

INSPECTION REPORT

CRONEHILLS PRIMARY SCHOOL

West Bromwich

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103923

Headteacher: Mr K Shilton

Lead inspector: Mrs L Murphy

Dates of inspection: 14th – 16th June 2004

Inspection number: 255922

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	296
School address:	Hardware Street West Bromwich West Midlands
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Fellows
Date of previous inspection:	July 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Cronehills Primary School is larger than most primary schools. It is situated very near to the town centre of West Bromwich, adjacent to major roadways and serves a socially and economically disadvantaged area. The pupils' attainment when they start school is low. The pupils are from a wide range of heritages, the main ones represented being White British, Asian or Asian British-Indian and Black or Black British Caribbean. A few of the pupils are asylum seekers. Twenty per cent of the pupils receive support in learning to speak English as an additional language. Over a third of the pupils in Year 6 have transferred from other schools including schools from overseas.

Twenty one per cent of the pupils have special educational needs which is well above average. These pupils are receiving support for social, emotional and moderate and severe learning needs. The school provides enhanced learning provision for pupils in the local education authority who have specific speech and language learning needs. At the time of the last inspection, these pupils were taught in a separate class. Now they are fully integrated into the mainstream classes. Nineteen of the pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need which is high when compared nationally. Finance has been secured for a new building planned for 2006.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16173	Mrs L Murphy	Lead inspector	Science and art and design
32661	Mr P Hopkins	Lay inspector	
19916	Mrs D Kerr	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, music and religious education
29426	Mr D Grimwood	Team inspector	Mathematics, history, physical education and special educational needs
21171	Ms S Handford	Team inspector	English, citizenship, design and technology and English as an additional language
14573	Mr H Wareing	Team inspector	Information and communication technology and geography

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education and sound value for money. Standards are well below average by the end of Year 6 and lower than at the last inspection. The school has a much bigger gap to bridge than previously, because the pupils' attainment on entry has fallen. The school has integrated the significant number of pupils with severe learning difficulties into the mainstream classes well but this has depressed standards when compared nationally. However, the pupils make good progress in lessons because good teaching is inclusive of all pupils and the school is well led and managed. Effective governance underpins these beneficial aspects. Staffing difficulties have been a barrier to improvement because the pupils' teaching and learning has been interrupted over time. As a result at the end of Year 6 the pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- at the end of Year 2 the pupils, including those who have special educational needs, those learning English as an additional language and those from the range of heritages represented at the school achieve well; at the end of Year 6 achievement is sound;
- standards are well below the national average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology at the end of Year 6;
- good teamwork ensures effective teaching and learning;
- the pupils behave well and have good attitudes, because of the good provision for their social and moral development and the good care they receive; the school fully includes all the pupils;
- the rate of the pupils' attendance and their punctuality are unsatisfactory; and
- assessment for learning in subjects other than English and mathematics is under-developed.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The key issues have been successfully addressed though standards have not risen because of the above factors. Importantly, other than in music, the pupils' achievement has improved. Good improvements have also been made in teaching, learning, the care and welfare of the pupils and the leadership and management.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	E	C	A
mathematics	E	E	E	E
science	E	E	E	C

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

The pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving:

- children at the end of the Reception Year achieve well. They make good gains from the low level on entry to the school but are likely to attain at a level well below the goals children are expected to reach at the end of the Reception Year. In personal and physical development standards are on course to be below those typically expected; no judgement was made in creative development;
- pupils achieve well at the end of Year 2. Achievement is satisfactory at the end of Year 6;
- pupils learning English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates;
- standards at the end of Year 2 are well below average in reading, writing and information and communication technology; and below average in mathematics;
- at the end of Year 6 standards are: well below average in English, mathematics and science; well below expected levels in information and communication technology and

music; broadly typical for the pupils' ages in religious education and history; below the level expected in design and technology and geography; and no judgement was made in art and design and physical education.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The pupils have good attitudes to school and behave well in lessons and around the school. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Though **teaching and learning are good** it is only comparatively recently that this effective level has been established; assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics has yet to be fully tackled. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage, and in English, mathematics and religious education. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour so that the pupils can get on with their work. Teaching assistants provide a very good level of support to the teaching and learning. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and this promotes the good gains that the pupils make in their learning.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. Satisfactory links are made with parents and the wider community. The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and balanced.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well as a team. They provide good role models for fully including all the pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and with wide-ranging needs. The school promotes racial tolerance well. Management has a clear focus on monitoring and evaluation and this is an important factor in ensuring that the pupils achieve increasingly well. The work of the governing body is good and statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are satisfied with the school. They say that their children are expected to work hard, that teaching is good and the children make good progress. The inspection judgements agree. Parents are not fully happy with the homework and hold different views on what is appropriate. They would like to see the school seeking their views to a greater extent. The inspection judges these aspects to be satisfactory. The pupils really like their school. In particular they like learning new things in lessons. They like the fact that the teachers help them to work hard and show them how to improve. The pupils have a known adult to turn to if they need help and they agree that the teachers are fair and listen to their ideas.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- raise standards across the curriculum;
- improve the rate of the pupils' attendance and punctuality; and
- develop assessment to inform the pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of pupils is satisfactory. It is good for the pupils in the nursery to Year 2. At the end of Year 6 the pupils' achievement is sound because the teaching and learning has been disrupted over time. Standards are well below average, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- all the pupils make good progress throughout the school because of the good teaching;
- achievement is satisfactory rather than good at the end of Year 6 because the group's teaching and learning has been adversely affected over time;
- standards are well below average in English, science and information and communication technology at the end of Year 6;
- the standards are improving in mathematics though are well below average at the end of Year 6;
- the effective inclusion of pupils with very specific learning needs is good and they achieve as well as their classmates. The same is true of the pupils who are learning English as an additional language; and
- standards in history and religious education are broadly average but in music standards are well below average.

Commentary

1. In the 2003 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics, the results attained by pupils at the end of Year 2 were in the bottom five per cent when compared nationally and in comparison to similar schools. Inspection judgement shows that standards are well below average, but good improvements have been made in the pupils' skills at speaking and listening which are below average. This has come about through a clear focus on teaching these skills which includes effective strategies for encouraging the pupils' confidence in speaking to a range of audiences. In science teacher assessments showed below average levels and this concurs with the inspection judgement.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	12.0 (13.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	9.3 (12.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	12.6 (14.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 39 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The school's trend over the last five years has been below the national trend. In the national tests for the pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2003, standards were average in English but well below average in mathematics and science. However, when compared to similar schools the results were a little healthier. They were well above average in English and below average in science, though well below average in mathematics.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.9 (5.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.8 (24.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	26.9 (25.8)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 43 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. The school has made good use of the subject expertise of the deputy headteacher to improve the pupils' achievement in mathematics. At the end of Year 2 standards have improved, though are still below average. Standards at Year 6 are well below average but there are good signs in year groups below this that standards are rising.

4. The many changes of staff that the pupils have experienced in the recent past have adversely affected the pupils' learning. This is also the case in the longer-term for the present pupils in Year 6. However, these aspects are being addressed methodically and the school has achieved a relative level of stability in the staffing. The rising standards in the years below Year 6 are coming hand-in-hand with improvements in the pupils' achievement. Pupils' overall satisfactory achievement is at a good level in the classes of younger pupils where they have not been so adversely affected by instability in staffing. As a result the pupils' teaching and learning has been much smoother and good achievement is now secure. The pupils in Year 6 have missed out on aspects of learning over time which has left gaps in their knowledge which the good teaching is now addressing.

5. In information and communication technology the school has made recent headway in establishing a reasonable level of subject knowledge among staff and in ensuring that resources are readily available. Pupils make sound progress because of this and are making satisfactory gains in developing their skills and knowledge in this subject. Opportunities to use information and communication technology in other subjects are increasing the pupils' achievements well. The pupils' attainment is well below the expected level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because the progress has not yet raised standards.

6. Standards achieved by minority ethnic pupils are in line with those achieved by other pupils in the school. Their achievement and progress is comparable to that of other pupils. Although some Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils take extended holidays during school time, the school provides appropriate work to be done during their absence. The majority of pupils learning English as an additional language develop their competence and fluency well. Pupils in the early stages of acquiring English develop their competence well because of the good support they are given. Assessment is very helpful in English and mathematics and is used well to match work to the needs of all pupils. In most other subjects, however, the use of assessment to promote the pupils' learning is underdeveloped.

7. The pupils who have special educational need are provided for well and make progress in line with their classmates as a result. The high proportion of pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need are taught well and fully included in all lessons and other activities. The inclusion of the pupils into the mainstream education has been achieved well. This, however, means that when standards in a year group are scrutinised, there is inevitable weighting to the lower attaining end due to the pupils' special needs. All the pupils eligible are entered into the national tests, giving each a chance to show their best. Because the school does not exclude any pupils from the national tests this means that the school's scores in the tests are consistently pulled down. However, the school also has fewer pupils than nationally reaching the higher levels in the tests in Year 2 and Year 6. Importantly, the pupils across the school are achieving better than at the last inspection, because of the good teaching and learning. This is managed well by the

headteacher and deputy headteacher through close monitoring and action stemming from evaluations. The good leadership and management also help the school deal well with the large proportion of pupils who join the school at various points during each school year. For example, of the present pupils in Year 6, over a third has transferred from other schools; these pupils have settled into their learning well.

8. The pupils' low attainment level on entry to the school is very evident in terms of their development in speaking, listening and their personal and social development; this is a barrier to their learning. Staff are good at nurturing these aspects but it takes some time for the pupils to become confident and their lack of vocabulary hinders development across the subjects. Children in the Reception Year achieve well making good gains from their low level on entry to the school. They are likely to attain at a level well below the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year. In personal development, the children achieve very well and are on course to reach standards below those typically expected because of the adult help provided and the importance given to this aspect of learning. In physical development, the pupils' attainment on entry is well below average and they make good gains to reach a below average level at the end of the Reception Year.

9. Standards are broadly typical for the pupils' ages by the end of Year 6 in religious education and history because even through the many changes of staff the teachers' interest and subject knowledge has helped to keep standards at a level found when the subjects were last inspected. In history, the added interest of visits and well-rounded studies has kept standards higher than in most other subjects. In music, however, the opposite is true; the lack of a subject leader, an unhelpful scheme of work and insufficient resources have meant that standards have deteriorated since the last inspection to a level well below that typically expected of pupils at the end of Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good, as a result of the good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- the school promotes good behaviour, and pupils behave well, particularly in lessons;
- relationships between pupils of all ethnic groups are good;
- pupils' personal qualities are developed throughout the curriculum;
- attendance levels are below the national average; and
- a significant number of pupils are regularly late for school.

Commentary

10. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection. The promotion of good behaviour has a high profile and a named member of staff takes the lead in monitoring how the pupils behave. The school rules and procedures are clear and well publicised. Teachers praise good conduct and deal with poor behaviour promptly and effectively. Pupils are clear about the difference between right and wrong, and the sanctions for poor behaviour. Behaviour at lunchtime has been a concern, but the mid-day supervisors have had training in managing the pupils' behaviour in a positive and fair way and this has proved to be successful. Their relationship with the children has improved and this has resulted in better behaviour. Some teachers have had training in anger management which helps them to ensure that pupils with challenging behaviours are included in lessons. Teachers engage the interest of pupils and this results in the pupils' positive attitude and good behaviour which supports their learning. Pupils learning English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic backgrounds have good attitudes to their learning. Those pupils who have additional support enjoy

their lessons and are keen and enthusiastic to succeed. Adults set good examples in the way they treat each other and the pupils. Those pupils whose attitudes can be anti-social are well supported in learning how to behave appropriately. The school council has had a positive effect in agreeing rules for playing football in the playground which was previously a source of concern.

11. Children in the nursery and reception classes have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy coming to school and thrive in the well-ordered environment that the teachers provide. Expectations of behaviour are made very clear from the start and children respond by being polite, helpful and co-operative. They often help one another without any prompting and take turns with toys and equipment. Children from different ethnic groups play together harmoniously and those who have special educational needs show the same enthusiasm for their activities as their classmates.

12. Parents highlight racial harmony and the multi-racial aspect of the school as strengths. They refer to the school's 'all embracing community' where pupils mix well together. The relationships throughout school are good. Children from different backgrounds get on well together, play happily at playtime and work together in the classroom. The teachers have a clear commitment to inclusion and this is reflected throughout the entire school. The need to be kind to others and value friendship is a key theme throughout the school and this has resulted in pupils helping and supporting each other well. They work well in teams and learn to collaborate on project work. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and are trustworthy. Older pupils support younger pupils as 'buddies', and help them to become more mature and responsible. Pupils feel they have someone to go to if they need help or support. No incidents of bullying or racism were seen during the inspection. The school has appropriate procedures for monitoring and recording action taken to address any anti-social behaviour and these are carefully followed.

13. The school uses opportunities throughout the school day to develop the personal qualities and awareness of the pupils. Good use is made of time set aside for discussion to make pupils aware of the differences between people and that people are individuals and special. Assemblies are used to focus on pupils' social development and feelings, for example, using the growth of seeds into plants to let pupils reflect on the things children need, such as love and care. Teachers use experiences in lessons to help pupils reflect on the world about them, though there are few planned activities that develop the pupils' spirituality. The After School Club promotes the school's values in a less formal setting; pupils engage in activities that enable them to think about their relationships with friends and family.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.4	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

14. The level of attendance is unsatisfactory due to the above average levels of authorised absence. A major part of the problem is that parents take their children out of school for holidays and many families take extended holidays to visit relatives in India or Pakistan. The school is taking positive action to improve the situation. It has set targets for improvement, there are class awards for good attendance initiatives such as 'every day counts' and staff have sent newsletters to parents emphasising the need for good attendance. They use a computerised system to monitor attendance, which prompts letters to parents. The education welfare officer is working with a number of families who need help to make sure that their children attend school regularly. The breakfast club is beneficial in helping to improve attendance as it brings the children into school early. Punctuality is unsatisfactory. Whilst children are clearly happy to be in school a significant proportion arrive late.

15. At the time of the inspection there was one temporary exclusion. The school has had and still has a few challenging pupils and has had to resort to temporary exclusion on occasions. The school works closely with the parents of excluded pupils to support their reintegration into school and these children have individual behaviour plans to help them improve.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	125	14	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	13	1	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	57	1	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	22	1	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Racial harmony is promoted well. The quality of teaching and learning is good; the curriculum is satisfactory and accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The care and guidance provided by the school is good. The school's partnership with parents and the links it has with the community are sound.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good across the school. Pupils of all heritages, those learning English as an additional language and pupils who have special educational needs are taught equally well. Assessment is satisfactory with strengths in English and mathematics and weaknesses in other subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and a high proportion is now good or better;
- teachers insist on high standards of behaviour so that the pupils can concentrate;
- support staff are very well deployed to make sure individuals achieve well;
- good subject knowledge and questioning are applied well to elicit the pupils' understanding; and
- assessment is used well in English and mathematics but not in other subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 55 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0 %)	5 (9%)	35 (64 %)	15 (27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

16. The table above shows that 73 per cent of the teaching and learning was good or better. This contrasts extremely favourably with the teaching found at the time of the last inspection. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eradicated through effective monitoring, evaluation and staff

development, all led well by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. As a result, the pupils are learning at a good pace and this is enabling them to achieve well at the end of Year 2 and satisfactorily at the end of Year 6.

17. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. A particular strength is the way in which teachers and nursery nurses work together to promote children's learning. They share the same high expectations and from the day children enter high standards are set and children are expected to show courtesy and respect. The children work and play sensibly, listen carefully to adults and to each other and keep their classroom tidy. As a result children feel very secure and achieve well; in their personal and social development they achieve very well. Teachers' planning has improved considerably since the previous inspection, although further refinements have yet to be made to match some activities more closely to the next steps in learning.

18. Because of the well-written Individual Language Plans, teachers receive good information about the specific language needs of pupils learning English as an additional language. These can then be targeted when planning lessons. The specialist teacher provides colleagues with good guidance and support, ensuring that learning support assistants are given training in the specific needs of pupils acquiring English as an additional language. Where pupils are withdrawn for targeted support, this is effective in helping them develop their language and literacy skills. At times, because of the groupings, the support inappropriately conflicts with that for pupils who also have special educational needs.

19. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good. Pupils who need help are identified early. Suitable programmes of work are planned and these are well matched to the pupils' needs. Pupils are well supported in the classroom by well briefed, knowledgeable teaching assistants. Pupils are also withdrawn in small groups, or individually, for lessons. The approach is very positive in these sessions with the teacher offering lots of praise, but at the same time challenging pupils to improve their learning. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils working on similes received liberal praise for their contributions but were continually pressed to extend their answers. Pupils are also withdrawn for relatively short but intensive sessions some of which involve the use of well-chosen computer programs. The learning support is now established and showing success in terms of the pupils' achievements. The school is ready to refine it, so that more teaching can take place within the classrooms and resources can be deployed even more efficiently.

20. Learning support assistants are very well deployed to help individuals and small groups of pupils. This means that more pupils benefit from direct teaching. In particular, the pupils' skills in speaking, listening, thinking logically and working collaboratively are extended well in this way. Effective questioning by teachers and other adults is based on their good knowledge of the subjects they teach. It helps the pupils to recall their previous learning and build well upon it, as they develop new knowledge and understanding. Adults accept the pupils' answers and patiently encourage them to extend their replies, so higher attainers increasingly speak in sentences and modify their speaking to suit their audience. Teachers build well on the diversity within their classes. For example, in a lesson in religious education in Year 2 pupils who worshipped in mosques were able to effectively explain about the Quran.

21. All adults involved in the teaching insist on good behaviour from the pupils so that all concentrate and apply themselves wholeheartedly to their tasks. This means that learning is brisk and the objectives for lessons are mostly met. On occasions, adults use loud voices unnecessarily and this detracts from the generally quiet atmospheres for learning because the pupils then also raise their voices without needing to.

22. The school has not yet arrived at a consistent system for assessing the pupils' achievements. Though tasks are mostly well matched to the pupils' needs in lessons in English and mathematics but this is not always the case in other subjects. Too much relies on discussion

without a formal framework for building up a picture of the precise needs of the pupils. In the nursery and reception classes teachers monitor children's progress informally day-by-day and make periodic checks on what the children have learnt in each area of learning. They keep detailed records of progress in language, literacy and number and this enables them to adapt their teaching of the basic skills to individual needs.

The curriculum

The quality, range and enrichment of the curriculum are satisfactory. The overall accommodation and resources meet the needs of the curriculum satisfactorily.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- provision for the pupils who have special educational needs is good;
- the curriculum is inclusive of all pupils though is not fully modified to take account of the ethnic heritages of the pupils;
- there is limited time for some of the foundation subjects;
- the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities and carefully monitors the ethnic background of pupils taking part in them; and
- there are few visits to places of interest or visits from outside speakers.

Commentary

23. The school has maintained the satisfactory curriculum found at the time of the last inspection. The school addresses all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and meets statutory requirements. The adoption of nationally recognised programmes of work in all subjects help to ensure that the pupils' skills are systematically developed. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been thoroughly implemented and these are having a good impact on achievement. The recent emphasis on problem solving has led to an improvement in standards in mathematics, particularly at the end of Year 2. The time spent on English and mathematics is slightly disproportionately high. This bias reduces the time for other subjects, particularly music and geography and limits achievement in them. There has been little attempt to modify the curriculum to reflect the ethnic background of many of the pupils, or to take advantage of the particular knowledge or insight of the parents' cultural heritage. The programme for personal development is satisfactory and sex and relationship education is appropriately addressed.

24. The curriculum for pupils under the age of five offers a satisfactory range of learning opportunities and is planned according to national guidance. Interesting activities are planned around a theme and this helps children to make links with other work. In the nursery, high quality displays and role-play areas are particularly successful in providing a stimulating learning environment. Resources for role-play are more limited in the reception classroom and this restricts opportunities for children to develop their imagination and practise new vocabulary. This is reflected in Year 1 and Year 2 where there are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to take part in structured play and role-play. The location of the nursery and reception classes at opposite sides of the playground limits both collaboration and the sharing of resources. However, teachers in both classes make very good use of the outside areas for a variety of learning activities.

25. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. The good policy fully meets the Code of Practice. The school identifies the needs of pupils at an early stage. Individual Education Plans contain clear, achievable targets for progress. Pupils who have Statements of Special Educational Need receive their full entitlement. The school makes full use of the expertise of outside agencies and takes a lead in some aspects. For example, the co-ordinator has modified units of work designed to ease the transfer of pupils to secondary school, to make these more appropriate for the use of pupils who have special needs. The co-ordinator has also instigated a number of initiatives designed to help improve pupils' basic literacy skills. The impact on the achievement of pupils has been fully evaluated and indicates the success of these ventures. They

do, however, tend to involve the withdrawal of pupils from classes, which can lead to pupils inappropriately missing lessons in other subjects. Pupils learning English as an additional language are regularly withdrawn from the literacy hour they miss out on what their classmates are doing. Some of these pupils expressed the desire for support in other subjects, such as mathematics and science. However, the school otherwise takes great care to include all pupils in its activities. Particular care has been taken to include the pupils who were formerly taught in the special unit for pupils with speech and communication difficulties. Teachers work at turning their classrooms into 'total communication environments'. Part of this strategy involves all of the younger pupils being taught a sign language, another venture in which the school is taking a lead through making a CD ROM for use by other schools in the local education authority.

26. The progress of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is carefully recorded and the number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds attending extra-curricular activities is monitored, to ensure that all are included in the school's provision. The school employs a good number of support staff, who are very well briefed, conscientious and skilful and make a positive contribution to the achievement of pupils who have special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. This means that both groups of pupils generally achieve as well as others. The leadership of both areas is good, although some aspects become slightly blurred when they are not clearly the responsibility of one co-ordinator.

27. The overall satisfactory enrichment has strengths in the good range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Though largely aimed at pupils in Year 3 to Year 6, they support and extend the curriculum well. The after-school club, externally funded but led and managed by members of the school staff, provides good learning opportunities for pupils before and after regular school hours. There is, however, only a limited range of educational visits or visits from outside speakers to enrich and bring relevance to pupils' learning, although those that do take place, like the Year 6 trip to extend their work on the Tudors, inspire much good learning.

28. The accommodation is generally suitable for the satisfactory delivery of the curriculum. The lack of a playing field restricts the opportunities for competitive sport and this limits pupils' achievement in physical education. Other resources are generally satisfactory, but the lack of any tuned percussion instruments to support learning in music is a serious omission adversely affecting the pupils' attainment in music

Care, guidance and support

29. The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The provision of support, advice and guidance for pupils is good. Pupils' involvement in the work and development of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- the pupils like being in school and have a trusting relationship with the staff;
- the before-school and after-school clubs provide good support to pupils and parents;
- pupils' safety is safeguarded through clear, thorough procedures; and
- the school provides opportunities for pupils to express their views.

Commentary

30. Children in the nursery and reception classes are cared for well. Teachers maintain a safe and secure environment. They know what the children's individual needs are and monitor them closely. Children trust the adults they work with readily turning to them when they have worries or concerns.

31. The pupils like the school and the staff. They feel they have to work hard and learn new things in their lessons. They have lots of friends from different backgrounds and like this aspect of

school life. Pupils say that teachers are kind, treat them fairly, listen to them and trust them to do things on their own. If they are worried at school, pupils feel that they can go to a known adult to discuss their problems. Some children at the after-school club were reluctant to leave, as they enjoyed the activities and relationships so much.

32. The breakfast club caters daily for a significant number of pupils for an hour before school starts. After breakfast the children play games and take part in activities, both indoor and outdoor, organised by the supervisors. The activities are often linked to themes being studied in school or special occasions such as Fathers' Day. The staff care for the children well and the atmosphere is cheerful. There are good links between the staff and the teachers that ensure continuity of care throughout the day. For the children, the club provides a good start to the day as some may not otherwise have a breakfast. The after-school club is so popular it has a waiting list. The staff help with the children's homework and general reading. For some children this is very helpful, as they might not get help at home. Analysis of progress made has shown that the children in the after-school club have made twice as much progress in reading as others in the school. There has also been an improvement in handwriting. The clubs also provide support for parents, since those who need to go to work or take part in further education have greater flexibility in working hours. Parents drop off and pick up their children which gives good opportunities for informal discussions with staff and helps develop parental links.

33. The progress of each minority ethnic group is monitored and strategies put in place to help overcome any identified problems. An example of this is the work designed for pupils to take with them if their families take them on extended holidays during the school term. Pupils from minority ethnic groups report that they like school, fit in well and are not treated differently from others.

34. The school has thorough procedures for the care and safety of pupils; they are easy to understand and clearly identify responsibilities. Health and safety is given a high priority with a regular audit, action planning and assessment of risk. The governing body takes an active role in care and safety issues. The school has achieved the bronze award for the Healthy Schools Initiative due to its focus on the pupils' personal development and awareness of drugs education. Displays throughout the school reinforce the messages to the pupils.

35. The school has actively encouraged pupils to be involved in its decisions. The school council was elected by the other pupils. Details of the members and their activities are prominently displayed in the school foyer for reference. They meet regularly and formally with the deputy headteacher regarding school issues. They have surveyed other pupils about things they would like to see in the school and have a small budget to manage. This has led to the introduction of new playground equipment and decisions about playing football at lunchtime. The council is representative of all the ages and ethnic groups within the school. They feel that they are listened to and that the council has been a benefit to the school. The members have a very positive approach to their responsibilities. A "worry box" in the school foyer means that the pupils can put forward any concerns in confidence. The growing influence of the views of the pupils in school life is contributing to their improved attitudes, behaviour and a happy environment supporting learning and development in the school.

36. The specialist teacher for the support of pupils learning English as an additional language keeps meticulous records. These are shared with the school and clearly show the good progress the pupils make.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **satisfactory** partnerships with parents, other schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- parents feel that staff are approachable and are happy to discuss the progress of their children;
- the school provides extensive support to the parents of children with speech difficulties;
- parents play a limited role within the school.

Commentary

37. There are sound links with parents of children in the nursery and reception classes. Teachers provide new parents with helpful information about school and provide appropriate opportunities for children to spend some time in their new classes before they start. Parents are welcomed into school at the start and the end of the day and teachers are always willing to chat to them about any concerns they may have about their child's progress.

38. Parents feel that the staff are approachable and many parents regularly meet the teachers at the end of the day and discuss their children's progress. Any problems are quickly resolved. The parents of children with special educational needs particularly feel that the staff regularly provide information and are very supportive.

39. There are a number of children at the school with speech and language difficulties. Their parents say that their children make good progress in the school. The staff provide extensive support to the children and their parents. The parents receive a daily report on progress and behaviour, together with suggestions about how they can best support their children. The staff make a special effort to ensure that the children are happy in the school and are not bullied or picked on. One parent who had recently moved house into another local education authority refused to move her child to another school because she felt that the progress and support at this school was so good.

40. Some parents help in the school and provide support in the classroom but this is not extensive and does not fully represent the different communities at the school. The school has used newsletters to ask for volunteers but with only limited success. There is no regular, structured method of sampling the views of parents and newsletters to parents are only in English which may be a problem for some parents. The school is making some positive steps, for example by supporting a family learning project, which encourages parents to come into school once a week to share a lesson with their child. This will help them to support their child at home and have a better understanding of how they can contribute to the life of the school.

41. The specialist teacher for English as an additional language is regularly available for consultation with the parents of the pupils she supports.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The leadership by the headteacher is effective and the school is well managed. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- the leadership provides clear direction for the work of the school;
- leaders work hard to ensure that the school is inclusive and all members are valued;
- there are good systems in place for monitoring the school's work but priority has yet to be given to subjects other than English and mathematics; and
- there is a strong sense of teamwork and commitment to improvement.

Commentary

42. The headteacher has worked hard since the last inspection to develop a strong, effective leadership team to take the school forward. Together they have successfully established a climate for learning in which all staff and pupils feel secure and valued and each individual matters. This philosophy is shared by staff and governors, and strongly reflects the school's stated aims. The outcome is a caring school that places high value on preparing pupils to live as responsible, well-adjusted members of the community. The impact of this provision is seen in the good behaviour of pupils around the school and the good relationships that exist at all levels. A feature of the school's success is the priority it gives to ensuring that pupils with particular needs, whether physical, speech and language, behavioural or learning difficulties, are fully included in the school's work. Pupils' needs are identified early on and teachers work hard to make the best provision for them.

43. Governors share the leadership team's vision. They meet regularly and ensure they have a working knowledge of the school through a well-organised system of committees. There are formalised links with the individual members of staff responsible for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. This ensures that governors are well informed about the school's provision for these areas. Governors carry out their legal responsibilities well and have clear aims and policies that guide the school's work. Recently their knowledge of the school's work has been enhanced by the better quality information they are now being given on pupils' performance and their own monitoring of the work of the school. Governors are beneficially involved with the formulation of the school improvement plan.

44. There are now good systems in place for tracking pupils' progress to identify where performance can be improved and these are beginning to have an impact on the school's work. Examples can be seen in both English and mathematics where teaching has been targeted at groups of pupils and improvements made to areas of the subjects that have not been taught well enough in the past. Senior managers have formal opportunities to observe teaching in these subjects and check on pupils' learning. This rigorous monitoring and analysis has yet to be extended to other subjects such as information and communication technology and religious education. Nevertheless, subject leaders are given planned opportunities to check on planning and pupils' books, and their confidence in developing their subjects and raising standards is improving as a result.

45. The school is well managed. The finance team monitors the school's finances closely, and spending decisions are discussed and agreed with governors and senior managers. Teaching staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and there are appropriate systems in place for appraisal, training and support. Newly qualified teachers benefit well from the extra support they are given.

46. The strong sense of teamwork that now exists in the school is demonstrated well in the way the school has responded so positively to guidance from external advisers. There is a shared desire to move the school forward which is already being seen in the improved quality of teaching and learning and raised pupil achievement. Recently, insecurity about plans for a new school building has been leading to falling numbers and consequently to reduced funding. Plans for a new building are progressing and the school is now very well placed to build on its recent improvements.

47. The management of the Foundation Stage has improved since the previous inspection. The school has benefited from outside advice and support, and recent improvements to planning and provision are already having an impact on the quality of education for these children. There is now a strong sense of teamwork and shared purpose among the teachers and nursery nurses, and an improved understanding of how young children learn best.

48. Data on minority ethnic performance is regularly collected and presented to management, to inform curricular planning and to ensure equality of opportunity. Provision for pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well managed. The management of English as an additional language falls

within the remit of the inclusion co-ordinator. A weakness in this arrangement is that groupings of children identified for support often include those with English as an additional language who also have special educational needs. These pupils do not always make the best progress because at times they work with classmates who cannot provide them with good language models. For those pupils who are developing fluency, the school has yet to identify where support is required in subjects other than English.

49. Care is taken to cater well for pupils who have special educational needs. The provision for special educational needs is well managed. The co-ordinator takes the lead in training and evaluating the work of the large team of learning support assistants. She also liaises well with the range of outside agencies which offer support for pupils with learning difficulties. The co-ordinator has taken the lead in a number of innovations in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs, including the piloting of a computer program designed to help pupils with both reading and writing. Initiatives are well evaluated, with the progress of pupils involved being carefully recorded. The school has established a reputation as being a leader in this field. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is also involved with arrangements to ensure that pupils are fully included in the activities of the school. There is, consequently, some ambiguity about areas of responsibility between the co-ordinator for special educational needs and the co-ordinator for pupils who do not speak English as their first language.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1092257
Total expenditure	1081777
Expenditure per pupil	2862

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	28842
Balance carried forward to the next	39322

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

50. When they start in the nursery, children's experiences and knowledge vary widely, but most have only limited experiences of the world. A significantly high proportion has very limited language skills, or speak little or no English.

51. There have been good improvements in provision since the previous inspection. Teaching is now good, so during their time in the Foundation Stage the children achieve well. Nevertheless, because of their lower starting points, few reach the standards expected in the six areas of learning by the time they leave the Reception Year. Standards are well below average in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world. They are below average in personal and physical development. Teachers are very sensitive to individual needs; they work hard to ensure that all children have full access to the curriculum, so that they achieve as well as their classmates. Children in the early stages of learning English as an additional language have extra support for some activities.

52. It was not possible to make an overall judgement on the provision in **physical development** as no lessons were seen, although children in the reception class were observed at outdoor play. In their movements around the classroom and playground, and in their use of pencils, paints, scissors and tools, children's control is satisfactory. In the playground the reception children play on wheeled toys and know the prescribed route and stay within it, stopping when requested. Children energetically, climb, slide and balance on the play equipment with reasonable control and confidence. Some average and lower attainers are more diffident. The majority of children reach standards below those expected in this aspect of learning having started at a well below average level. The playground is well resourced, with a good range of equipment. There are fewer opportunities for the nursery children to use the equipment but both classes have timetabled opportunities for physical activity.

53. It was not possible to make judgements on provision or standards in **creative development**, as very few planned opportunities for creative development were seen. Artwork on display demonstrated that children in both classes regularly work with paints, modelling and craft materials. Teachers plan regular opportunities for music and dance. Teachers' planning for this area does not always take full account of the next steps in the learning of individuals and groups. There are good opportunities for role-play in the imaginatively resourced nursery and in the outdoor reception area but the role-play area in the reception classroom does little to stimulate children's imagination.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- teachers and nursery nurses have high expectations and encourage children to learn and play independently;
- supportive relationships ensure that children feel secure and happy; and
- at times the nursery provides too many new tasks at one time.

Commentary

54. Very good teaching ensures that, during their time in the Foundation Stage, children develop confidence and independence and make very good progress and achieve very well in this area of learning. Teachers' expectations of what children can do for themselves and how they should behave are high. From the time they start children are expected to settle down quickly and sensibly in the morning, get what they need for a task, play sensibly and put equipment and toys away at the end of the session. A notable example of this was seen when children from the nursery selected from the wide range of practical activities on offer. They knew the rules for selecting an activity and quickly decided what to do. Children organised themselves at the computer or played happily together in role-play, for example. On occasions there are too many new tasks to choose from in the nursery, and some of the less confident children need more guidance to help them select and settle to an activity.

55. One of the strengths of the teaching is that teachers and nursery nurses share the same high expectations and provide very good role models for children. They are calm, well organised and approachable and treat children with respect and courtesy. This leads to very warm and trusting relationships and helps the children to behave in a friendly manner towards one another.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- teachers plan a wide range of practical activities that develop children's language skills;
- children in the reception class are well prepared for the more formal lessons in Year 1;
- teachers and support staff make regular assessments of children's progress to help them tailor work to children's next steps in learning; but
- the importance of taking turns to speak is not always emphasised sufficiently well.

Commentary

56. Teaching is good and all children achieve well. Those who are in the early stages of learning English receive additional support in some activities. Nevertheless, because of their low starting points, the proportion of children reaching the standards expected for their age is low. Teachers promote the development of speaking and listening well by widening children's vocabulary in a variety of ways. They explain new words when reading stories, for example and when they occur in other activities. The very good relationships that exist between adults and children mean that higher attainers are increasingly confident to ask questions and talk about their play though others need much extra encouragement. In an area set aside to investigate small creatures two children played happily together as they hunted for hidden plastic insects and told each other what they had found. Staff in the nursery are particularly good at modelling correct language and encouraging children to use it. In the reception class, adults do not always enforce firmly enough the rules for taking turns to speak during class discussion. On these occasions some children do not listen to each other as carefully as they should.

57. Children are taught their letter sounds in the nursery and have more formal lessons at the end of the reception year. Teachers make good use of games, clues, mnemonics, actions and resources such as puppets, to help children learn them. Children quickly develop an appreciation of books and older children recognise the links between letter sounds and words, as they learn to sound out simple words for themselves. Reading is planned and taught well in the reception class and careful records of progress are kept. Children enjoy stories and sometimes choose to read quietly to themselves, or share a book with a partner. From the start, children are encouraged to write independently. They have opportunities for writing within some role-play activities and also during focused writing sessions, when they make good use of whiteboards to record their initial

efforts. Adults support learning well, by guiding the different activities in turn. They join in with children to help extend their vocabulary and make assessments of what they can do and what they need to learn next.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- teachers plan a wide range of practical mathematical activities;
- children's poor language skills limit what they can understand in mathematics.

Commentary

58. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan interesting activities that build on what children have already learnt and understood, and this ensures that all children achieve well. Nevertheless, because some children have limited language they do not always fully understand the language of mathematics. Approximately half reach the standards expected of them by the time they leave the reception class. They are better at counting than they are in other aspects of mathematical development, such as the understanding of shape, space and measure. Teachers take every opportunity to teach and practise counting forwards and backwards, so all children quickly become familiar with numbers from one to ten and a few can count beyond this when they leave the reception class. Counting is supported by lively actions, games, rhymes and stories such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, which children love to join in. Wherever they can, teachers make links with other areas of learning; for example, children in the nursery counted spiders' legs in their study of small creatures. Children in reception make good use of resources including whiteboards and calculators, and this ensures that they all participate in the lesson.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities around themes to promote learning in this area;
- the outside area is used well for a range of learning and play activities; but
- activities are not always precisely planned with regard to the next steps in learning.

Commentary

59. Teaching, learning and children's achievement are satisfactory overall. Teachers plan a wide range of practical activities linked to a theme that help children learn by finding out for themselves. Children in the nursery learnt about snails, for example, by observing them closely with hand lenses. Children making collages learnt about the symmetry of a butterfly's wings, through careful observation of the pattern. The outdoor facilities beside the classrooms are used particularly well to support learning in this area. Resources such as play equipment, sand and water are often well organised and resourced to link with the topic being studied. A weakness in the planning for this area is that it is not sharply focused enough to ensure the activity enables the children to make the next step in their learning. Whilst the experienced adults such as the teachers and nursery nurses know how to guide and question the children to help them move forward, less experienced helpers infrequently ask the right questions or reinforce the learning appropriately.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well below average overall though below average in speaking and listening;
- teaching is good and well organised so that the pupils learn well; and
- the leadership and management are good.

Commentary

60. At the end of Year 6, standards are not as high as those found in the previous inspection. This is in part because not enough pupils achieve at the higher level but also because pupils enter the school with lower standards of language and literacy than previously; some children are still in the early stages of acquiring English. They take longer to attain average standards of literacy, but because teaching is good, they achieve well at the end of Year 2. Though teaching is good in Year 3 to Year 6 the pupils' achievement is satisfactory because of their interrupted learning over time. Because of the high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs in the year group, pupils in the current Year 6 are unlikely to attain as well as those in the previous year when the school's results in the national tests were average when compared nationally and well above average when compared to similar schools.

61. At the end of Year 6, speaking and listening skills are below average but pupils across the school achieve well in this. Teachers allow plenty of time for discussion in lessons. This helps pupils to develop their speaking skills well, especially where teachers prompt pupils to defend their ideas and to extend their sentences. Younger pupils listen very carefully and follow instructions well. This was especially so in a lesson in Year 2, in which they had carefully prepared questions to ask a father about his baby, so that they could take notes to write an information book for expectant parents. Nonetheless their vocabulary is limited.

62. The pupils' skills in reading develop well, but by the end of Year 2, too few pupils are reading at the higher levels. They enjoy books and demonstrate a good understanding, for example, of what characterises a story written by a particular author. The good opportunities provided by reading workshops are helping pupils to develop a good understanding of what they read. In a session in Year 6, pupils were absorbed in their books and keen to write about what interested them in the stories. The books are suitable and graded to the different reading abilities in the class. The pupils' achievement is satisfactory at the end of Year 6. This judgement takes into account the many changes in teachers over time.

63. The pupils' attainment in writing is well below the national average. However, a good feature which is helping pupils to improve their writing is the very structured approach to support them in organising it. Classroom displays provide very good guidance, in the form of prompts and vocabulary and pupils use these to help them. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 understand what they have to do, because teachers ensure they are thoroughly prepared for the task. For example, in the interview mentioned above, a lesson had been spent on helping pupils form their questions. Year 6 pupils demonstrate very good understanding of poetic conventions, so they can use a poem studied to produce their own very effective versions. Marking in Year 6 is thorough and helps pupils know exactly what skills they need to develop in order to progress to the next level. Pupils' achievement is good at the end of Year 2. Though it is sound at the end of Year 6 it is also improving due to the recent good teaching and learning.

64. The quality of teaching and learning are good. In most lessons, there is good oral preparation for the writing task, so pupils have time to explore and express their ideas. Pupils of lower ability and who have special educational needs in the combined Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 classes achieve well, because work is generally appropriately adapted to meet their particular needs. In Year 6 higher attaining pupils are challenged to extend and develop their ideas. However, their work lacks the complexity of vocabulary which would help them reach the higher level in English. Significant features in most of the written work are the pupils' weak spelling skills and inconsistencies in the quality of handwriting which are evidence of the past gaps in their learning. Pupils in the early stages of acquiring English are given targeted support that helps them develop their language and literacy skills. This is mainly helpful for them, but because they are regularly withdrawn from literacy sessions they are not able to benefit from the positive models provided by their classmates.

65. Leadership and management are good. A focus on improving standards has resulted in confident, well-organised teaching by teachers who are secure in the requirements of the national strategy for literacy. Assessment is good and good records are kept of the pupils' progress and test results are analysed to identify areas for development. Year 6 pupils provide good records of what they can achieve in English in their transitional projects that they complete in their secondary schools.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

66. The development of literacy through other subjects is satisfactory. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily for research purposes and there are good examples across the school of pupils presenting their work effectively by considering layout, font, colour and importing images.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- standards are below average in Year 2 and well below average in Year 6;
- the achievement of most pupils is good;
- the quality of teaching and learning is good; and
- the leadership of the subject is effective.

Commentary

67. The results of the school's national tests in mathematics in 2003 showed that at the end of Year 2 standards were very low and at the end of Year 6 were well below the national average. These results followed the trend over recent years. Girls, particularly in the younger age group, have consistently out-performed boys. Observation of the present pupils, however, suggests that things are improving. Pupils are beginning to achieve well, in some cases very well and standards are rising. The greater improvement has so far been noticed at the end of Year 2. While standards are still below average, they are considerably higher than in previous years. Standards at the end of Year 6 are still well below average but this can, to a certain extent, be explained by the disturbed nature of their education in the past and the large proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Despite this, however, pupils in Year 6 have made good progress in the last year and one in six pupils is now confidently working at levels above those expected of pupils of this age. The standards of pupils presently in Year 5 are much closer to the national average. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates. This is largely the result of the good provision for these pupils which includes clear individual plans with achievable targets, often the result of consultation between pupils, parents and teachers. Achievement is also

helped by the good levels of support from generally well briefed, conscientious and skilful learning support assistants. Pupils who do not speak English as their first language achieve well and observations suggest that those of Asian heritage, the largest of the minority ethnic groups at the school and therefore those with the most reliable statistics, achieve at least as well as the indigenous pupils in mathematics. The most obvious reasons for this are the good support these pupils receive in helping them overcome their language difficulties and, because of the inclusive nature of the school, pupils are treated very much as individuals. So, for example, older pupils, still learning English and having to be taught literacy in special groups, are included in mainstream classes for mathematics. The achievement of higher attaining pupils, although satisfactory, is not so consistent. Although in many lessons activities are planned for pupils of different attainment, lower and middle ability groups often have more direct adult support than the higher attainers. Higher attaining pupils in Year 4 produce near faultless work in their books but seem to return to addition and subtraction of number regularly despite having seemed to have mastered these. On the other hand, special sessions for higher attaining pupils in Years 4 and 5 are very well planned and prepared and pupils are challenged to think logically and systematically.

68. The improvements in the provision in mathematics can be traced to the recent effective leadership of the subject. The subject leader has conducted a meticulous analysis of pupils' responses to assessments and tests, tracking the attainment of pupils on the basis of their ethnic origins and gender. Areas of weakness in learning have been identified and action has been taken to rectify the situation. For example, problem solving has been a focus of learning in Year 1 and Year 2 and pupils in Year 3, identified as underachieving because of a lack of understanding in certain areas of mathematics, are given extra teaching to address the weaknesses. The good assessment procedures are supported by the introduction of a systematic programme of target setting for all pupils. Each pupil has a list of targets related to levels of the National Curriculum. The targets are regularly reviewed and this allows teachers and pupils to have a clear idea of the level at which pupils are working and the progress they are making. The subject leader has been able to monitor the quality of teaching and, as a result, offer timely advice and help to teachers, using the resources of the school and help from outside agencies. This has helped to bring about an improvement in the quality of teaching, which is now good, as compared to satisfactory at the last inspection. Because the co-ordinator is free of class teaching duties, she is able to teach groups or classes and aim this effort to benefit the achievement of pupils. For example, the Year 6 class was divided into two, so increasing the level of help and attention for individual pupils and helping their achievement.

69. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers are generally positive in their approach, using praise liberally, and this creates good relationships and positive attitudes in their pupils. These positive attitudes were shown as lower attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 enthusiastically conducted a traffic survey. The morning session, which does not finish until 12.40 p.m. is rather longer than in most primary schools and the enthusiasm of some Year 3 pupils tend to flag in the latter stages. Although relationships are good, there is a tendency for teachers, in more than one class, to talk over the noise of the lesson, rather than asking for silence, and this leads occasionally to levels of noise bordering on the unacceptable and can lead to a lack of productivity from the pupils. Teachers plan their lessons well and frequently plan activities for pupils of different abilities, which helps the achievement of all pupils. Teachers usually prepare well, with resources readily at hand, helping the pace of lessons and maximising the time for learning. Thus pupils, in a very good lesson for higher attaining pupils in Years 4 and 5, were provided with packs containing equipment, worksheets, extension material and homework activities. The time at the end of lessons is used well to consolidate learning. Marking is generally good and teachers offer encouraging remarks as well as suggestions on ways pupils can improve their learning. Pupils, in the older classes, are encouraged in the appropriate use of calculators but the use of computers has not yet had much impact on achievement in mathematics. Interactive whiteboards are beginning to be used but although pupils are delighted by their use, it is still at the novelty stage, rather than as a solid tool for learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

70. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. Year 2 pupils extend their data handling skills by listing information in a table, using computers. There are examples of pupils' mathematical skills being developed in science and geography. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good use of graphs to illustrate their findings.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- the pupils' attainment is well below average at the end of Year 6 and below average at the end of Year 2;
- pupils are well behaved and have a good attitude to the subject; and
- the scheme being followed in Year 2 helpfully gives pupils targets for attainment but this does not apply to Years 3 to 6.

Commentary

71. The school's results in the national tests have been well below average over a number of years. However, the improved leadership has a clearer focus on standards and target setting and is bringing about improved achievement. In 2003, for example, when compared to similar schools standards were below rather than well below average. At Year 6 the proportion of pupils attaining at a high level for their age, however, was much lower than nationally. At the end of Year 6, standards in science are well below average. Although some pupils achieve well and reach standards that are average, the proportion of pupils who attain highly continues to be well below average. For individual pupils, progress and achievement are satisfactory overall. The pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 do not as yet benefit from the planning for assessment, as do the pupils at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 2, pupils achieve well and their attainment is below average. Pupils have benefited from the trial of a national scheme of work for teaching materials and from the information this gives to teachers on planning for assessment and target setting.

72. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Year 1 and Year 2. The teachers plan work so that pupils are interested and engaged in the learning. Pupils behave well and are interested in the practical activities organised to develop their investigative skills. This was seen in a Year 6 class, where pupils quickly engaged in an experiment to test the reaction when bicarbonate of soda was added to dilute vinegar. Teachers' questions encourage discussion and ensure literacy and vocabulary development. In Years 1 and 2 teachers' expectations of all groups are high and relationships in all classes are good, which makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Assessment is used well to inform planning and tasks are provided for pupils that encourage them to seek solutions and think for themselves. Work is well matched to pupils' needs and this results in pupils showing interest and absorption in their tasks. In Years 3 to 6, there is less focus on the use of assessment to inform planning. As a result the work is less well focussed on developing each individual. For example, in an otherwise good lesson in Year 6, the higher attaining pupils were not encouraged to reach higher levels of attainment by attempting extra challenging tasks.

73. The subject is well led and soundly managed. The subject leader has benefited from support by the local education authority and from a local Beacon school. Improvements in pupils' achievement have been brought about by the concentration on assessment and target setting. The subject is monitored by regular scrutiny of teachers' planning. Information and communication technology is soundly embedded in the scheme of work. Opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy are identified and taken. Since the last inspection there has been sound improvement. Work supporting investigation has been integrated into lessons in all year groups

and extra classes are provided for the pupils in Year 6 to boost their attainment before the national tests.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- pupils have a good attitude to their work and enjoy the subject;
- tasks are well chosen to engage the pupils;
- pupils' individual records of achievement give clear targets for development in the subject; and
- the use of information and communication technology for research and display of work is well developed in other subjects; though
- control technology and data handling are under-used in other subjects.

Commentary

74. Although standards are well below the expected level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The pupils now have targets based on assessment criteria. These are given to pupils in the form of a record of achievement booklet that outlines assessment criteria for all aspects of the subject. Teachers sign and date these when a pupil has achieved a particular target. This ensures the programme of study of the National Curriculum is met and gives pupils an indication of how well they are doing. Although assessment and learning objectives are clearly stated, they are not tied to the levels of the National Curriculum, so pupils and teachers are not clear about how to improve performance. The challenge of more capable pupils to reach higher levels of attainment is not indicated as a requirement.

75. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good and have improved since the subject was last inspected. The pupils are clearly focused on their learning and enjoy using computers in their work. They appreciate the opportunities to do so.

76. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers show good understanding of the use of computers to enhance the presentation of work and information and communication technology was a feature of the display of pupils' work in classrooms. The Internet is used well to support research and the development of this was seen in an effective lesson in Year 1. Once developed, pupils use these skills effectively, as was seen in a Year 5/6 lesson where pupils were using the Internet to research history topics. High expectation and challenge were seen in lessons where pupils were using software to control events such as the changing of traffic lights in a pre-determined sequence. These lessons also show a high expectation of pupils being self-reliant and developing confidence in themselves. On occasion too much time is spent in giving instructions leaving less time for the pupils use the computers

77. The subject is well led and satisfactorily managed. The subject leader has a clear vision of how to improve, as shown in the development of the pupils' records of achievement. There have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. The subject organisation has improved considerably as has the quality of teaching. However, standards remain well below average. Teachers now have the expertise to ensure progress, and individual pupils are achieving satisfactorily.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

78. Information and communication technology is used soundly to support learning in other subjects. It is used well by pupils in all year groups as a tool to display final drafts of literacy work. In these cases, teachers make good use of the computer suite and the pupils work effectively in

pairs or in small groups. There are individual computers in each classroom. These are used less efficiently and effectively. Teachers do not employ strategies to enable the continual use of the classroom computers. Other strands of information and communication technology, such as the use of data handling, are less well embedded in subjects across the curriculum because the planning does not make clear when opportunities arise.

HUMANITIES

79. In **history** insufficient teaching was seen to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision

80. In the one lesson seen the teaching and learning was good. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 and a study of the work produced indicates that standards are broadly at expected levels at the end of Year 6. The pupils make a very thorough study of the Tudors and this helps them sequence historical events. They make an educational visit to a museum in Birmingham where role play stimulates much interest and good writing. Pupils support their work in literacy by using a range of writing styles, including argument and biography. An interesting item is the use of a speech from a Shakespearean play to learn about a figure in history. Pupils use the Internet for research and complete some research as a homework project. Much of the work is well marked with comments to stimulate further interest and research.

GEOGRAPHY

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- pupils' attitudes to the subject are good; but
- work is not adequately matched to the individual pupils' needs.

Commentary

81. Standards in geography are below the expected levels for the pupils' ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. For example, even though those pupils of average attainment at the end of Year 6 can describe the landscape features associated with rivers and their valleys and the higher attainers can also describe the geographical processes that lead to the development of these features, the proportion of pupils unable to do so is significant. Nonetheless, this represents sound achievement and progress for the individual pupils.

82. Pupils have a good attitude to their work and produce writing that is extended and gives a good amount of detail. For example, Year 6 pupils studying the pedestrianisation of the local town centre give good detail in their accounts of changes to shopping habits that could affect shops on the high street.

83. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. A strength is in the good development and use of the pupils' knowledge of the local area and the use of resources such as appropriate photographs. The development of enquiry methods in the teaching of geography is satisfactory, as was seen in a class of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils where they were using information from the local environment to help them find out about roads. A weakness is that work is not well-matched to the needs of the higher attaining pupils because insufficient use is made of assessment. Lessons are planned to follow a scheme of work based on national guidance. Time allocated to the subject is adequate, but less work is produced than in history, which is given a similar amount of curricular time. Resources for the teaching of geography are satisfactory and are well supported by loans from the local authority library service.

84. There has been satisfactory improvement since the subject was last inspected. The quality of teaching has improved; the pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved and do not now interrupt or prevent learning. The time allocated to geography is slightly lower than in some other subjects and as a result standards have been maintained but have not risen.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- teachers plan and prepare well for lessons and make good use of resources;
- requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus are fully met; but
- not enough use is made of visits and visitors to support learning.

Commentary

85. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. A helpful scheme of work is in place that meets the needs of the school. Pupils achieve well as a result of well-planned lessons and good teaching and learning. At the end of Year 2, pupils understand that faith and worship plays an important part in many peoples' lives. They know, for example, that devout followers of Islam worship five times a day facing the holy city of Mecca and that the Islamic creed is the 'Five Pillars of the Faith'. They know too that the Quran is a special book for Muslims. At the end of Year 6, pupils are able to compare and contrast similar aspects of the different faiths studied, and make personal responses to what they have learnt. Year 6 pupils, for example, could describe the atmosphere they would expect to encounter in a place of worship in which they would feel comfortable, based on what they had learnt about common features of places of worship. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to visit places of worship and world faith resource centres and so their understanding is based on learning in the classroom and their own faith. Very few visitors from a range of faiths enhance the curriculum and so the pupils miss out on the first hand experiences this would afford. Nonetheless the subject contributes well to pupils' personal development as they learn to respect and value the beliefs and practices of others.

86. A strong feature of the good teaching is that teachers are mostly well informed about the different faiths studied. They take time to ask advice from the subject leader if necessary, and make good use of the knowledge brought to the lesson by individual pupils from different faith groups. In a Year 4 lesson on Buddhist worship, the teacher fully engaged pupils' interest when describing the different gods and goddesses and explaining their importance, using colourful models that pupils could handle and observe closely. In general, teachers are making good use of the recently purchased resources, such as religious artefacts and pictures, to help bring the subject to life. On occasions, teachers and pupils use information and communication technology well for research in the subject, as when Year 2 pupils used the Internet to find out about the home life and religion of a little Muslim girl.

87. Pupils are encouraged to talk about their work in the lesson, often working in pairs or groups. Pupils from different ethnic groups work harmoniously together and respect each other's contributions. For the most part, teachers' expectations of behaviour are very high and pupils are attentive, which enables them to achieve well. On occasions, the noise level generated by group discussion can be too high and this detracts from the learning for some pupils, particularly those who are still learning English. Teachers are aware of the special needs of individual pupils and support them where necessary, enabling them to take full part in the lesson.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

88. Insufficient evidence was available in **art and design** to judge the provision. The curriculum is satisfactory but assessment is unsatisfactory.

89. In **physical education** only two lessons were observed, so it was not possible to judge standards. In the lessons seen, pupils showed a good knowledge of the effects of exercise on the body. High attaining pupils in Year 2, for example, know that oxygen is carried around in the blood and so the flow of oxygen is increased when the heart beats faster. In both of the lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. In both cases, pupils demonstrated average throwing and catching skills. There was insufficient stress on physical activity, and warm-ups were often perfunctory. Good use was made of demonstration and useful points were illustrated, although pupils were not given sufficient opportunity to practise these points and improve their performance. Teachers managed the pupils well. Some classes have only one physical education lesson per week, which is not sufficient to consolidate learning or develop suitable levels of physical fitness. The school has not reached the nationally recommended time for physical education. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support by teaching assistants in lessons. The programme is enriched by visits from professional sporting organisations including the local football club. The lack of a playing field reduces the opportunities for games and means that pupils' chances to practise their skills in a competitive situation are limited.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Provision in design and technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- standards by the end of Year 6 are below those expected;
- there has been no effective subject management for the past eighteen months; and
- the policy and scheme of work are out of date.

Commentary

90. Standards are lower than those found in the previous inspection. In the past insufficient attention has been given to the subject and the pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Evidence from analysis of work shows poorly executed drawings and presentation. While there was evidence of designing and planning not all work was completed or fully labelled. The pupils examine products and evaluate the outcomes of their construction but this is not a regular feature. In discussion, Year 6 pupils evidently enjoy lessons in design and technology and remembered the different products they had made. However, they also remembered that they had designed slippers, but were given no time to make them.

91. The quality of teaching and learning seen was satisfactory overall and some was good. Pupils enjoyed the challenge of investigating materials, such as packaging in Year 3. They worked well together to examine the different examples. The discussion between pupils was lively and because pupils of different abilities were in mixed groupings there was a good level of support for the less able or those still developing their English. In all lessons, resources were well prepared and teachers used demonstration effectively, especially to help the younger pupils in Year 1 to understand the need for making strong joins when constructing models of playground equipment.

92. This has been a neglected subject. The policy is not supportive of the practice and the scheme of work is out-dated so much depends on the individual teacher. This leads to inconsistency across the teaching and learning and a lack of continuity for the pupils making provision overall unsatisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator is enthusiastic but has not yet had the time to develop the subject though has an effective action plan to do so.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **unsatisfactory**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- standards at the end of Year 2 are at an expected level;
- leadership and management are unsatisfactory; and
- most teachers are unhappy with the scheme of work

Commentary

93. The quality of provision in music has declined since the previous inspection. Leadership in the subject has been unsatisfactory for some time as a result of staff absence. Consequently, there has been little development in the subject. There are no subject specialists on the staff to provide advice or support to teachers and, in general, music has a low profile in the school.

94. Class teachers do what they can to provide an appropriate range of musical experiences for pupils. The teaching seen was good and standards in Years 1 and 2 are at the level expected for the pupils' age. They learn to listen carefully to different kinds of music and play simple percussion instruments confidently. Pupils with special educational needs join in fully and pupils in the early stages of learning English are well supported by the teacher or classroom assistant. Teachers manage pupils well and have high expectations of behaviour. As a result, pupils learn to share instruments, taking turns sensibly and collaborating well when working in pairs. A good example was seen in a Year 2 lesson, in which pupils listened to a recording of familiar 'morning sounds' and worked together to sequence the pictures that matched them. Activities like these make a good contribution to pupils' personal development and pupils of different ethnic groups and home backgrounds work together amicably.

95. Only one lesson was seen in Years 3 to 6 which was good but information from discussions with staff and pupils indicates that teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall and standards attained are below those expected for pupils at the end of Year 6. Pupils are unable to achieve as much as they should because the school is poorly resourced for the subject. There are no pitched instruments, for example. Additionally, some teachers lack the confidence and expertise they need and the scheme of work is difficult for them to work with. Year 6 pupils report that although they have regular opportunities to sing they have had few for playing or composing. A small number of pupils receive instrumental tuition from visiting teachers and this helps them with their music in class. Currently the school has no choir or orchestra, although a very successful steel pans band that had been running at the school and closed due to absence has recently started up again.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

96. Where personal, social and health education and citizenship is taught as a discrete subject, teaching is good and pupils learn well. However, lessons are not a regular feature on the timetable and are also often of a short duration and so the pupils' learning is sporadic. In one very good lesson, a well-chosen poem about autism helped pupils to understand the similarities and differences between themselves and children of different abilities. Year 6 pupils have recently attended a local activity centre, to learn about aspects of health and safety and citizenship. The school provides appropriately for the pupils' sex and relationships education and ensures that the pupils are aware of the use and abuse of drugs. The work of the school council enables all pupils to take part in democratic voting and decision making for their school community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).