

INSPECTION REPORT

DINGLE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kingswinford

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103829

Headteacher: Mrs J Wheeler

Lead inspector: Mr Paul Baxter

Dates of inspection: 9-11 February 2004

Inspection number: 255973

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: | 4-11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 204 |
| School address: | Madeley Road Kingswinford West Midlands |
| Postcode: | DY6 8PF |
| Telephone number: | 01384-818305 |
| Fax number: | 01384-818306 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr Keith Corns |
| Date of previous inspection: | September 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This community primary school has 204 pupils aged between four and 11 years and is below average in size. The school also accommodates a purpose-built pre-school for children aged three to four years. The school serves a community within Kingswinford in the West Midlands reflective of an average socio-economic context. About six per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is below average. Less than four per cent of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds; no pupils have support for English as a language different to their mother tongue and this is low in relation to that found nationally. Approximately 14 per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, a below average proportion, and these include moderate learning, speech and communication, and emotional and social needs. No pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and this is also below average. The vast majority of children enter the reception class having experienced learning in the adjoining pre-school and most have average skills. Occasionally significant variation and change can affect individual year groups. The school holds several awards including: 'Investors in People 2001', 'Schools Achievement 2002' and 'Healthy Schools 2003'.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| 25217 | Paul Baxter | Lead inspector | Science Geography History Religious education |
| 9770 | John Baker | Lay inspector | |
| 27242 | Enid Rice | Team inspector | Foundation Stage Special educational needs Mathematics Art and design Music |
| 31838 | Martin Williams | Team inspector | English Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education |

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's **effectiveness** is **good**. Children enter the reception class with average standards. In response to mostly good teaching pupils achieve well and reach above average standards, especially in English and mathematics, by the end of Year 6. The headteacher provides good leadership and management. She works closely with the deputy headteacher and Chair of Governors to provide good leadership and is promoting an improving team approach to management that is helping to raise standards and give good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, showing good achievement stemming from good teaching and a well-planned curriculum.
- Consistently good provision in the reception class and in the adjoining pre-school means that children settle quickly and achieve well on entry to school.
- Most pupils have good attitudes, behave well and enjoy good relationships as a result of good care and guidance from staff and good provision for their social and moral development.
- Provision for the pupils' health and safety is very good and the school develops equally effective links with the local community that enrich the pupils' learning.
- Teaching for pupils in Year 2 promotes satisfactory learning, but provision is not always as effective as it could be in managing and supporting pupils with emotional and behavioural needs.
- The pupils' work is assessed well, but information is not used to best effect by teachers and managers to raise standards in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- The school's partnership with parents is weakened by delicate relationships with a few parents.

Overall, there has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen well in English and mathematics. Teaching has improved from satisfactory to good, especially in Years 3 to 6 with unsatisfactory teaching eliminated. The curriculum has been developed well and most key issues have been successfully addressed, but there is scope to increase the opportunities for pupils to show independence in their learning. The partnership with parents has slipped from good to satisfactory, with an increased minority of parental dissatisfaction, which the school is seeking to rectify. The developing team approach to leadership and management is strengthening the rate of improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| English | A | D | C | A |
| Mathematics | B | E | C | A |
| Science | A | D | D | B |

*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.*

Caution is needed in interpreting the data because the number of pupils in each year group is relatively small. The pupils' performance in national tests at Year 6 has not kept pace with the rise found nationally in recent years, but inspection shows that **most pupils achieve well** by the time they

leave the school in response to improved teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers also achieve well. This is illustrated by the pupils' well above average performance in relation to similar schools in the table above. Pupils' attainment in Year 2 is average, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. Although improving, achievement is constrained to satisfactory due to difficulties in supporting pupils with behavioural needs in this class. Pupils in Year 6 reach above average standards in English and in mathematics and average standards in science, ICT and religious education. These standards represent good achievement by the pupils. Standards in Year R are average in relation to the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in all the areas of learning, also showing good achievement.

Pupils' personal qualities are **good** overall. Most pupils show good attitudes and behaviour and a few have emotional and social needs and receive support. **Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** is **good** overall and attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are **good** overall, especially in English and mathematics. Teaching is consistently good in Year R and in Years 5 and 6. Strengths of teaching include good planning and teachers' knowledge, and warm relationships. In the most effective lessons, learning is enriched by the teachers' good questioning, which includes all pupils equally, and by the teachers' interesting presentations. Teaching assistants give very good support and pupils are keen to please. Occasionally less effective management of the pupils' behaviour, for example, in Year 2, insufficient use of assessments and an over-emphasis on worksheets restricts learning. The curriculum is good, including for children in Year R. There are very good links with the local community and good links with other schools and between subjects. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils is good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. She works closely with the deputy headteacher and the Chair of Governors to provide good leadership and an effective focus on improvement. The co-ordinator for early years provides good leadership. As a group, other key staff provide satisfactory but improving leadership and management that improve as colleagues work as a team. Financial planning is good, but financial information is not easy to read. The governors complete their statutory duties well and support the staff effectively.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are appreciative of the school, particularly the quality of teaching, encouragement of pupils, expectations of staff and the subsequent good progress of the pupils. A significant minority of parents have concerns, however, about the school's response to their views, the quality of leadership and management, the range of activities outside lessons and the incidence of bullying. Overall, parents' views of the school are satisfactory. Inspectors agree that relationships between some parents and the school should be better, but find that the school has addressed other concerns effectively.

The vast majority of pupils like their school, especially support from staff. Several pupils have concerns about the behaviour of other pupils and would like some lessons to be more interesting. The inspection team agrees with these comments, but finds that swift improvement is now being achieved.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED (These are being addressed by the school already)

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

- Strengthen the quality of provision for all pupils currently in Year 2.
- Make more effective use of assessments of pupils' work, in subjects other than English and mathematics, to raise standards.
- Develop management by involving subject leaders more fully in raising standards.
- Seek ways of promoting a more harmonious and effective partnership with parents, especially with the significant minority who have concerns, in order to enrich pupils' learning further.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Children achieve well in their reception year (Year R). Standards in Year 6 are above average and average in Year 2. These standards represent good achievement for the pupils in Year 6 and satisfactory achievement for pupils currently in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers achieve as well as their peers in all parts of the school. Standards are above average in English and mathematics and they are average in science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education by the end of Year 6. Standards are average in all these subjects by the end of Year 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 and these represent good improvement since the last inspection.
- Children achieve well in Year R and reach expected goals in all areas of learning.
- Consistently good teaching and learning in Years R, 5 and 6 promote good achievement for all pupils.
- Occasionally less effective management of the pupils' behaviour, for example, in Year 2, constrains pupils' learning to a satisfactory quality.
- Improved teaching and learning across the school is raising standards and enabling an increasing number of pupils to achieve well.

Commentary

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading | 15.7 (17.2) | 15.7(15.8) |
| Writing | 17.0 (16.0) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| Mathematics | 16.5 (17.9) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 26.6 (25.9) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| Mathematics | 27.0 (25.7) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| Science | 28.2 (27.7) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Caution is needed in interpreting statistical data because occasionally significant variation and change can affect individual year groups as they move through the school. Such was the case with the group of Year 6 pupils tested in 2003. In the main, although overall standards have not kept pace with the rises found nationally in recent years, results show that pupils have generally done well in relation to their prior attainment.

2. Most pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school and this stems from improved teaching and learning in all classes. Inspection findings indicate a good improvement in standards since the last inspection. Other factors that have contributed to this improvement and continue to impact positively on standards include:
 - A well planned and taught curriculum that enables pupils, with various levels of attainment, to develop skills progressively as they move through the school.
 - An improved level of consistently good practice in all classes that promotes good learning.
 - A strong commitment to teamwork, promoted by the headteacher, which is encouraging the sharing of expertise and improving the quality of teaching.
 - Well-targeted teaching in Years 3 to 6, including by the deputy headteacher, that is challenging all pupils across the range of prior attainments, especially higher attainers in mathematics, is helping to raise standards.
3. Standards are highest in English and mathematics because these subjects have benefited most from the strategies outlined above. The development of the pupils' writing skills and problem solving skills in mathematics has been a whole-school initiative. As a result, good practice is now firmly embedded across the school in these subjects. Standards are average in science, ICT and religious education, but they are rising in response to the increasing investigations and discussions offered to the pupils. Achievement is constrained to satisfactory in these subjects due to limited opportunities available for the pupils to present their findings reflectively through writing or other media and due to an over-reliance on using worksheets to record their findings.
4. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is average in reading, writing and mathematics, and in science, ICT and religious education. Although improved, learning and subsequent achievement is constrained to satisfactory at this time due to difficulties in managing pupils with special educational needs in this class. Overall, standards represent good achievement by the majority of pupils by the time they leave the school. Standards in Year R are broadly average in relation to the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception in all the areas of learning, and these also show good achievement.
5. Children generally start school with average skills and in response to good teaching and other adult support, develop good ways of learning both individually and co-operatively, initially in the pre-school and then in Year R. Learning is an enjoyable, practical adventure and curricular experiences are well planned and resourced. As a consequence, most children reach expected goals in all the areas of learning by the end of reception. Most gains are achieved in communication and language, and in their personal, social and emotional skills.
6. Most pupils do well in Year 1 and good links with staff in Year 2 are helping to enrich pupils' learning. Achievement is satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 2. Several pupils currently in Year 2 have significant emotional and social needs; with help from caring teaching and support staff satisfactory learning is sustained most of the time. Occasionally learning is constrained, however, by less effective management of the pupils' behaviour. Achievement is good overall through Years 3 to 6 for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers, and is strengthened by a well-planned curriculum and consistently good teaching in Years 5 and 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality good. Pupils' moral and social development is good and their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Overall the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in the classroom help them to achieve well overall.
- Relationships between pupils and pupils and staff are good. This is the result of the caring ethos of the school and the good example set by the staff.
- Pupils are confident and keen to take responsibility. This is the result of their being given appropriate opportunities to take responsibility, particularly in Year 6.
- Pupils' social and moral development is good because the school engages well with pupils and seeks their views. As a consequence, pupils take the responsibilities of living in a community seriously, showing good levels of maturity as they move through the school.
- Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory; they learn much about a range of different cultures, but there is scope for them to learn more about their own.
- Spiritual development is satisfactory; teachers and pupils explore opportunities in different areas of the curriculum, but these are often unplanned.

Commentary

7. The vast majority of pupils are keen to come to school; their punctuality is good and has a beneficial impact on learning. The school promotes pupils' attendance effectively and the overall rate of attendance matches that found nationally. In the vast majority of lessons pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Nearly all listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. This is the result of good teaching where teachers maintain a high level of interest and set appropriately challenging tasks that ensure that pupils of all abilities have the opportunity to achieve well.
8. Standards of behaviour are good, including young children in the pre-school and in Year R, where warm relationships support the children's confidence. Behaviour is good in the classroom and around the school including the playground where pupils play harmoniously together. Most pupils discuss and agree class rules and are fully aware of the high standards expected and insisted upon by all staff. Currently there are several pupils with emotional and behavioural needs in Year 2. Whilst their needs are managed satisfactorily, they are complex and need additional teaching support to improve the quality of learning. In general most pupils with special educational needs are included well and have their behavioural needs met effectively. No signs of aggressive behaviour were seen. However, a significant number of parents consider that bullying does occur and Year 5 pupils consider that there is some friction between themselves and Year 6. There was one, fixed-period exclusion last year and this was fully justified and correct procedures were followed.
9. From the day they start school pupils are encouraged to become independent and willingly take on a range of responsibilities appropriate to their age. Classes from Years 3 to 6 have representatives on the Dingle Kids council and Year 6 pupils take on a wide range of responsibilities including running the school shop and organising termly talent shows.
10. Relationships between pupils and pupils and staff are good. Pupils play harmoniously together and work well together in groups. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson pupils worked well together taking turns to contribute and listening respectfully to others. Relationships between pupils and staff are also good and are the result of staff giving a positive lead in engendering good relationships, for example, by giving praise and encouragement at every opportunity as well as acting as good role models.

11. The school listens to its pupils and values what they have to say. As a consequence, pupils learn to take on responsibility and work well together. They play harmoniously together, for example, partly because they were involved through class discussions and their playground council in designing playground markings for preferred games. Adults give a positive lead in engendering good relationships by taking opportunities to give praise and encouragement as well as acting as good role models. The lunchtime ICT club, for example, is supervised by teachers, but effectively run by pupils, where Year 6 unprompted and unselfconsciously shared their knowledge with Year 4.
12. The school broadens pupils' experience of the traditions of a range of other cultures through art and music and also through contributions from parents and other visitors. The study of Western European traditions is satisfactory, but this aspect is not as prominent as the study of traditions of more distant cultures.
13. Religious education lessons and assemblies offer good support to spiritual development, often through the contributions of Christian visitors and due to strong connections with places of worship. There are few similar links with other faiths, but the school ensures that its pupils regularly visit the local authority 'Faith City' where they meet people of a range of beliefs. Whilst teachers are encouraged to support pupils' spiritual development this is not systematically planned so opportunities during lessons may be missed.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.2 |
| National data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.1 |
| National data | 0.4 |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British |
| White – any other White background |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean |
| No ethnic group recorded |

| No of pupils on roll |
|----------------------|
| 181 |
| 5 |
| 2 |
| 2 |
| 1 |
| 2 |

| Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 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 good. Teaching and learning, the planned curriculum and provision for the pupils' health and welfare are good. The partnership with parents is satisfactory; the school works well with other schools and has a very good partnership with the local community. Taken together, these aspects have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good and result in good achievement. They are good in Year R and in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 2. Assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are good in English and mathematics and are satisfactory in all other subjects where judgements could be made.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching and learning in the reception class and in the adjoining pre-school means that children settle quickly and achieve well.
- Teachers deploy and work with teaching assistants very effectively and include and promote good relationships with the pupils and these have a positive impact on their attitudes and learning.
- An over-emphasis on using worksheets to record pupils' work is limiting the development of the pupils' independence in learning.
- The deputy headteacher's targeted teaching is having a beneficial impact and will support the raising of standards by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers share learning objectives productively with pupils and enrich learning through good links with previous work.
- Class-based computers are underused in a few classrooms, restricting the opportunities available for independent research.
- Assessment of the pupils' work is not always used to best effect in some foundation subjects, for example, design and technology and religious education.
- The good assessment procedures have not yet been fully embedded to ensure a consistent, precise response to individual needs throughout the school. This is limiting the value of their use to promote improved pupils' learning in foundation subjects.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 1 (3%) | 23 (59%) | 15 (38%) | 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.

14. English and literacy and mathematics and numeracy are taught well, strengthened by a well-established curriculum and whole-school approach that emphasises the teaching of pupils' skills. The teaching and learning in Year R are typified by consistently good use of resources, warm relationships and questioning, and good opportunities to learn independently by making their own choices across all the areas of learning. ICT is used effectively throughout the school to enrich pupils' learning when pupils visit the well-equipped computer suite, for example, when continuing research in history using the Internet. Class-based computers are not used to the full, however, limiting their contribution to the pupils' independence in learning.
15. Teaching has improved well since the last inspection. Teachers are successful in involving pupils in their learning and keeping them on task through questioning and in discussion. For example, as in a mathematics lesson in Year 6 where the teacher kept all pupils on task investigating word problems using factors of 30 and challenged them effectively through comments such as, "I haven't heard much from you this morning!". However, the development of the pupils' independence in learning is still limited in several subjects, for example, in science, by the over-emphasis on completing worksheets. This is because pupils have too few opportunities in several lessons to reflect in their written work or to plan and conduct their own lines of enquiry. This is limiting pupils' achievement on occasion.

16. Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge of the National Curriculum subjects and use this well to focus the pupils' learning. Such was the case in an English lesson to a mixed aged class of Years 5 and 6 pupils. The teacher used knowledge acquired previously in a career in industry to show the practical use of 'persuasive writing' to sell an idea for a product using an advertising poster. By using clear examples the teacher was able to help the pupils to understand and this aided their learning well.
17. Lessons are planned carefully and teachers are supported by the headteacher's promotion of teamwork and consistent strategies across the school. For example, by identifying clear learning objectives and sharing them with the pupils at the beginning of lessons and by making precise links with previous work teachers ensure that pupils extend their skills confidently. This development of consistently good practice is having a beneficial impact on pupils' achievement. Evident in the majority of lessons observed, it was illustrated well in an English lesson in Year 1 where the teacher developed the pupils' understanding of when to use capital letters effectively.
18. Resources are used particularly well throughout the school to raise the pupils' interest and to develop their understanding. For example, the developing and supportive use of whiteboards and overhead projectors is helping teachers to challenge all pupils at an appropriate level, especially higher attainers in mathematics. A strength of the teaching is the way teachers use, deploy and support the talented teaching assistants. Their work is well planned and teaching assistants in turn keep the teachers well informed. This helps to ensure that the work of teaching assistants is targeted closely and is very supportive of the pupils' needs. Teaching assistants give effective group and individual support. They promote warm relationships and offer close support in terms of pastoral guidance and, as a consequence, pupils feel secure. This was apparent in most lessons observed and is a particular feature of the teaching of younger pupils in Years R, 1 and 2. In Year R, for example, teaching assistants play a strong role in promoting the children's independence in learning by supporting their choice of practical activity.
19. The school has improved its strategies for challenging pupils across the range of attainments, including higher attaining pupils, and the deputy headteacher's contribution in teaching mathematics to combined groups of pupils from Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 is raising levels of attainment. In general pupils with special educational needs have their needs considered well. They receive good support from teaching assistants and are fully included in class activities, especially discussions. As a consequence, most learn as well as their peers. However, although their learning is satisfactory, a specific group of pupils with emotional and behavioural needs currently in Year 2, require additional teaching help at this time to cater more effectively for their developmental needs.
20. Strategies for assessment are good. Use of assessments of pupils' work is satisfactory overall. Teachers are using detailed assessment procedures particularly effectively in English and mathematics to track progress and match tasks to the needs of the pupils. They record the National Curriculum Levels each pupil is expected to reach each year and review these regularly. Whilst a lot of data had been regularly collected and held on computer, the information provided has been subject to a thorough analysis only since September 2003. This now includes targets. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, have their own personal targets to work towards to give them an understanding of what they need to do to improve. In response to the questionnaire, the vast majority of pupils felt that teachers showed them clearly how to make their work better. Thanks to monitoring and standardisation the use of data by all staff is becoming more consistent, but it is still better developed in some years than in others.

The curriculum

The school ensures that all pupils have a good quality and range of learning opportunities. It provides them with good opportunities to widen their experiences through extra-curricular activities and a variety of visitors to the school. The school's good accommodation and resources support their learning well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is good and effective links are made between different subjects.
- A good range of experiences both within and outside the school day develops pupils' confidence and self-esteem as well as their knowledge and understanding.
- The accommodation and resources are good and used well to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

21. The well-planned curriculum is a key factor in the pupils' attainment of above average standards and their good achievement by the time they leave school. There are good policies and schemes of work and teachers make good links between subjects; for example, religious education and history. They are especially careful to reinforce pupils' literacy skills in all areas, which adds considerably to the quality of pupils' learning. A similar approach to numeracy is less strongly developed. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage (Year R) is planned and resourced well. All areas of learning are carefully and effectively considered ensuring that the children have good opportunities to learn by making their own choices and through appropriate adult support.
22. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities including after-school sports clubs, lunchtime ICT, recorder and French clubs, choirs and group participation in poetry competitions and debates with other schools in the area. The ICT club, for example, although overseen by a teacher, is largely run by Year 6 pupils who share their expertise with younger schoolmates. This helps pupils learn and develop socially as well as academically. However, most clubs are for Years 3 to 6 only so these benefits do not extend sufficiently to pupils in Years 1 and 2, limiting their experience. The good range of visits, visitors to the school and very good links with the local community enhance the curriculum and extend all pupils' learning in a variety of ways. A visit by the local vicar, for example, involved Year 1 in an enactment of a baptism and made their religious education lesson much more vivid and memorable.
23. Teachers recognise the different levels of attainment within their classes. They regularly seek to include all pupils equally and to match work to meet pupils' needs, with notable success in Years 5 and 6. In general pupils with special educational needs receive good support and, as a result, their needs are well met. However, although satisfactory and improving, provision for an above average number of pupils with emotional and behavioural needs in Year 2 could be more effective. Pupils who have special educational needs have good individual educational plans highlighting their needs. These plans are regularly reviewed so that targets reflect the progress that they make. All pupils with special educational needs have access to the same curriculum as their peers and derive equal benefit to their learning. Specific ICT programs, for example, are well used to support lower attainers especially in English and mathematics.
24. The good-sized classrooms provide ample space for whole-class activities and for work in pairs and groups. Pupils may thus work more independently and take some responsibility for their own learning. The provision of two library areas also supports group activities and independent research. The school benefits from its own adjacent sports field and the refurbishment of its outdoor areas is almost finished. This includes markings for a variety of traditional playground games. Resources are of good quality and are well organised. Teachers make good use of them to support pupils' learning. The school's own evaluation identified some gaps, for example, in science and ICT resources for sensing and control. These are currently being addressed; a new digital microscope has just arrived and awaits full installation. The well-equipped computer

suite, now with 'Broadband', benefits all pupils and contributes increasingly to the standards attained.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Support and guidance for pupils' personal development is good and satisfactory for academic development. Pupils' involvement in the work and development of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good procedures to ensure a healthy and safe working environment.
- Good provision to ensure pupils' healthy and safe living.
- Pupils have a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults.
- Induction arrangements for pupils are good.
- The child protection policy needs to be reviewed and updated.

Commentary

25. Health and safety procedures are very good. The premises are inspected termly using very detailed checklists covering all areas of the school and any issues are resolved with appropriate urgency. Risk assessment checklists are in place for a wide range of potentially hazardous activities including visits and journeys, physical education, design and technology, science and use of computers.
26. Pupils' healthy and safe living is well promoted through the 'Healthy Schools' initiative and in particular, during 'Health and Safety Week', which is very well supported by visiting speakers. These include experts on food safety, environmental health, road safety and the fire service. Taking exercise is encouraged through visits to fitness centres and through the introduction and encouragement of skipping in the playground, an activity in which the headteacher leads by example.
27. Teachers and support staff know their pupils and their families very well, are sensitive to their needs and are thus able to provide good personal support and guidance. The good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically.
28. The care and support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils well. The school's values are reflected in the way that pupils with special educational needs are given opportunities to take part in all school activities. Their contributions are valued and their achievements recognised fully. The teacher with responsibility for special educational needs keeps good records of pupils' progress as they move through the school and their progress is reviewed regularly. Individual education plans highlight key areas for improvement for pupils with clear targets. These are shared with pupils and parents. A key factor is the early identification of such needs and the action taken to make the necessary provision to help pupils. However, help from outside agencies is sometimes difficult to obtain so that referral, and any subsequent improvement, is delayed. This is particularly significant in the Year 2 class, which contains a number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
29. Pupils are introduced to the school routine and helped to settle in by attending 'Dingle Duck' sessions in the reception class during the term prior to starting school. Children also become

familiar with the school through the pre-school group that operates daily and younger children attend activities afternoons that are held weekly.

30. A number of senior staff have received specialist training in child protection and pass this information on to all staff, which ensures satisfactory child protection procedures for the school. However, the policy needs to be reviewed and updated to incorporate the outcomes of recent training. The school is aware of this and has plans to address this issue.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has satisfactory links with parents, very good links with the community and good links with other schools. These have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are well informed about the school and their children's standards and progress.
- Parents' satisfaction with the school expressed in their responses to the questionnaire has deteriorated since the last inspection.
- The very good links with the community help to enrich the curriculum.
- The very good links with the local secondary school ensure that pupils transfer happily on to their next stage of education.

Commentary

31. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, the governors' annual report, half-termly newsletters and frequent other correspondence. Parents are well informed about their children's attainment and progress through termly consultation evenings and very good annual reports. Parents are also welcome to discuss concerns at any time.
32. Parents with pupils who have special educational needs are well informed about their child's progress by the teacher with responsibility for special educational needs. Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning and time is made for them to share their concerns with the co-ordinator if necessary. This partnership has a beneficial impact on the pupils' learning.
33. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning by providing some much valued help in the classroom and good support on trips and visits. Parents also raise significant funds for the school through the home-school association. School functions are well attended and most parents attend consultation evenings.
34. The good response to the parents' questionnaire indicates that parents care about the school. Their views are mainly positive, although not as positive as at the time of the last inspection. Areas where a significant number of parents expressed concern in the questionnaire and during discussions with inspectors were, bullying, feeling comfortable about approaching the school, leadership and management, and seeking parents' views. The inspection team did not witness any bullying or harassment, but acknowledges that there are pupils in the school with emotional and behavioural problems. Inspectors consider leadership to be good overall and management satisfactory. Inspectors agree that relationships with a few parents are delicate and hold the view that the school should continue to seek ways of promoting a closer relationship with these parents, as well as building further on the existing good relationships with the majority of parents for the benefit of the pupils.

35. There are strong links with Calvary Church whose representatives lead assembly regularly. Very good use is made of the school by the community and includes the Woodcraft group, an aerobics class, the local church and Sunday school. The school also runs a weekly activity afternoon for parents and toddlers. The school makes very good use of the local area as an educational resource including visits to the Wyre Forest Discovery Centre and the Construction Industry Centre. Also many organisations and speakers visit the school, particularly during 'Focus Weeks', for example, during a 'Health and Safety Week' in the autumn term, and they make a very positive contribution to the pupils' learning.
36. The very good links with the local secondary school include providing specialist staff to teach at the primary school and use of the secondary school's swimming pool, and these have a beneficial impact on pupils' skills. The good induction arrangements include talks to Year 6 pupils, two induction days and the provision of a Year 9 'buddy', and these help to ensure a smooth transfer to the next stage of learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the school is good overall and the management of the school is satisfactory. The governance of the school is good and the school continues to improve.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good monitoring of teaching by the headteacher has had a significant impact on improving its quality, but some co-ordinators have still to impact fully in this aspect.
- Co-ordinators who have been in post for some time have a good idea of what needs to be done in their subjects and are leading with enthusiasm and effectiveness. There is good leadership of English, mathematics, special educational needs and in the Foundation Stage (Year R).
- The headteacher, deputy head teacher and Chair of Governors have worked well to establish a good team commitment to the future development of the school.
- Performance data, such as test results, are routinely being analysed to find out what they show about progress and ways to improve. However, several subject leaders are new to their posts and have still to make best use of assessments to raise standards.
- Overall, provision for pupils in Year 2, although satisfactory, is an area for development.
- The governors support and work effectively with the staff to develop the school in a clear and purposeful manner and fulfil their statutory obligations well.

Commentary

37. The headteacher and deputy provide strong and caring leadership with a commitment to raise standards in all aspects of the school's work. The deputy headteacher contributes well to the leadership of the school. Even though this is a relatively recent appointment, the headteacher's vision for development is both shared and promoted strongly by the deputy headteacher. The headteacher, deputy and Chair of Governors have worked hard to establish a supportive atmosphere for staff in the school and a positive climate for learning. The commitment that all staff show to the inclusion of pupils, regardless of level of attainment, contributes strongly to the good ethos of the school.
38. Standards in English and mathematics have been the focus for development and at the same time the whole curriculum has been viewed, by encouraging co-ordinators to take the lead in their areas. The co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have responded well to this, even though some are newly appointed and have yet to have a full impact fully on standards. They are aware

of what needs to be done through their own analysis, and have action plans for improvement. Monitoring of teaching, largely in English and mathematics, has, nevertheless, had a significant effect on improving provision and raising standards. The school self-evaluation, completed before the inspection, closely matches the judgements in most areas of the inspection showing that the school has an accurate knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. The challenge to the leadership now is to move beyond the close focus on English and mathematics to continue improvement and to raise standards and the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum.

39. The co-ordination for the Foundation Stage (Year R) is good and ensures a smooth transition from the adjoining pre-school and good links with the teachers in Year 1. As a result, children achieve well. The management of special educational needs is good, showing that the investment in allowing the co-ordinator some time without direct classroom responsibilities has been valuable. Effective procedures have been established for the early identification of pupils who need support, from pre-school onwards. Support staff are effectively deployed and supported. However, the deployment of support for several pupils with emotional and behavioural needs in Year 2, although satisfactory, is an area that should be stronger. Teacher assistants support the teacher and pupils well, but additional teaching support is needed to ensure that all pupils in this year group develop to their full potential as they move through the school.
40. The monitoring of teaching is sound. Performance management is also in place, appropriately linked to professional development and school improvement planning. Management is enriched by developing an effective team approach to decision-making, but is restricted occasionally by insufficient up-to-date information gathered by co-ordinators. Results are analysed effectively by the headteacher and deputy linked with targets for development. However, all co-ordinators are not as yet fully involved in analysis of their own subjects and this is restricting improvement.
41. Under the careful and dedicated direction of a hard working Chair and a very experienced and influential Vice-Chair the governors fulfil their statutory duties well. These include appropriate strategies for ensuring racial harmony and the inclusive ethos of the school. They play a strong and effective role in maintaining and developing the fabric of the school so that it promotes learning well. Several governors either work in the school or visit the school regularly to support pupils and staff. Although information is occasionally presented in a complex form governors generally have a good knowledge of the strength and weaknesses of the school. The governors play an effective part, for example, by appointing new staff carefully and by working to achieve an additional classroom, in promoting improvements. These are now having a beneficial impact on standards.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 470,702 |
| Total expenditure | 518,060 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,523 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Balance from previous year | 119,114 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 71,756 |

42. The headteacher and administrative assistant, with accountancy advice from the local education authority and support from the finance committee of the governing body, plan the budget effectively over the medium and long term. For example, the large carry forward from 2001/2002, shown in the table above, contained £90,000 of accrued capital funding that has

now been spent prudently to create the additional classroom. The £71,756 carried into 2003/2004 has been used effectively to update ICT equipment and to provide additional teaching support to meet pupils' needs.

43. This strategy generally enables the school to make good use of its staff and resources, including additional grants for pupils with special educational needs and to support standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT. A relatively new and successful feature, the teaching of potentially higher attainers by the deputy headteacher, is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Evaluation of effectiveness is less consistent in the short term. Overall financial control and management are good. However, governors are not always presented with budgetary information in an easy to read format and, consequently, their consideration of 'best value' is satisfactory. The currently used computer-generated printouts require too much additional explanation before they can be understood, limiting a more effective consideration of 'best value'.
44. Overall, although expenditure per pupil has been above average in recent years, the pupils' good achievement represents good value for money. This is an improvement compared to the satisfactory value identified at the time of the last inspection.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision is good for children in Year R and children achieve well. At the time of inspection, some children had been in school for one term and others for a few weeks. They enter school with a range of attainment, but overall attainment is broadly average for all areas of learning.

The provision is managed well and, as a result, achievement is at least good in all areas of learning. Teaching during the last inspection was judged as good and this inspection shows that it has continued to be consistently good in all areas of learning. A wide range of practical activities contributes to this stimulating the children and supporting their learning well. Teaching seen during the inspection showed high expectations of the children of the present class. The main strengths of the teaching seen during inspection include good detailed planning for all adults teaching or supervising children's activities. Their progress is also monitored well with individual targets so that children know what they are learning. All adults manage the children very well and the good ratio of adults to children ensures that the needs of all are well met. Good induction procedures are in place and strong links exist with the pre-school that is on the school site. These ensure continuous good learning for the children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well because good teaching encourages them to take responsibility for their own actions at an early age.
- The children reach average standards for their age by the end of the year.

Commentary

45. The teacher and other staff provide a secure environment for work. Classroom routines are quickly and securely established. All children enter the room quietly and sit politely, listening carefully when the register is taken. They co-operate well with each other in group activities and already work independently when necessary. For example, children dress themselves and are encouraged to help each other when they are in difficulty. The teacher provides a good balance of directed and chosen activities in a classroom with an atmosphere of harmony.
46. From the outset, staff teach the children rules and responsibilities, which are on display. There is a carefully established routine in which children participate. Children with special educational needs are well integrated and receive good support. They are confident, as could be seen with a child who had speech difficulties, but was eager to discuss his work. All children are helped to maintain concentration by the interesting activities offered. As a result, even at this stage, children are able to sit quietly and work independently. They are likely to reach this Early Learning Goal by the end of the year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher and support staff provide good opportunities to develop children's language skills and teaching is good overall.
- Early reading and writing skills are taught systematically and well and this promotes good achievement.

Commentary

47. Children in Year R have developing speaking and listening skills. All adults help by speaking slowly and clearly ensuring clear explanations of the tasks expected of children. They often repeat back, using clear speech, children's replies to questions to promote understanding effectively. Expectations of attentive learning are met well by the children and signals for children to stop are already well established and effective.
48. Good links exist with the pre-school, which the majority of children have attended. The result of this is a continuity of approach to writing and learning especially in letters and sounds. This structured approach with well thought out practical activities gives good support to the good start made in the pre-school. An example was seen where a child working on the story of 'Noah's Ark', drew a picture of an elephant and was able to use his phonic skills to label his work. Another child worked freely in the 'Discovery Hour' and wrote a few lines unaided in a 'story' about his picture. Teaching is good and most children are on line to reach this Early Learning Goal by the end of the year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of well thought out practical activities ensures that early number work is well covered.
- Numbers are used well in other activities to reinforce learning.
- Teaching is good in this area of learning.

Commentary

49. The children are provided with interesting tasks that are well matched to their mathematical development and the teaching and learning are good. Adults take every opportunity to develop mathematical language. For example, counting 'pairs' of shoes around the class.
50. When reinforcing counting, literacy skills are also reinforced in such tasks as matching games where words like 'same' and 'different' are highlighted. The teacher used physical activities such as working in 'pairs' in the hall to reinforce work in mathematics with a concept that some children found difficult. Children achieve well in this area of learning to reach Early Learning Goals.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures that children learn well about the world around them.
- The teacher provides a broad curriculum and a variety of practical activities to promote interest and good achievement.

Commentary

51. The working area for children in Year R is well organised and, although it is not very spacious, it is used well. In a lesson seen, children used a computer program effectively as an extension to mathematical activities on 'pairs'. Objects were matched on the screen and the children showed good mouse control. Other children built houses for animals and were able to check that they were big enough. The teacher planned activities well identifying clear objectives. Children were interested in their work and skilful questioning helped them to solve problems. Good work was celebrated at the end of the lesson for all children who had tried hard
52. Photographs of children at work, show that the teacher plans a good variety of activities to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them. They explored autumn leaves in a wooded area, experienced play in the snow and found tracks and patterns from their footprints. They related personal experiences with postcards displayed in the classroom; for example, 'I like swimming'. Children were introduced to celebrations with christening cards that had been made and a multicultural aspect was highlighted with work on Divali. Children are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children can use their bodies well to move in a range of ways and are starting to link movements.
- Children are developing a good use of space.
- Teaching is good.

Commentary

53. The children enjoy outside physical play as well as whole-class physical education lessons in the hall. During the inspection the children working in the hall, could run, jump, hop and most of them could skip. They were able to change their mode of moving in a 'follow-my-leader' game led by the class teacher and teaching assistant. Children copied the movements closely and fun was had by all! Children are learning to watch each other's movements, and demonstrations of good work by children who had tried hard, reinforced this. Children are attaining Early Learning Goals.
54. Good opportunities are provided for children to use construction sets to make and design their models. A range of equipment, for example, scissors, paintbrushes and pencils, are provided to encourage the development of good hand control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- A well-planned curriculum and good resources promote good learning.

Commentary

55. The role-play area of a 'vet's` surgery', is resourced well, stimulating learning and providing children with exciting play. This area contains a pen for sick animals, an office with telephone and a first aid kit to help the 'patients'. Such role play gives children time for conversation and the opportunity to play well together.
56. The children paint pictures of themselves, make collage faces and snow pictures. Patterns and models, which result from the free activity of the 'Discovery Hour', are also displayed in the classroom, giving all children the opportunity to celebrate success. Children are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, with effective assessment contributing to good achievement and above average standards by the time pupils leave the school.
- Teachers develop the pupils' speaking and listening skills well through the use of challenging questions and opportunities to speak in a variety of circumstances.
- The school encourages reading effectively through good resources. Pupils read well, but younger pupils' library skills are not yet well developed.
- The subject is well led by the co-ordinator and progress is carefully monitored. The current focus on writing is raising standards.
- Literacy skills are developed well in other subjects.

Commentary

57. Standards are broadly average by Year 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are above average by Year 6 and pupils' achievement is, therefore, good over their time in school since they have broadly average skills on entry. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
58. The quality of teaching and learning is good. A good feature of the lessons observed was the way teachers shared the learning intention at the start of each lesson. Consequently, the pupils knew what they were expected to learn. In a similar way at the end of the lesson most teachers encouraged pupils to reflect on how well they had reached those objectives. Occasionally this review was not as thorough as it should have been so pupils were not entirely clear about what they needed to do next. Teachers generally use assessment well to check how well pupils are learning. Their assessments are used to set the targets pupils are expected to achieve by the end of each year. Such targets and the accompanying comments and indications in marking are less prominent in the books of younger pupils than in those of pupils in Years 5 and 6, who are moving forward more rapidly. These pupils have particularly detailed personal targets that they also refer to in lessons. This is helping to raise standards especially in their writing. These strategies ensure that pupils with different needs are fully included and achieve equally successfully.

59. Pupils speak well because they have plenty of opportunities to ask and answer questions, take part in drama and also participate in debate. The high expectations of most teachers mean that pupils in general are attentive in conversation and make pertinent contributions. They have a good idea of the tone and language appropriate to different situations. This also demonstrates their good attitudes and behaviour.
60. The school is strongly focused towards reading, with two well-stocked library areas and stimulating displays in all classes. Older pupils are adept at locating relevant books and also using their research skills via the Internet. Whilst pupils in Year 2 read with interest their research skills were less developed; they had little experience of finding a book on a particular subject.
61. Curriculum management is good. The school has revised its tracking of standards with great care, which has helped it identify pupils' needs more clearly and, where appropriate, introduce support programmes. It has taken steps to improve writing performance, which is not yet as well developed as listening, speaking and reading, by increasing the time for extended writing and in particular by a recent strong focus on creative writing. These are already paying dividends. Another positive feature is the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning that stems from the good leadership of the headteacher. There is good teamwork amongst the staff and lessons are monitored so that best practice may be shared.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Language and literacy have been well developed through good emphasis on key vocabulary and by pupils using their discussion, research and writing skills to support work in other subjects. This involves communication for a variety of purposes. In history, for example, pupils write regularly at length about famous people and events. In contrast, pupils are required to use a more terse style to plan and evaluate their work in design and technology and in science. Word-processing skills are well developed in ICT; pupils write in a good variety of styles including instructions, letters, news articles and poems. The drafting involved also helps develop spelling and understanding of grammar.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Average standards have been maintained by Year 2 since the last inspection, while those in Year 6 have improved and are now above average.
- The organisation of pupils from Years 3 to 6 into groups based on prior attainment is used effectively to raise standards.
- Teaching and pupils' learning are good overall with the deputy headteacher's support of particular groups, for example, higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6, having a positive impact on standards.
- Older pupils have improved in rapid mental calculation.
- The leadership of the co-ordinator is good. The subject has been well monitored and pupil performance data analysed. The information is used efficiently to raise pupils' standards by the end of Year 6.

Commentary

63. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a secure grounding in number calculation and by Year 6, the organisation of mathematics where all groups of differing ability are targeted, ensures that work is matched well to pupils' needs, resulting in pupils developing the skills to calculate rapidly. Pupils easily recall their multiplication facts up to ten times ten, and use them quickly in conjunction with corresponding division facts, leading them to independent learning. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils solved problems choosing and using appropriate number operations. Mental strategies are well taught, with a clear expectation of what pupils should know and how rapidly they should be able to calculate. As a result, good teaching ensures that by Year 6, pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average.
64. Teaching and pupils' learning in lessons seen were good overall. Teachers based planning effectively on the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons started with a brisk mental arithmetic session that pupils enjoyed. Devices such as interactive whiteboards were set at 'fast' and individual whiteboards to write answers, ensuring that all pupils were actively involved. Year 4 pupils used a 'thumb sign', either up or down, to show if they agreed with answers, while older pupils were encouraged to explain their findings. These tools gave the teachers a quick assessment of how well the class were performing. The use of partners was another good strategy, which ensured that all pupils were fully involved in lessons. A useful display in Year 3 showed pupils ways to work with their partner. Classes are well managed during the main mathematical activities and learning support assistance well used to support pupils with special educational needs. Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics. In discussion, a pupil commented, "We have hard questions to answer, but learning is fun!".
65. Mathematics is a school focus within the school improvement plan and the co-ordinator provides good leadership. The teaching is well monitored and recent test results have been analysed to inform teachers' future planning. Targets have been set to raise standards and information used to set short-term achievable targets that pupils understand. Aims of lessons are highlighted in pupils' books, giving them a good knowledge of their learning. This subject is monitored well to ensure that pupils make good progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well in mathematics lessons and is planned satisfactorily in other subjects. Mathematical skills are used in science where data is presented in the form of graphs. Pupils use their measuring skills in design and technology and suitable programs are used as an extension to classwork ICT. In lessons observed, mathematical vocabulary was highlighted, linking well with English.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mostly satisfactory teaching with an increasing amount of good teaching ensures satisfactory achievement by all pupils.
- The average standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 6 represent an improvement compared to the previous inspection.

- There is an over-reliance on pupils' completing worksheets and this restricts opportunities for them to reflect about their findings or to enjoy the excitement of discovering things for themselves.
- The new team approach to subject leadership is having a positive impact on learning through practical investigation.
- The pupils co-operate well during scientific investigations.

Commentary

67. Inspection shows that most pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their capability. This applies equally to pupils with special educational needs and to higher attaining pupils. In general, however, pupils have too few opportunities to set up their own tests and follow their own lines of enquiry to solve problems and this is constraining achievement.
68. Most pupils develop appropriate observational skills by the end of Year 6 and predict outcomes with reasonable accuracy. For example, pupils understand forces, complete electrical circuits and investigate how substances dissolve. Pupils show average attainment in their written descriptions, but there is little evidence of pupils reflecting about their findings. The work scrutiny shows that pupils in Year 2 have a sound knowledge of 'fair testing'. They have an appropriate understanding of healthy eating, growth and differences between plants and animals. The quality of their work reflects their good attitudes to learning and shows that standards are rising.
69. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall.
Stronger features included:
- Very good use of support assistants to include all pupils equally and to help pupils to sustain their concentration.
 - Good planning that enables pupils to build on previous skills.
 - Good use of resources to support practical work and to enthuse the pupils.
 - Warm relationships between adults and pupils that promote the pupils' positive attitudes to learning.
- Less successful aspects included:
- Pupils continuing investigations in a manner prescribed by the teacher rather than setting up their own ways of finding things out.
 - An over-emphasis on using worksheets to write up experiments. Although this 'frees-up' time for investigation, it limits independence and becomes a form-filling exercise'.
70. Work in Years 5 and 6 included a successful emphasis on pupils discussing their findings and sharing ideas with others. Other lessons, such as in Year 4, included pencil and paper assessments with pupils talking about experiments rather than undertaking them, and this limited what they actually found out and learned. The teachers make interesting introductions to their lessons and make good links with previous work. For example, in Year 6, the teacher reviewed 'safe practice' and the need for accuracy in measurement and this supported the pupils' investigation of forces.
71. Resources are used effectively to support pupils' practical work and discussions, for example, about thermal conductors in Year 4, and help to develop the pupils' literacy skills. ICT is being used with increasing effectiveness, especially in the computer suite, for example, as in Year 3 to interrogate a database. In general, however, class-based computers were underused in the science lessons seen during the inspection. Teachers are diligent in emphasising the correct

terminology and technical language to use and this is promoting the pupils' understanding of concepts such as forces and changes.

72. The relatively newly appointed co-ordinator, with support from the existing co-ordinator and colleagues, has been successful in ensuring that the curriculum is planned well and this represents a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. They have achieved their aim in promoting a more consistent emphasis on pupils learning through practical investigation and this is having a positive effect on the pupils' achievement. As yet, however, the co-ordinators have had insufficient opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school, limiting their impact on standards and, therefore, their input is satisfactory at this time. Satisfactory assessments are completed at the end of each topic, but, as with teachers' marking, they are not consistently used to best effect to support future teaching and learning. The subject is resourced well and improved accommodation is having a beneficial impact on the pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. The school is currently reviewing its curriculum to provide greater challenge.
- Resources are good, including a computer suite now linked by 'Broadband' to the Internet.
- Although satisfactory overall the subject is used inconsistently across the curriculum.

Commentary

73. Staff training and the development of the computer suite have enabled the school to maintain average standards and satisfactory achievement since the last inspection. Pupils word-process work well and paint and draw using a variety of programs, but other aspects of ICT have received less emphasis. The school is currently reviewing its curriculum and assessment system for ICT so that pupils have a greater opportunity to reach above average standards. The use of ICT to control events and for modelling and sensing external events in Years 3 to 6, for example, has been relatively limited, restricting attainment. A digital microscope has just been purchased and when operational should improve opportunities in this area.
74. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is especially the case when pupils visit the computer suite. Strong features that promote learning are the teachers' planning, the consistent way that teachers manage the pupils' behaviour and the enthusiastic response from the pupils. The pupils enjoy their ICT work and co-operate well, and this enriches their learning. This was seen to good effect in a lesson in Year 2 where all pupils, including a few with emotional and behavioural needs, sustained concentration to record their poems effectively. At times, however, pupils have insufficient time to explore or find things out for themselves by using computers, as, for example, in a satisfactory lesson in Year 3 where the work on interrogating a database was too heavily directed by the teacher. Similarly class-based computers are not always used to best effect to develop the pupils' skills.
75. The school is well equipped with computers in all classrooms, two with interactive whiteboards, as well as a computer suite now with the benefit of 'Broadband'. The school has a digital

camera, but as yet this has only been used by staff. Although these facilities have been used to host sessions in learning for schools in the area not all teachers within the school are confident in using ICT to its fullest extent. Curriculum management is satisfactory because staff have received basic training. Their plans are checked, but lessons themselves are not systematically evaluated in order to identify further training needs more clearly. The school has identified teaching and support staff with significant ICT expertise. It now remains to bring the two elements together to help raise standards.

ICT across the curriculum

76. Teachers identify opportunities for pupils to develop the skills they have been taught through other subjects, but this varies from subject to subject and year to year. For example, word-processing skills are well used in English and form a regular part of learning in virtually all subjects. Teachers make use of appropriate programs to offer additional support especially in literacy. Art and painting programs are frequently used to illustrate a variety of tasks. Computer records show that Years 5 and 6 have used spreadsheets and graphs to support mathematics. Whilst ICT is used for specific support for lower attainers there was little evidence of its general use to support mathematics to the same extent as literacy. There are examples of Internet research to support history and geography. On balance, the use of ICT is satisfactory, but not as firmly embedded as it could be.

HUMANITIES

Religious education was inspected in full and is reported below. Geography and History were sampled.

77. Due to the school's cycle of planning it was not possible to observe any lessons in **geography**. A discussion with the subject co-ordinators, a relatively newly formed team, revealed that the subject receives appropriate emphasis across the school and is well planned and resourced. The co-ordinators are still evaluating work in the subject and provide satisfactory leadership. The scrutiny of pupils' work showed that some teachers are promoting the pupils' independence effectively, for example, in Years 5 and 6, to plan how to survey a river. This is not a consistent feature in the pupils' work from other classes though. The scrutiny of work and discussion with the co-ordinators also showed that assessments of the pupils' work are not used consistently to inform future teaching and learning and this is limiting benefits to pupils' achievement.
78. Teachers demonstrated good knowledge in the **history** lessons observed in Years 1 and 2 and in a mixed Years 5 and 6 class taken by the Year 6 teacher. Planning was thorough and pupils enjoyed the variety of resources and artefacts used effectively to promote their learning about changes in their locality over the last 100 years and 'Band Aid' respectively. Careful questioning was a feature of both lessons allowing pupils to express ideas about their findings. The scrutiny of work showed that the pupils' developing writing and ICT skills are used with increasing success to enrich pupils' learning. Not all teachers are using assessments of the pupils' work to inform new learning, however, limiting the otherwise positive impact of such writing on pupils' achievement. Discussion with the subject co-ordinators show that the subject is led satisfactorily and that teaching is supported by a well planned and resourced curriculum.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are taught to respect the religious beliefs of others.
- Pupils are encouraged to reflect about religious beliefs through discussion, but have insufficient opportunities to reflect through writing or other forms of expression.
- Visits and visitors make a very positive contribution to the pupils' learning.
- Assemblies make an effective contribution to the pupils' awareness and understanding of other religious beliefs.
- Assessment of the pupils' work is not used to best effect in promoting new learning.

Commentary

79. The pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 match those expected of pupils of these ages in the locally agreed syllabus. Most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and higher attainers, achieve satisfactorily.
80. Work in the subject is based on the locally agreed syllabus that has recently been revised. The taught curriculum ensures that pupils build appropriately on previous learning and develop a sufficient understanding of the support people receive from their religious belief and practice. Teachers are careful to link the pupils' own experience, for example, of the Christian faith, when studying other religions, such as Judaism, and develop similarities beneficially. The co-ordinator gives satisfactory leadership and has had a supportive impact on teaching and learning by planning suitable topics through which pupils' understanding can be developed. The co-ordinator has insufficient opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching, however, and this limits her impact on standards.
81. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In the best lessons seen, for example, in Years 1 and 5, learning was strengthened by warm relationships, good use of religious artefacts to raise pupils' interest and lively and knowledgeable contributions from visiting clergy to promote a spiritual dimension to pupils' experiences. The very good lesson in Year 1 was successful because the pupils were able to observe a role-play enactment of a ceremony of baptism and witness for themselves through the vicar's actions and his descriptions of the participants' responses the enjoyment of this religious practice. In a good lesson in Year 5, taken by the Year 6 teacher, the pupils' learning was strengthened by the teacher's well-planned use of illustrations and artefacts to promote a discussion about how Jews celebrate the 'Sabbath'.
82. Discussion is a helpful part of all lessons and teachers encourage and value pupils' ideas to promote new learning. The scrutiny of pupils' work revealed, however, that pupils have too few opportunities to reflect in other ways, for example, through extended writing or artwork and this is restricting achievement. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and take heed of pupils' responses in lessons. However, these observations are not always used effectively to plan future teaching and learning or to raise standards and this is a weakness that the co-ordinator is currently addressing.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The focus of this inspection did not include a full examination of the provision in these subjects, but work was sampled in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

83. Work on display shows how pupils develop skills in **art and design**. Visitors to the school are attracted by the colourful displays showing a range of work in classrooms, corridors and the

hall. For example, tie-dye patterned fabrics in Year 2, screen printing in Year 3 and papier-mache animal sculptures in Year 4. Photographs of displays based on the work of famous artists like L S Lowry were seen in Year 6 and attractive aboriginal patterns in Year 4 gave a multicultural flavour to the subject. Greek masks by pupils in Year 5 showed development in three-dimensional skills linked with history.

84. In a satisfactory Year 1 lesson, pupils made self-portraits based on the miniatures of Isaac Oliver. They were encouraged to think about their work and a good link was made with literacy in their class discussion. They collaborated well in group work, but were not given many opportunities to choose resources, leading to independent learning. However, clear explanations by the teacher led them to work confidently and they showed a developing awareness of others' work. Pupils in a mixed Years 5 and 6 class used a range of skills in a good lesson taken by the Year 6 teacher. They used many techniques to produce different effects in the making of hats. A strong link was made with design and technology in this lesson. Pupils decorated their hats in a variety of ways and could discuss the whole making process from research, resources used, making and evaluation. Pupils were able to communicate their ideas and meanings in discussion. They commented fully on the methods and approaches used in their own and others' work. A good link was made with ICT, when pupils moved to the computer suite to make their own evaluation sheet. The two teachers working in both halves of this lesson showed enthusiasm for the subject and successfully transferred this to the pupils. The expectation that each pupil would produce work of good quality using good quality resources resulted in very creative work. The co-ordinator has recently been appointed, but already has a good overview of the subject with action plans for future development.
85. Work in **design and technology** meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Samples of work and photographic evidence show that the subject receives appropriate emphasis within the school's curriculum. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and monitors the teachers' planning. The subject is resourced appropriately and the co-ordinator is establishing new connections and is developing existing links with the local community further to extend the pupils' making skills, for example, through bricklaying and carpentry. The scrutiny of the pupils' work shows that pupils in Years 5 and 6 develop the idea of a design brief effectively when making hats and costumes. Pupils in Year 2 sketch their designs of wheeled vehicles. There is limited evaluation of finished products, however, showing that assessment is not used to best effect in informing future teaching and learning.
86. One lesson in **music** was observed during the inspection. Evidence was gathered from documentation, classroom display, assemblies and discussion with co-ordinators. Insufficient evidence was seen to make a judgement on teaching and learning overall, but positive features were the way pupils work well together and the good use of resources. In a satisfactory Year 4 lesson, pupils learned about scales and melodies. A variety of resources were used linking music with information and communication technology, with the use of an interactive whiteboard and taped music. Pupils generally responded well to the music and were able to note differences as the melody moved from high to low. The teacher had good subject knowledge, supporting pupils well, particularly a pupil with special educational needs. Good links were made with literacy, highlighting musical vocabulary such as 'descending scale' and 'extract'. The introduction of the 'tonicsol-fah' at the end of the lesson proved difficult for some pupils, who were confused with hand signals. Indications are that pupils have limited opportunities to make music themselves restricting the benefits to their skills.
87. During assembly pupils sang sweetly to a taped accompaniment. They showed very positive attitudes by 'clapping their hands' and 'clicking their fingers' as soon as they recognised the

melody. When a new song was introduced, pupils were told that the choir would learn it first so that they could give a lead to the school as a whole. The music set the scene for assembly and focused the pupils, creating a positive atmosphere for worship. Two co-ordinators have responsibility for music. They work well together, taking charge of singing and instrumental work respectively. The school takes every opportunity to invite musicians into school for stringed instruments and brass so that all pupils have the opportunity to see actual performances. Cross-curricular links are made. For example, Tudor minstrels visited, linking with history. Some pupils learn to play instruments such as the keyboard and clarinet, led by peripatetic staff. Classes for recorders, ocarina and choir are available for older pupils, led by the music co-ordinators. Opportunities are planned for pupils to perform to a wider audience with, for example, a recorder festival at a local secondary school and a mass choir performance at Dudley Castle.

88. Two satisfactory **physical education** lessons were seen, one in Year 5 and one in Year 6. A visiting 'Sportslink' coach led both lessons with the class teachers playing a supportive role. Teaching was typified by an appropriate emphasis on developing the pupils' skills and clear instructions that helped to promote the pupils' positive attitudes. Learning was restricted to satisfactory due to the limited opportunities offered to the pupils to evaluate their own and each other's contributions. Discussions with the pupils and the subject co-ordinator showed that the subject is a valued part of the school curriculum and activities are planned well. A good range of extra-curricular activities enriches learning in the subject and extends the pupils' skills and experiences.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PSHE)

No direct teaching was observed and evidence was insufficient to report in detail on this area. Therefore, personal, social and health education was sampled.

89. Assemblies and religious education contribute well and encourage all pupils to develop a good awareness and appreciation of the needs of others. Health education is a good feature of the curriculum and has resulted in the school receiving the 'Healthy Schools Award'.
90. The school follows a published programme of PSHE and citizenship and supplements with materials from the local authority. The programme contributes to the rounded development of the pupils. It included in the autumn term, for example, a focus on 'Health and Safety', making use of cross-curricular links with geography to conduct a survey on litter and the environment. Its current focus is entitled 'Emotional Literacy' and includes such activities as debates on various issues where pupils learn to express themselves fully within an appropriate social framework. Work in this area of the curriculum has a beneficial impact on the pupils' attitudes and behaviour and overall personal development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

| | |
|--|----------|
| The overall effectiveness of the school | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |

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|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Overall standards achieved | 3 |
| Pupils' achievement | 3 |

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|---|----------|
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 3 |
| Attendance | 4 |
| Attitudes | 3 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 3 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |

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|--|----------|
| The quality of education provided by the school | 3 |
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| How well pupils learn | 3 |
| The quality of assessment | 4 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 3 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 3 |

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|--|----------|
| 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 | 4 |
| The effectiveness of management | 4 |

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