pupils of lower ability benefit from focused learning opportunities and the systematic teaching of skills. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. This establishes a good climate for learning, in which pupils behave well. The best teaching gives pupils the opportunity to develop speaking, reading and writing in a co-ordinated way. For instance, when learning about non-chronological writing in Year 5, very good questioning skills enable pupils to answer questions after due consideration. This leads to a development of appropriate vocabulary to employ in the task. Results of research are then entered onto a computer program and on screen editing of a wide range of subjects, takes place. The lesson ends with a plenary session, which consolidates and extends previous learning. This lesson format is used by most teachers and usually a brisk pace is maintained. Teaching is most effective, when teachers have high expectations. Teaching is less successful, when the timing of lessons goes awry or they are not planned with a plenary session, and opportunities to assess understanding are lost. On other occasions, teachers rely on published materials, which do not match accurately the needs of all pupils. More care is

needed, in such cases, to plan lessons with the pupils, not the text books, in mind. The quality of marking varies. In the profile books it is very good and effective. Sometimes marking does not focus on ways to improve and, on occasion, is abrasive in tone, which does not encourage self-esteem.

79. The subject co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject in the school. She has produced an action plan, designed to meet the school's needs. She has a clear vision for the future development of the subject. Teaching has been monitored and teachers have received feedback, which has improved performance. Assessment data is used to set targets for individuals and year groups. The school meets and exceeds its long-term targets. Ongoing assessment could be better used to target specific groups of pupils in lessons. Plans are regularly checked for accurate coverage of the curriculum. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop the library, and has been greatly helped by a volunteer parent. Book resources are now better, although the intention is for continued improvement.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. The inspection evidence found the attainment of the current Year 2 classes to be below average due, in part, to the higher number of children with special educational needs in this year group. The number of children achieving the higher Level 3 at the age of seven is below average. The inspection identified a lack of challenge for the more able pupils during some lessons in Year 2 and this group of pupils are not achieving as well as they should. By the end of Year 6 standards are above average when compared to all schools and average when compared with similar schools. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The number of children achieving the higher Level 5 at the age of eleven is above average. Boys achieve slightly higher standards than girls. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school.
81. Since the last inspection the school has adopted a setting system and increased the number of teaching groups to enable teaching in single age group sets from Year 3 to Year 6. Due to the limitations of the accommodation there are still mixed Year 5 / 6 sets. The teachers use assessment data to place pupils in the set most appropriate to their age and ability. These setting arrangements, combined with the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, have made a significant contribution to the increase in standards by the age of eleven.
82. By the age of seven pupils use their knowledge of place value to order two-digit numbers. They use a range of calculation strategies for addition and subtraction, for example they can add three or four single digit numbers by looking for pairs that make 10 and they know how to find the difference between a number and a two-digit multiple of ten by counting on. Pupils recognise odd and even numbers to 30 and most can solve simple word problems involving money. They recognise halves and quarters of simple shapes, higher attaining pupils can identify three quarters. Almost all pupils recognise reflective symmetry in a vertical mirror line, the higher attaining pupils can recognise symmetry in two planes.
83. By the age of eleven pupils can round numbers to the nearest 10, 100 or 1000. They can multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10, 100 and 1000 and find the difference between a pair of numbers to one decimal place. They can identify the mode, mean median and range of a set of data and most know how to find simple percentages of amounts. The majority of pupils make good use of their mathematical knowledge in order to solve a variety of open-ended problems. The higher attaining pupils can multiply and divide a three-digit number by a two-digit number.

84. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection ranged from very good to unsatisfactory and is judged to be satisfactory overall. Twelve lessons were observed. A third of the teaching was good or very good, two unsatisfactory lessons were observed. In the best lessons the learning objectives were shared with pupils in language meaningful to them so that they were clear about what they were going to learn. In one very good lesson in Year 6, led by the mathematics co-ordinator, the oral and mental starter was based on the curricular target she has set for the pupils this half term. Her effective questioning and use of a counting stick to provide a good visual model ensured that the pupils made good progress towards their target of being able to express equivalent measurements in metric units. Where teaching is good all pupils are actively involved in each part of the lesson. An example of this was seen in a Year 2 lesson where the teacher skilfully kept all pupils involved throughout his teaching input on buying and giving change by asking questions which they had to answer by writing their response on a whiteboard and holding it up to show him. This allowed the teacher to make assessments of what the children had understood and gave the opportunity to use errors as teaching points. In successful lessons additional adults are used well to provide support to pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language. A good example was observed in a set of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils where the additional adult was used for a part of the lesson to work with a pupil whose individual education plan target was to know his number bonds to 10. In a Year 4 lesson an additional adult provided good language support to a pupil who was mathematically able but whose English was not well developed. In the best lessons teachers continue to provide targeted teaching to a group following their teaching input to the whole class. A good example of this was seen in a Year 6 lesson where the teacher provided focused teaching to the more able pupils on multiplying decimals with two-decimal places by two-digit numbers while the rest of the class worked on multiplication of decimals by single digit numbers. Teachers show in their use of language, explanations and careful questioning that they have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics. For example in a Year 2 lesson on symmetry the teacher made clear to the pupils that the image is the same distance behind the mirror as the original is in front of it. She modelled this very effectively in her teaching input and as a result pupils were meticulously accurate when making their own symmetrical patterns with a variety of objects. There is a whole school approach that ensures that teachers identify the learning objectives in their lesson plans. These are displayed for the pupils to refer to throughout the lesson. In most classes this is working well. The teachers build successfully on previous work and the pupils make good progress during lessons. In all the lessons observed the pupils demonstrated enthusiasm for mathematics and their behaviour was good.
85. In less successful lessons the learning objectives were not shared with the pupils and the teacher wandered from group to group with no clear focus following the teaching input to the whole class. Expectations of pupils, particularly the more able pupils, were too low in some lessons. In Year 2 one of the higher attaining boys was asked to find change to 50p during a lesson on money but on questioning he was able to find change to multiples of £5 up to £20. Scrutiny of Year 2 work also found evidence of insufficient challenge for the more able pupils. More able pupils were under challenged in a Year 4 lesson on division. Teachers sometimes make differentiation over complex leading to pupils being unclear of what is expected of them. In a Year 3 lesson on solving word problems the teacher planned to work with a group but was interrupted by a steady flow of pupils who needed clarification of what they were to do which had a negative impact on the quality of learning taking place. Poor time management in one of the unsatisfactory lessons led to pupils having insufficient time to do the activities planned. In both the unsatisfactory lessons observed no plenary took place therefore the teachers were unable to summarise the key learning points or assess what pupils had understood.

86. The mathematics co-ordinator, although new to the post, provides very good leadership for the subject. She is an exemplar of good classroom practice and has a good overview of standards across the school. She has produced a clear action plan for mathematics. The inspection evidence confirmed the strengths and areas for development identified by the co-ordinator following her recent monitoring of teaching and joint scrutiny of work with the Headteacher. Curricular target setting has been introduced recently with all teachers identifying a curricular target for their mathematics set each half term. The mathematics co-ordinator has plans to review the impact of this new system and she has good ideas on how it could be developed. The school should consider the most effective way of sharing curricular targets with parents and what advice they can offer them on supporting learning at home.
87. Procedures for medium-term assessment are consistent across the school and assessment is used to inform planning. The quality of marking is variable with the best marking giving pupils clear guidance on what is good about their work and how it might be improved further. Less effective marking is restricted to very short comments such as “Good” or “Well Done”. Some marking in one of the Year 5 / Year 6 sets is inappropriately critical in tone.
88. Although the scrutiny of work reveals some instances where pupils are beginning to understand the application of mathematics in everyday life, across the school, practical and investigative work is not strongly represented in pupils’ work. In order to secure further improvements in standards at the age of seven and eleven there needs to be greater coverage of the using and applying aspects of the mathematics National Curriculum.

## SCIENCE

89. The standards of work seen during the inspection are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement from the last inspection. More able pupils in the infants could do better if the work was more challenging and this is borne out by the teacher assessments in the 2002 tests. The pupils with special needs and those who are at early stage of learning English make good progress throughout the school.
90. Year 1 pupils have the knowledge to label parts of the body. They sequence the life cycle of a butterfly and know light ‘bounces’ back from a surface and this is better if the surface is shiny. They classify living and non living things and identify less obvious sources of light such as traffic lights, lighthouses and fairy lights. They use charts and diagrams to support the recording of this work. In Year 2 pupils identify foods which help us to grow such as yoghurt or cheese, food which gives us energy such as bread and biscuits and food which keeps us healthy such as fruit. They know oil is the best surface for sliding and fur the worst. They put these results in graph form. In Years 3 and 4 pupils predict how long it will take for a jelly to dissolve and then compare results using different factors such as more or less water, hot and cold water. They understand solubility and can explain the principles behind a suspension. They pose questions for investigation such as ‘do dandelions have long or short roots?’ In Years 5 and 6 pupils designed a balanced meal with carbohydrates, proteins and vitamins. They provide explanations for the relationship between the size of a shadow and the distance from the source of light or screen. They can draw the lines of reflection within a periscope and know sound can travel through several materials. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 understand the need for a fair test and the term ‘different factors’. They attempt to predict and hypothesise.
91. The teaching is good overall in the infants. Where the teaching is particularly effective, the pupils are kept busy with a wide range of stimulating activities. In Year 1 the breadth and depth of work is very impressive as is the range of recording strategies and level of independent recording. The curriculum is broad and varied and links well with other curriculum subjects. The module about healthy living is extended to include exercise in

physical education whilst work on light links well with a study of candles in churches, at Christmas or on birthdays in religious, personal and social education. Robots are made in art which have reflective shiny or dull silver foil surfaces. Learning is less effective, however, when teachers have insecure subject knowledge and learning objectives lack clarity, resulting in confused delivery. Investigations and challenges are part of many lessons, though occasionally, these are too teacher directed. There is not planned, challenging work for the more able pupils, however, and these underachieve.

92. In the junior classes the teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. There are many opportunities for pupils to carry out experiments such as 'does sugar dissolve faster in warm or cold water?' or 'does the length of wire affect the lightness of a light bulb? Whilst this teaching is effective in furthering pupils' knowledge and providing a clear acquisition of skills, much of their investigation work is too heavily teacher directed. In some lessons pupils do not work at their own pace but have to wait for the whole class to finish each stage before continuing. The pupils are rarely set opportunities to solve problems by themselves, devise their own experiments or select their own materials. Virtually all work in Years 5 and 6 is work sheet based with very little independent recording. There are no interactive science displays which pose questions or provide pupils with opportunities to handle and investigate artefacts or apparatus. The teachers have good subject knowledge and deliver the learning objectives briskly and with clarity. Skills such as learning to use thermometers accurately are taught well. There are sufficient resources for all pupils to be involved in practical work. Where teaching is very good the pupils are set challenging open-ended tasks which encourage the development of their questioning and deductive skills. Teachers help pupils draw out clear conclusions such as maximum energy gives a loud sound and minimum energy results in a soft sound. Exciting visual stimuli are used such as light projected from a pinhole and through smoke from a joss stick. This intrigues the pupils and enables them to see that light travels in a straight line. The teachers build effectively on pupils' previous knowledge thus ensuring they can see a development in their own learning.
93. The Co-ordination of the subject needs to be further developed. There is no clear action plan or vision for the future, and monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching across the school does not take place. There is little training planned for staff, although support is available if requested. There is no consistent approach to assessment. Individual teachers may devise their own assessment systems to give them information about how well pupils understand each area of learning. They are not measured against curriculum levels, however, and no rigorous targets are set each year to measure pupils' attainment against national criteria. There is a lack of informative marking to help pupils further their learning.
94. As yet there is little ICT used to further scientific knowledge other than *Colour Magic* pictures of rockets or squashy potatoes in the infants. Resources are adequate. The Kinetic and Quantum Science Theatre Companies visit the school and there are two separate day trips by older pupils to the Forestry Commission environmental centre at Cannock Chase. Here they can track animals, find evidence of food pyramids or make a study of mini beasts. The school grounds are being developed and offer areas for further environmental study.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

95. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection. One of these, in Year 2, was an introduction to a course of study and concentrated on a video programme. The other, in Years 3/4, took place in unsuitable conditions, which made teaching and learning very difficult. Judgements, therefore, are based on a scrutiny of completed work and discussions with teachers and pupils. The quality of work displayed in Years 1 and 2 indicate that standards are above average by the end of Year 2. The pupils follow a comprehensive programme of work, which systematically develops their skills. All pupils have access to the subject and progress is good. The art curriculum in the juniors is delivered on a two-year

cycle and, because of the way it is organised, does not provide a progressive programme with a full range of experiences. The quality of work achieved is good, but it is too narrow in range and overall standards are average.

96. The quality of work on display in Years 1 and 2 is good. The pupils in Year 1 follow a careful and systematic approach to weaving and produce good examples in paper and fabric. A large piece displayed 'like an African rug' is particularly impressive. Pupils show good scissor control and develop a good understanding of colour and texture. Equally, experiences in tie-dye show a good sense of colour and technique. Very good natural sculptures are produced, using clay, sticks and fabric. This gives pupils an insight into the possibilities of using the environment to provide a range of media. Work groups are named after artists, so pupils become familiar with Renoir, Warhol, Mondrian and Picasso, among others. Information technology is also used well as pupils produce space pictures, using an art program. By year 2, drawings in chalk show improvements in the control of media, as pupils draw artefacts. Ongoing work in the style of Van Gogh demonstrates an increasing awareness of the power of mixed media to recreate vibrant and bold paintings. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of artists is good, as they compare a work by Breugel with one by Van Gogh. Pupils continue to work in different media, such as ink marbling and printing in Years 3/4. A particularly good example of a mural in the style of Georges Seurat has been completed. However, the distribution of the time allocated over the two-year cycle makes it difficult to build accurately on skills already acquired. This is further compounded in Years 5/6, when even less time is allocated. Consequently, although very good standards are achieved in, for instance, paintings in the style of L.S. Lowry, which are accompanied by good critical writing, there are too few opportunities for a wide range of experiences.
97. The quality of work displayed in Years 1 and 2 indicate that teaching is good, and that teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the subject. A good programme of work is planned and delivered, which is instrumental in raising standards. Teaching was good in the lesson observed, as the teacher made good use of pupils' earlier experiences to introduce new work. She made relevant comparisons between the techniques used in Breugal's 'Children's Games' and Van Gough's 'Starry Night' as a prelude to pupils painting in the style of Van Gogh. In this way pupils' powers of observation improve and they learn to use appropriate language. The teacher in the Year 3/4 class had to overcome great difficulties to deliver a satisfactory lesson. The room is too small and cramped, making access to materials very awkward. Nevertheless, she successfully taught colour mixing and the application of a colour wash in preparation for underwater collages. The constraints of the classroom and the ambitious nature of the plan meant that some pupils did not receive the help they needed to develop their oil pastel pictures. Works of real artists were used successfully as a stimulus, in this case Hockney's 'A Bigger Splash' and Van Gogh's 'A Seascape.' The quality of work displayed in Year 6 shows that the techniques taught are taught well. The use of sketchbooks is good and they are being increasingly used to experiment and plan future work.
98. The co-ordinator has a very clear sense of direction for the future. She has a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, and the strengths and weaknesses in the school. She has successfully organised the infant curriculum using national guidelines. To develop the subject further, she needs to evaluate the curriculum in the juniors and the allocation and balance of time, so that a wider range of experiences may be progressively built upon. Visits to art galleries are making a positive impact on pupils knowledge and understanding of artists and their work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

99. Standards in design and technology are above average by the end of Year 2, but below average by the end of Year 6. This decline in standards is largely due to the way the subject is organised for the older pupils. Too little time is spent in Years 5 and 6 to allow a sustained and progressive development in the subject. There is too great a time lapse between periods of study for teachers and pupils to build accurately on what has gone before. All pupils have access to the subject.
100. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, so judgements are based on observations of completed work, a scrutiny of plans and discussions with pupils and teachers. The quality of work displayed in Years 1 and 2 show that pupils learn a systematic development of skills and knowledge, which they apply in new situations. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to complete the design and make process. They follow up initial plans with mock-up patterns. These are evaluated and modified, so that eventually good quality articles are produced. This is best exemplified in the puppets made to enact fairy tales. No evidence exists of recent work in Years 5 and 6, apart from one model of a Greek urn, produced during art lessons, but which did have a design component. This was of acceptable quality. Year 6 pupils recall experiences they have had, and talk enthusiastically about the subject. They describe the step-by-step process that they follow under the teacher's direction, when making a Tudor house. It is evident, however, that pupils' knowledge and understanding of design briefs is unsatisfactory. They have not experienced solving problems and managing their own learning sufficiently, to make them independent workers. It is such a long time since they engaged in the subject that their recall of materials used is limited. Some control technology has been introduced to the curriculum, but it is in the early stages of development.
101. Teaching in the lesson seen, in Year 1, was good. The pupils are carefully and systematically taught the skills necessary to make a well-finished product. In this lesson, very good use was made of classroom assistants and volunteer parents. Two classes combined and the expertise of each teacher was well utilised, which included the provision of exemplar models. All groups had an adult helper to assist them in designing and making a prototype of a moveable picture, linked to the story of Neil Armstrong. Pupils understood that their pictures would eventually be made into a book. The lesson was challenging and rigorous and resulted in finished articles of good quality. A weakness in the lesson was the domination of adults during the feedback session, which gave the pupils little chance to consolidate their understanding by talking.
102. The subject leader has carried out an audit of the subject and is aware of the need to re-organise the way it is taught in the juniors, so that pupils are taught a systematic and progressive curriculum. Work has been done in the infants and good use has been made of national guidelines.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

103. At the time of the last inspection standards at the end of Year2 were average; these standards have been maintained. Standards at the end of Year 6 were below average but are now average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. There is no difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls at the age of seven or eleven. The inspection judgements are based on analysis of the curriculum planning, scrutiny of the small amount of work available due to the stage in the planning cycle, discussions with pupils from Years 3 and 6 and work on display around the school. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection.
104. Standards attained by older pupils at the time of the last inspection were below average due to pupils' unsatisfactory knowledge of geographical vocabulary, other locations in the United

Kingdom and knowledge of physical aspects of the world. The school has addressed these issues by ensuring that long and medium term plans are in place to ensure coverage of the curriculum. The plans form a two-year rolling programme with medium term planning being evaluated and amended as appropriate each time a particular unit of work is delivered.

105. In Year 1 pupils learn about places within and beyond the United Kingdom by following the travels of Barnaby Bear which they plot on maps at various scales. Through this they develop awareness that the places he visits have their own distinctive character and that the landscape and weather are different in each. In Year 2, the teacher's planning shows that pupils learn about the local area and learn to identify the differences between their own locality and a contrasting one. They consider what they like about the local area, what could be improved and how this might be achieved. They are taught how the local environment is changing.
106. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have studied the course of the River Severn and they can use appropriate geographical vocabulary to describe how the course of the river changes from its source in The Cambrian Mountains to the estuary in the Bristol Channel. The higher attaining pupils can describe accurately how meanders are formed. Pupils' knowledge of physical geography and their use of geographical vocabulary have improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Pupils of all abilities in Year 3 are able to use the Dewey system effectively to find non-fiction books and atlases in the library in order to support their geographical enquiry, they use the contents pages well but only the higher attaining pupils make use of the index pages to locate specific information.
107. By the end of Year 6 pupils are able to describe the basic characteristics of Lichfield, which they studied in Years 3 and 4 however, they are not as enthusiastic or knowledgeable as they are about the History topics they have studied. They describe Lichfield as being a "big" place but are unclear about why this settlement grew to be the city is it today or how and why it is changing. They are due to study St. Lucia in the summer term therefore it was not possible to ascertain their ability to compare and contrast Litchfield and St.Lucia during the inspection.
108. From the scrutiny of work the overall quality of the teaching in geography is satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and some good quality activities were observed during a lesson on rivers with Years 3 and 4. The quality of written work pupils produce is variable. Teacher expectations of the quality of finished work should be higher than they are at present.
109. In order to raise standards the geography co-ordinator should lead a review of the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils are expected to learn from each place study in Years 1 to 6. The impact of the learning activities pupils take part in during the study of places also needs to be evaluated as, currently, the pupils do not retain much of what they have learnt about places. More opportunities to undertake fieldwork need to be planned into the curriculum. The geography co-ordinator has not undertaken any recent monitoring of teaching or pupils' work; this should form part of the review of the curriculum. There are no agreed procedures for the assessment of knowledge, skills and understanding in geography.

## **HISTORY**

110. At the time of the last inspection standards were average by the end of Year 2 and remain similar. Standards by the end of Year 6 have risen and are now above average. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported as are those with English as an additional language and they make

good progress. Pupils' research skills have developed well since the last inspection and by the age of eleven they know how and where to find information. The inspection judgements are based on the three lessons in Years 1 and 2 observed during the inspection, scrutiny of work, discussion with pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 and work on display around the school. Due to the position in the planning cycle it was not possible to observe teaching in Years 3 to 6 during the inspection.

111. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils' work folders contain a limited amount of recorded work. This is because much of the learning involves discussion of pupils' ideas and observations about the past through the use of stories, non-fiction text, drama, videos or the use of historical artefacts. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about some famous people from the past including Guy Fawkes and Grace Darling. Pupils of different abilities talk enthusiastically about Guy Fawkes and have a satisfactory knowledge of the Gunpowder Plot. They know why Guy Fawkes wanted to blow up Parliament and describe in detail what happened to him when he was caught but even the above average pupils have not retained specific information such as the year the Gunpowder Plot took place. They are, however, able to find this information by referring to the timeline that has been built up in their classroom.
112. Three lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection. The quality of teaching ranged from very good to satisfactory. Very good teaching was characterised by varied and imaginative use of resources and teaching techniques. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on Neil Armstrong, two teachers worked well together and made use of a video showing the moon landing. Through careful questioning they were able to draw out from the pupils how Neil Armstrong might have felt as he was about to become the first person to set foot on the moon. One of the pupils was dressed as Neil Armstrong using pillows, boots and a rucksack which was successful in modelling how difficult it was to walk on the moon wearing a protective space suit. The pupils went on to work together in groups of five to produce a short piece of drama of the moon landing. They co-operated extremely well together and, as a result of the stimulating teaching input, made good progress in communicating their ideas through drama. In a follow up lesson the pupils demonstrated their awareness of the benefits space exploration has brought, for example the use of satellites to send television signals and to track weather. Teachers in Year 1 matched the work well to the pupils' abilities.
113. By the end of Year 6 the pupils have a very good understanding of Britain since the 1930's and talk enthusiastically about this period in history. They use different sources of evidence including non-fiction texts, artefacts, photographs and stories to find out about life in Britain during World War II. The pupils' personal research skills are developed through their independent study of an aspect of life in Britain since the 1930s. One classroom contained a good display of artefacts but there were few examples of questions to stimulate pupils thinking about what they were or what they might have been used for. Pupils know about life in Ancient Greece and that this is where the Olympic Games started. They are able to describe the influence of Ancient Greece on life today and they can identify words and prefixes which have their origin in Ancient Greece. They talk with confidence about the discoveries of the mathematician Pythagoras.
114. The presentation of written work produced in Year 6 varies in quality; even the work produced by higher attaining pupils is at best satisfactory. Teacher expectations of the quality and quantity of finished work should be higher than they are at present. The way the pupils' work is collated in topic folders could be improved so that they better develop a sense of pride in their written work.
115. Planning for history is satisfactory. To ensure coverage of all the elements of the history curriculum, units of work are allocated to year groups and planned into a two-year cycle of

topics. The History co-ordinator, who has only recently taken up the role, has enormous enthusiasm. She has ensured that the school library is well stocked with non-fiction books relating to each of the history topics studied. She has advised staff on the availability of boxes of artefacts available from the LEA relating to the history topics and wants to do some developmental work with teachers on getting the most out of artefacts and the internet in order to teach history. No monitoring of teaching or work scrutiny has taken place recently. Despite the good progress in the teaching of historical enquiry skills since the last inspection there is currently no agreed procedure for the assessment of such skills.

116. The curriculum is enriched by a good variety of visits to museums and visiting theatre companies. The Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 coincided with the school's own Silver Jubilee, and good use was made of these events to look at aspects of local history.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

117. The school has made a significant investment in ICT since the last inspection and has converted two courtyards into a large and a small computer suite. There is also access to a computer in most classrooms. The co-ordinator leads the subject particularly well and has the expertise to provide a good level of advice and guidance to her colleagues. She has written guidance for staff and all of the teachers have completed their ICT training. They are competent users of computers and confident about teaching the subject. A comprehensive programme of work is in place across the school and the pupils are acquiring skills progressively year-on-year.
118. By the end of Year 2, the pupils reach standards that are in line with those expected of seven-year-olds. By the end of Year 6 the standards have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with those expected of eleven-year-olds.
119. In the infants, the pupils have good mouse and keyboard skills. They are able to use word processing skills to create short pieces of text and use a colour graphics program to draw pictures on a screen. In the topic *Ourselves* they add text to a document containing their own scanned photograph. The work in Year 2 builds progressively on what has been learnt in Year 1. The teachers provide opportunities in science for the pupils to select pictures that sequence the life cycle of a caterpillar. Links are established with other subjects when pupils are taught to order the months of the year and to display the outcomes of a food survey in a block graph. This cross-curricular work is very effective in teaching the pupils skills such as dragging techniques as they move pictures and text-boxes to other locations. They are able to open programs such as *Clip Art* and are learning to use simple illustrations in their work.
120. The levels of work seen in Years 3, 4 and 5 are appropriate for the ages of the pupils. The pupils' word processing skills are developing well. All classes use the computer suite at least once in a week and the scrutiny of their work indicates that they are making good progress. The pupils have a good understanding of how a CD Rom works and are able to search on the internet for information using key words, files and menus to access the information. They can research web-sites to evaluate the quality of information that is provided. Although the use of computers to support the work in other subjects is still developing the pupils improve their historical understanding and compile information about the *Egyptians* and the *Second World War*. A *Tiles* program is used effectively by Year 4 pupils to consolidate their understanding of regular and irregular polygons. The pupils are taught to load programs that they have previously saved and can close them down when they have finished. They learn to use the keyboard and mouse with control and understanding, and can use both right and left *click* commands on the mouse. By the time they leave the school the pupils can use a publishing program to produce a newspaper setting out the text in two columns. They are

sufficiently skilled to add illustrations. Year 6 pupils use *Talking First Word* to compose biographies of their grandparents and use digital cameras to include appropriate photographs.

121. Four lessons were observed during the inspection and overall the quality of teaching was satisfactory. The teachers managed the pupils well and they generally learned effectively during the lesson although the time allocated to classes during the *circus* sessions in the juniors is too short and the pupils often do not complete the work that has been set. The best teaching was observed when a Year 5 literacy group was taught to improve their writing of non-chronological texts. Having carried out some initial research in the library the pupils then worked in twos and used *Power-point* to devise slides containing information about their chosen theme. The pupils improved their ICT skills during the lesson but also made very good progress in varying the start of sentences to make their writing more interesting.
122. There are areas for further development and these have also been identified by the subject leader. Computers could be used more to support the work in other subjects, particularly mathematics and science and school needs to identify links with other subjects in its cross curricular planning. Control devices do not feature much in the school's work and control technology and the links with design technology are underdeveloped. However, the capacity for improvement in the subject is very good and the subject leader ensures that the teachers plan progressively more demanding work and are able to make the best use of the equipment available to them.

## MUSIC

123. Standards in music are at the expected level by the end of Year 2 and above the expected level at the end of Year 6.
124. In the infants all pupils achieve satisfactorily. The very good quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 ensures that pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school. The pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included in all aspects of the music curriculum and make progress in line with the rest of their classmates. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.
125. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing in tune, show sound understanding of rhythm and compose and play tunes using symbols. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have built well on the skills they have acquired earlier. They sing satisfactorily in whole school situations and particularly well in group sessions with the music teacher. Particular attention is paid to rhythm and phrasing, for example when singing songs from the Nineteen-Sixties. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of creating music and following a graphic score. They show good skills when creating a musical accompaniment to the poem 'Space Journey'. Pupils listen to and appraise music, for example in Year 3 and 4 when they write about 'Fingals Cave' by Mendelssohn.
126. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There is very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 and as a result pupils make very good progress and achieve well. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. A music specialist teaches Years 5 and 6, the lessons are very well planned and challenge the pupils, for example when composing musical accompaniments to poems. The music chosen to set the mood in a Year 6 lesson, 'Sprach Zarathustra' by Richard Strauss, was very effective and gave the pupils a very good spiritual and musical experience. In all lessons teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond very well to this. Pupils are challenged in lessons, for example in Year 2 pupils not only had to compose a piece of music using symbols but then had to ensure that the instrument they chose was suitable for playing the composition. Occasionally teachers make the tasks a little difficult for a minority of the pupils and subject knowledge is only just

satisfactory. Pupils enjoy music, they respond well both in lessons and in the hall for collective worship and song practice. When playing in groups they listen to each other well.

127. Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils are given many opportunities to listen to and reflect on music both in lessons and at the start of collective worship: there are missed opportunities to develop this even further by having a short period of musical reflection before pupils leave the hall. The pupils have opportunities to play together in groups within lessons and older pupils have an opportunity to join the very good recorder group. There are opportunities to study music from around the world. Speaking and listening skills and reading are effectively developed in music. The use of information and communications technology is limited and requires further development. This has been recognised by the subject manager and is one of her targets for improving the subject. Visiting musicians and opportunities to take part in the local recorder festival have a positive effect on developing musical skills.
128. There is good management of the subject. The co-ordinator is keen to raise standards and in the past has monitored teaching and learning in the classrooms. The school has acknowledged that the present timetable arrangements mean that some groups receive a relatively short time in actual music lessons and as a result the teaching of musical skills is not fully secure. The school partly addresses this issue by including music in other elements of the curriculum, for example in art and aspects of geography: responding to rivers. There are satisfactory assessment procedures in place but these have not yet been fully monitored to gauge the impact on learning. A small number of pupils develop their musical skills by learning the violin with a visiting teacher.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. During the inspection it was only possible to observe games in the infants and dance and gymnastics in the juniors. The evidence from these lessons, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and conversations with the pupils and the subject leader indicates that physical education has a secure place in the curriculum. The pupils are provided with a broad and balanced physical education curriculum that includes dance, gymnastics and games. Pupils also have swimming lessons and all Year 5 and 6 pupils have the opportunity to swim on a fortnightly basis. This amounts to the equivalent of half a year's programme of swimming. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs are given equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of the physical education curriculum.
130. Although it is not possible to judge the standards in gymnastics and dance in the infants there is good provision for games which was judged to be a weakness at the time of the last inspection and the pupils attain standards that are expected of seven year olds in this aspect of their physical education. By the end of Year 6 the pupils achieve standards that are above those expected of eleven-year-olds in dance and swimming; they achieve standards that are in line in gymnastics. The provision for games is very good but the limited use of apparatus in gymnastics restricts the pupils' progress and the standards that they achieve. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls. Overall the standards are higher than those found at the time of the last inspection. All of the necessary elements of the National Curriculum are systematically taught. Indoor and outdoor resources are good.
131. The teaching observed in the lessons was very good overall and ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Teachers planned their lessons thoroughly. They had clear learning objectives and high expectations. They managed the lessons well and a good standard of behaviour was maintained. In the infants the pupils worked enthusiastically in the games lessons, for example in Year 1 when the pupils improve their ball skills by practising kicking each side of a target. When the teacher introduces an element of competition into the activities they help each other to increase the accuracy and the number of *shots* at the target. The pupils are

taught different techniques and by the end of the lesson they make good progress in acquiring the skill of kicking with instep and side of the feet. A good feature is the imagination displayed by the teachers in making the warm up activities amusing for the pupils through games such as the *Planets*.

132. The dance lessons observed in the juniors were a joy to watch. The pupils enjoyed the lessons immensely and the teaching was of a very high standard. They demonstrated a great awareness of space, remembered movements from previous lessons and were totally committed throughout the lessons. Both the teacher and the teaching assistant demonstrated the different stepping sequences and other moves so that the pupils learned quickly to compose sequences. The themes of lessons are built around the topics that are covered such as *Britain from the Nineteen-Thirties* and the pupils learn dances from a variety of ethnic origins as well as folk, modern and creative dance.
133. There is a comprehensive programme of work in gymnastics in the juniors. In the lessons observed the teaching was good and the pupils used their evident skills in changing pace and direction when running and using different parts of the body when exploring ways to link a sequence of balances together. They make good progress in these floor movements. However, too little time is provided by the *circus* timetable and the teachers are unable to extend the work in the first part of the lesson to work on the apparatus. The pupils miss this challenging and enjoyable element of the PE programme.
134. The pupils co-operate well with each in other showing a good standard of self-discipline. At the start of lessons they revealed a good understanding of how warm-up exercises should be used to prepare them for vigorous exercise; they showed a good awareness of safety. They worked well together, had very good attitudes to learning and behaved particularly well. Records indicate that by the time they leave school, around ninety percent of the pupils are able to swim 25 metres.
135. There is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities including football, rugby, netball, hockey, cricket, rounders, cross-country and athletics. The pupils have received football coaching. These activities effectively provide support for the subject, enrich the physical education curriculum and extend the pupils' learning. The subject is well led by a co-ordinator who is aware of the shortcomings in gymnastics. The scheme of work for the subject is to be reviewed along with the time allocated to gymnastics in the juniors.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

136. Standards of attainment in religious education by the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily. The school has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection by maintaining satisfactory standards.
137. The programmes of study for religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of year 2, the pupils understand how different occasions are celebrated both concerning themselves and others, for example birthdays, weddings, Christmas and harvest. They know that there are special people and special books such as the bible. All of the pupils gain a sound knowledge of a number of stories from different faiths, they are able to retell the stories and the most able pupils can relate the moral of the stories to their own lives and experiences. The pupils have a simple understanding of the creation story and a good knowledge and understanding of the Christian church. This is very well reinforced by a visit to a local church and a very good classroom display.

138. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have built on the knowledge they have acquired earlier and show sound knowledge of the main features of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism. They compare and contrast the faith groups, for example when talking about rules they mention the 'Ten Commandments' and the 'Five Pillars of Islam'. Pupils understand that there are differences both within and between religious faiths. They identify major faith leaders including Jesus, Mohammed and Guru Nanek. Pupils talk about different religions in lessons but there are too few opportunities to learn how people put their religious beliefs in to practice, for example Ghandi and Mother Theresa.
139. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to study the major world religions. In Key Stage 1, displays are used effectively to reinforce learning. Artefacts are used effectively to develop learning, for example in a Year 1 lesson on Christian artefacts and symbols. Planning for lessons is good, but occasionally there are no extension activities for pupils who complete their work earlier than expected. The development of literacy skills in religious education is inconsistent. Older pupils have too few opportunities to research and write about the topics being studied. Marking, although positive does little to develop learning. Very good use is made of pupils who belong to faiths being studied. Pupils in Year 6 talk very enthusiastically about a fellow pupil who has given them a very good insight into the Islamic faith. Teachers do not make sufficient use of information and communications technology in the subject. Pupils enjoy religious education. They show good attitudes to the subject and older pupils are eager to talk about the faiths they have studied.
140. Religious education makes a very good contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have opportunities to study the world's major faiths and learn about their customs and rites. There are opportunities to visit places of worship, visitors from different faiths visit school and pupils are encouraged to write prayers and think about major events.
141. The headteacher has oversight of the subject and a newly qualified teacher is to take over at the start of the next year. She is keen to ensure standards rise and has already attended courses to prepare her for the role. The systems for assessment are not fully in place and as a result step-by-step skill development is not guaranteed as pupils move through the school. This has been recognised by the school and action is being taken to address the matter.