

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MATTHEW'S C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103404

Headteacher: Miss B D Thomas

Lead inspector: Mr R Bonner

Dates of inspection: 6 – 8 October 2003

Inspection number: 257859

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	St Matthew's CofE Primary School
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	208
School address:	Duddeston Manor Road Nechells Birmingham
Postcode:	B7 4JR
Telephone number:	0121 359 1602
Fax number:	0121 333 4392
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Jo-anne Bevan
Date of previous inspection:	22 February 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

St Matthew's is a voluntary controlled Church of England Primary School with 208 pupils aged from rising 5 to 11 on roll. The number on roll is steadily declining, following redevelopment in the area. The school is situated in a challenging inner-city district of Birmingham. Crime rates are high and the immediate area is one of significant deprivation with high levels of unemployment. Nearly two thirds of the pupils are eligible for free school meals – over three times the national figure. About a quarter of pupils have special educational needs, which is above the national average. Three pupils have statements of special educational need. Pupils who attend the school come from a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Over a quarter speaks English as an additional language, which is well above the national average and these numbers are rising rapidly. The main languages spoken are Somali, Bengali and Urdu. There are two pupils with refugee status, from the Congo. There is very high mobility within the community. This causes disruption to many classes in the school. The school is part of an Education Action Zone that has supported it in seeking to improve the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and assisted in the development of business partnerships. Since the previous inspection, many of the teaching staff have left the school, including all of the senior management team. Children enter the school with very low levels of attainment in all six areas of learning but most especially in communication, language and literacy.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25384	Mr R Bonner	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education English as an additional language
11437	Mr A Anderson	Lay inspector	
21893	Mrs V Brittain	Team inspector	English Science Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs
30781	Mrs W Richardson	Team inspector	Geography History Music Religious education Foundation stage

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services  
 Strathblane House  
 Ashfield Road  
 Cheadle  
 Stockport  
 SK8 1BB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING SUBJECTS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>31</b>

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

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

The **effectiveness of the school is satisfactory**. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Children in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2 have achieved well over time. However, pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not always made the progress they should. This is mainly as a result of high levels of staff mobility in the past two years. Inspection evidence shows that pupils throughout the school are now achieving well, and making good progress in response to good teaching. Significant changes in staff also disrupted the senior management team, and as a result the strategic direction of the school was temporarily lost. However, this has now been regained and the headteacher and the new senior management team have a clear view for the improvement of the school. The headteacher and governors have recently appointed a deputy headteacher, a literacy co-ordinator, and a leading mathematics teacher whose roles include the raising of standards in English, mathematics, science and information communication technology, and the development of rigorous systems to check pupils' progress. It is too early in the year to make any firm judgement about the effectiveness of these appointments, but they are positive measures in the school's efforts to improve standards and to raise the level of pupils' achievements. There are many positive features, but until standards are raised, particularly in Year 6, the school is judged to provide satisfactory **value for money**.

#### **The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:**

- The standards recorded in the 2002 tests for 7-year olds were well above average when compared to similar schools.
- Governors have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide good levels of support.
- Pupils throughout the school are supported well by the teaching assistants.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school's action to improve attendance is very good.
- The school works hard to provide equal opportunities for all its pupils.
- Pupils are well cared for in a safe working environment.
- The school has good links with the community and other schools.
- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are below the national average.
- The school's methods of checking pupils' progress require improving.
- Attendance is below the national average.

Since the last inspection standards of attainment in Years 1 and 2 have improved in writing and mathematics, particularly in relation to schools in a similar context. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school has also improved, including the ways in which teachers mark pupils work. There have been satisfactory improvements in the provision for outdoor play for children in the reception class, but it could be better still. Standards in information and communication technology are not as high as those recorded in the last inspection. Frequent changes in staff have had a detrimental effect on the development of this subject. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory, but it is not as strong as it was at the time of the last inspection.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E*	E*	E*	D
mathematics	E*	E*	E	D
science	E*	E*	E	D

*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.*

**Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.** Test information from previous years indicates that in the reception class and in Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well. But this has not been the case in Years 3 to 6 where frequent changes in staff has had a detrimental effect on pupils' progress. The headteacher has put into place effective strategies to improve this situation. In response to good teaching, the vast majority of pupils are now achieving well. During the inspection, pupils' achievement was satisfactory or better in all but one lesson observed. It was good or better in nearly two thirds of lessons. Close examination of pupils' work supports the view that the vast majority, including those who speak English as an additional language, is making good progress in their learning. There is, however, a minority of pupils who find it difficult to behave properly or to concentrate for any length of time. In spite of teachers' best efforts, these pupils do not always achieve as well as they might. From a very low starting level, particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy, the vast majority of children are unlikely to attain the standards they are expected to reach by the end of the reception class. In spite of the good progress pupils make in Years 1 and 2, standards in English, mathematics and science are still below the national average. In Years 3 to 6, high levels of pupil mobility and increasing numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language joining the school, has had the effect of lowering standards. Although pupils in these years are currently making good progress in their learning, standards in Year 6 are currently below average in mathematics, and well below average in English and science. Attainment in information and communication technology is below the national average throughout the school. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in religious education in relation to those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

**Pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good.** Most pupils like school and respect the established values. They have good attitudes to their work. The standard of behaviour is satisfactory overall. Teachers and other staff are good role models in their relationships and interaction with each other and with pupils. There is a well-developed reward system to encourage kindness and tolerance. Values are fostered through the caring, supportive and good relationships that exist between staff and pupils and the good example set by all those working in the school. Most pupils attend regularly and on time. There are, however, a few pupils whose attendance is poor and who are frequently late. Some parents and carers do not ensure that their children come to school regularly and on time.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.** Teaching and learning throughout the school are good. In all the lessons seen, teaching was at least satisfactory. Over three-quarters of lessons were good or better, and nearly a third were very good. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and have high expectations of pupils and their work. Lessons are usually well planned and organised, and teaching assistants are deployed effectively to promote pupils' learning. Pupils are encouraged to work hard and are often provided with very good levels of support. Teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy are good. Overall, the curriculum provision

is satisfactory, but the school recognises that more work needs to be done in improving provision for the teaching of information and communication technology. There are good opportunities for enriching the quality of pupils' learning through a range of visits and visitors into school. The school's positive links with the community and other schools provides a strong contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education but the parents' involvement in the day-to-day life of the school and in helping their children at home is inconsistent.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** The headteacher and newly established senior management team has a clear view of where the school needs to improve and how this is going to be achieved. The headteacher is particularly well supported by the deputy headteacher who has a pivotal role in raising standards. His skills and knowledge contribute significantly to the work of this team. The governing body is effective in its work in providing support and guidance to the school. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and help shape the vision and direction of the school. The chair of governors, the chair of the finance committee and the foundation governor are particularly active in evaluating the effectiveness of the school and supporting its work.

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

In conversations with parents, at the parents' meeting and in their questionnaires, parents expressed general support for the school. However, a minority had some reservations about the behaviour of pupils in the school, the information they receive about their children's progress and the leadership and management of the school. Most pupils have positive views about the school especially the support they receive in their lessons. They are pleased that the bullying that has sometimes occurred in the past is now happening much less often.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- Raise standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology throughout the school.
- Develop rigorous systems to check pupils' progress.
- Improve the levels of attendance.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning subjects**

**Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- In comparison to schools in similar contexts, the results of the national tests in 2002 for seven-year-olds were well above average in writing and mathematics.
- Children in the reception class and pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well over time.
- In comparison to the national average, standards of Year 6 pupils are at least below average in mathematics and information and communication technology and well below average in English and science.
- In the past, pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not made sufficient progress, but pupils throughout the school are now achieving well.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children enter the school with very low levels of attainment in all six areas of learning but most especially in communication, language and literacy. Increasing numbers of children are joining the school in the reception class who do not speak English as their mother tongue. Many of these do not speak or understand any English at all. Children are generally well supported in their lessons and make good progress in their learning. However, a few of these children have very specific learning needs, which are not always fully met, in spite of the best efforts of all staff concerned. Even though children achieve well in the reception class only a small minority are likely to achieve the expected levels by the end of the year.
2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well because of the good teaching and support they receive. However, because of their low starting point, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science in Year 2 is still below the national average. In recent times high levels of pupil and staff mobility and poor standards of behaviour have had a detrimental effect on pupils' achievements in Years 3 to 6. However, as a result of recent changes in staff the quality of teaching and learning has improved and pupils are now making good progress in their learning. Even so, inspection evidence points to standards in Year 6 that are below average in mathematics and well below average in English and science. Attainment in information and communication technology is below the national average throughout the school. Since the last inspection there have been a number of curriculum leaders who have joined the school for short periods and then left. Many teachers lack confidence and subject expertise in this subject. As a result this subject has lacked development and standards have fallen. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in religious education in relation to those identified in the locally agreed syllabus.
3. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is similar to that made by other pupils in the school. These pupils are well supported in class by able teaching assistants and often make good progress in their learning. However, pupils are sometimes given work that is too difficult for them, particularly in mathematics lessons, and as a result they do not make the progress that they should. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported in their learning and make good progress.

### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002*

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	12.9 (13.5)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	13.8 (13.3)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	16.5 (15.1)	16.5 (16.2)

*There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. At the end of Year 2, results in tests in 2002 were in line with the national average in mathematics, below the national average in writing and well below the national average in reading. In comparison to schools in similar contexts, results were well above average in writing and mathematics but below average in reading. The school has been successful in raising standards in writing and mathematics. It has been particularly effective in improving the standards achieved by boys. However, attainment in reading has been declining in relation to standards nationally. Unconfirmed results of the tests in 2003 indicate that there has been an improvement in reading but a slight decline in standards in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicate a rise in percentage achieving at the expected level (Level 2) but a decline in those attaining at the higher level (Level 3). Early indications are that standards are better in the current Year 2 class and are likely to rise.

### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2002*

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.4 (23.3)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	23.7 (20.8)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	26.0 (24.1)	28.3 (28.3)

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

5. At the end of Year 6, results in tests in 2002 were well below the national average in mathematics and science and amongst the lowest five per cent nationally in English. In comparison to schools in similar contexts results were below average in each of the three subjects. Standards in mathematics and science are slightly higher than those recorded at the time of the last inspection. But standards in English have not kept pace with those in most schools nationally. The progress made by pupils based on their prior attainment at the end of Year 2 well below average in each of the subjects. Unconfirmed results of the tests in 2003 indicate that there was a decline in standards in English and science and a slight rise in mathematics. Early indications are that standards are better in the current Year 6 class and are expected to rise.
6. Attainment in information and communication technology is below the national average throughout the school. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in religious education in relation to those expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

**The school promotes pupils' personal development well.** Most pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to their work. This reflects the good teaching and good relationships throughout the school. Most pupils understand the need for rules and follow them consistently both in and out of the classroom. A minority of pupils finds this difficult. The school develops pupils'

spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. Attendance however is unsatisfactory; too many pupils are missing their lessons and many arrive late.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most pupils have positive attitudes, like coming to school and value their teachers' support.
- A minority of pupils lack confidence, which makes them reluctant to answer questions in class or attempt challenging work.
- The majority of pupils behave well. The school has good systems to support those who find difficulty in behaving properly.
- Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.
- A minority of parents do not support the school towards good attendance levels.
- The school has good systems in place to monitor and promote good attendance.

### **Commentary**

7. When children enter the school in the reception class, the majority have very poor social skills and it is much to the credit of the school that most quickly find enjoyment in listening and taking part co-operatively despite some barriers to understanding through language difficulties. Through the leadership of the headteacher and key staff a friendly but strong tone of self-discipline and responsibility is set. Assemblies help to promote good family and Christian values, and the majority of pupils' behaviour reflects the caring and inclusive attitudes that they encounter. Consequently exclusions are confined to a relatively small number of pupils some of whom have now left. There are clear systems in place to manage and improve the behaviour of a small minority of pupils who find it difficult to behave well, particularly in lessons, and teachers generally use these effectively. Pupils play well together at playtimes and the buildings site supervisor plays a key role in promoting good attitudes and behaviour through his involvement at lunchtime and through his work with school prefects. Prefects appreciate the problems of living in a school community. They take their roles and responsibilities seriously. All ethnic groups are well represented.
8. Teachers and other staff are good role models in their relationships and interaction with each other and with pupils. They are fair, patient and considerate and provide good levels of support and encouragement to a significant minority of pupils who lack self-confidence. There is a well-developed reward system to encourage kindness and tolerance. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language have good attitudes to learning due to the high level of support from all the learning support and integration assistants in school. The good attitudes established among the majority of pupils now form a base from which to focus upon improvement in academic standards. If parents ensure that pupils achieve a higher level of consistent attendance and punctuality this should benefit the attainment of many pupils who miss key elements of learning when they arrive late or miss days in school.
9. The overall attendance at the school is unsatisfactory and is below the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is high and is above the national average. There is significant lateness and a minority of parents do not support the school in helping to ensure that their children attend school regularly and promptly. The school is very proactive in following up all unexplained absences and in promoting good attendance and punctuality.

*Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence	
School data	5.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.7
National data	0.5

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

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

No of pupils on roll
50
8
2
1
17
10
8
4
43
6
8
11
12

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
3	0
4	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
1	0
0	0
0	0
14	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
3	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

### Teaching and learning

#### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	8	12	5	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.*

**Teaching and learning throughout the school are good.** All teaching observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory. Over three-quarters of lessons were good or better and nearly a third were very good. This constitutes a significant improvement since the last inspection when nearly one out of every ten lessons was judged to be unsatisfactory and where the proportion of good and very good teaching was much lower. Weaknesses in teachers' marking have been tackled effectively, and this is now good. In lessons, teachers and teaching assistants are patient and supportive, and work particularly hard at boosting pupils' confidence and developing their self-esteem. As a result, levels of achievement are beginning to rise as pupils begin to realise how well they can learn when they concentrate and try hard.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach.
- Teachers plan their lessons well and expect pupils to work hard and try their best.

- Teachers and teaching assistants provide very good levels of encouragement.
- Good marking informs pupils of the merits of their work, and provides pointers for further improvement.
- Sometimes mathematics work is not sufficiently tailored to meet the learning needs of all pupils.
- The lack of detailed assessment information means that important teaching time is wasted.

## Commentary

10. Teachers' have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. At the beginning of lessons they share the lesson objectives so that pupils know what they are expected to achieve. Teachers' clear explanations enable pupils to make connections in their learning. They present lessons in a variety of ways which capture pupils' interest, making them enthusiastic and giving them confidence in their own abilities. Teachers encourage the use of correct vocabulary and often provide opportunities for pupils to explain their methods and practise what they know. However, in some lessons teachers are too keen for pupils to respond quickly and do not give them sufficient time to answer questions fully.
11. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and frequently remind them to listen carefully and to work hard at the presentation of their work. The majority of pupils pay careful attention and display positive attitudes to their work. However, a minority find it difficult to listen well or to focus on tasks for long periods. Teachers skilfully use appropriate behaviour management strategies to encourage these pupils and others who present challenging behaviour to work hard. Teachers and learning support staff are both consistent and patient and as a result pupils feel their contributions are valued and this appreciation helps to build their self-esteem and encourages them to try harder.
12. Teachers use the session at the end of lessons effectively to revisit the learning objectives and to assess what the pupils have learned during the lesson. In the best lessons, teachers use a range of different types of question to check pupils' understanding. However, in a minority of cases teachers ask focused questions to a narrow range of pupils without fully assessing the understanding of a wider group. Teachers mark pupils' work well. They clearly indicate what is good and features that need improvement. In the best cases, teachers provide targets for the next steps in the pupils' learning. There is currently no whole-school approach for recording pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in any subjects. Some useful information is passed on to the new teacher at the end of each school year but in its current form this is insufficiently detailed. As a result, important time is wasted at the beginning of a school year while teachers try to find out the levels of pupils' attainment. During this time less able pupils are sometimes given work that is too difficult, particularly in mathematics.
13. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is good overall and support staff, make a significant contribution to this. It is particularly effective in English and mathematics lessons because these pupils are always supported. In most classes support assistants and learning mentors are used well to enable pupils with special educational needs to be fully involved in whole class discussions and this raises their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils with statements of special educational need have specific, short-term targets in their individual learning plans and these are addressed well.
14. The teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language, including refugees, is good overall. However, class teachers and teaching assistants have only had limited training to meet the learning needs of an increasing number of pupils joining the school who do not speak or understand English. Class teachers and teaching assistants make good use of every

opportunity to encourage and support these pupils. In a very good mathematics lesson in Year 1 for example, the class teacher used a wide range of everyday objects to illustrate teaching points and reinforce key vocabulary. Where appropriate, pupils in the very early stages of learning English are given the opportunity to practise basic vocabulary and conversation skills in small groups.

## **The curriculum**

**The quality of provision is satisfactory** and has been maintained since the previous inspection. The basic curriculum fully meets statutory requirements. Activities and visits provided both within school hours and outside the school day enrich this provision.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Personal, social and health education is good.
- The curriculum caters well for the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of planned activities that enrich the curriculum.
- There are insufficient resources for information and communication technology to support work across the curriculum.
- The library is not well situated to allow for regular use by older pupils.

### **Commentary**

15. Guidelines for all subjects have now been in place for a year. The curriculum leader has recently drawn up a whole school plan to ensure that knowledge and skills are developed systematically. Good use is made of additional strategies in literacy to help less able pupils, and support staff have been trained to teach these. The expertise of learning support assistants is enabling lower-attaining pupils to make good progress in lessons. The school has not kept pace with developments in information and communication technology, for example, in the use of control technology. The school has recognised that there is also more work to be done in developing the use of computer technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects. In science, the school has yet to fully exploit the potential of an investigative approach to the teaching of this subject as a way to raise attainment.
16. The school has a well-planned programme for personal, social and health education. Outside agencies are used well to support this, for example in sex education and drug awareness. Time is regularly set aside for pupils to discuss and explore feelings and relationships and this is an important part of the school's positive approach to behaviour management. Sports activities are targeted well at selected pupils in order to help develop their co-operative skills in a team situation.
17. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall, but there are weaknesses. It is less strong than at the time of the last inspection because staff changes left this area without a co-ordinator for part of last year. Pupils on the special needs list do not have current individual learning plans. However, well-trained learning support assistants support them very well in class and work is well matched to their needs, particularly in mathematics and literacy. Pupils with profound difficulties, those with statements of special educational need, are very well provided for. All of these pupils have equal access to the whole curriculum.

18. Although there are fewer after school clubs this year, due to a change in policy to use outside providers, the curriculum is strengthened and enriched by many other learning opportunities. These support work across the curriculum but particularly the arts. For example, there have been 'Shakespeare 4 Kidz' workshops, visits from storytellers, musicians and artists. Regular residential visits for older pupils offer opportunities for outdoor pursuits.
19. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. It is spacious, clean and attractive and displays reflect the inclusive ethos of the school. Good attention is paid to safety and security. However, the position of the library is not conducive to regular use by older pupils for research.

### Care, guidance and support

**The procedures for child protection and welfare are good and those for supporting and guiding pupils' through monitoring are satisfactory. The procedures for seeking and acting on pupils' views are satisfactory.** The school has effective procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare. The systems and procedures for the monitoring of pupils' personal progress are satisfactory and the outcomes are used to provide support, advice and guidance.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures are in place and effective.
- Relevant staff are trained in child protection systems and procedures.
- School teaching and support staff know their pupils well.
- Medical records are well maintained.
- Risk assessments take place in advance of school trips.
- Although accident reporting is good, many of the records are written in pencil.
- The regularity of fire drills is unsatisfactory.

### Commentary

20. Child protection systems and procedures are in place and all staff in the school know the 'reporting person'. Relevant staff training in child protection matters has also taken place. The school teaching and support staff, well supported by a range of external agencies, provides a high degree of welfare support to individual pupils. The school monitors pupils' academic performance and personal development both formally and informally and steps are taken to identify any individual problems.
21. In the classroom, teachers and support staff know their children well and they are quick to observe any personal difficulties exhibited by pupils and to take appropriate and remedial action. The school operates a good first aid system for minor accidents and appropriate records are maintained. Although occasional fire drills are carried out, the frequency is unsatisfactory. A log is maintained of pupils' medical records including food allergies, which are copied to relevant staff around the school. The site manager carries out regular health and safety audits and the school is proactive when considering possible risks on external trips out of school.
22. The personal development of some pupils is enhanced through the setting of individual attendance targets that are the result of the school's good monitoring and promotion systems. Although pupils are given opportunities to express occasional ideas and suggestions through

curricular subjects in the classroom, their involvement in promoting the wider aspects of the day-to-day life of the school and of its work are, as yet, underdeveloped.

23. The school has good procedures to identify pupils with learning difficulties at an early stage and help is swiftly put in place. This also applies to those with behavioural difficulties and other specific needs. Pupils with special educational needs are generally given work that matches their needs. Outside agencies are used well to provide pupils with extra support and to give guidance to staff.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

**Parents' views of the school are satisfactory, as are the school's links with parents. The schools links with the local community and other schools is good.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The majority of parents feel that their children like school.
- The teaching is felt to be good.
- The school uses the community and other schools well to support the curriculum.
- A minority of parents are not supportive of the school.

### **Commentary**

24. The parents' meeting with the inspectors was not well attended and a small minority of parents returned the parental questionnaire. Based on this low percentage return, a majority of parents are supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. Parents feel that their children like school and that they are making good progress. Parents also feel that the teachers are good and that they have high expectations of their children. A minority of parents were concerned about pupils' behaviour and about the way the school is led and managed. Some also felt that they are not always kept informed about the school's development and that there are insufficient school clubs and extra-curricular activities.
25. Newsletters are sent out weekly and include helpful information to parents who are also encouraged to make their own suggestions as to what extra information might be included. At present, these newsletters are only available in English but the school is considering the possibility of making them bi-lingual. Annual academic reports to parents are of a satisfactory standard although targets for pupils' further development are not specifically highlighted. There are three parents' evenings each year during which parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress but the parental attendance at these events is inconsistent. Parents have welcomed a recent initiative where teachers have talked to them about their children's individual targets for improvement.
26. Very few parents are frequent visitors to the school but some help out with visits and occasional residential trips. Parental attendance at school concerts, celebrations and sports days is good. There is no parent -teachers association or friends of the school in operation and the overall involvement of parents in the day-to-day life of the school and in helping their children at home is inconsistent. The school is proactive in attempting to bring together the diverse cultural interests and backgrounds of all pupils in the school and to this end is arranging to set up courses for any parents who may wish to learn or improve their knowledge and understanding of English.

27. Pupils with special educational needs are not placed on the special needs list until discussions have taken place with parents. There has been some recent disruption to the close links established between the school and parents of pupils with special educational needs due to the lack of co-ordinator since December. There is a new post holder and the school improvement plan indicates that termly reviews of pupils' progress will start in December.
28. The school makes good use of the local community and environment to enhance the pupils' learning. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, but pupils' participation and parental support for these are inconsistent. The school has good links with the local church and library and occasional field trips are made to study the local environment. There are good links with Nechells Sports Centre and Bloomsbury Health Centre from where Year 3 pupils recently experienced a Health Roadshow. Close sporting links are also made with several other local primary schools and the school is developing good industrial links with local companies such as Land Rover. The school's positive links with the community and other schools makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.** The headteacher and newly established senior management team has a clear view of where the school needs to improve and how this is going to be achieved. The headteacher is particularly well supported by the deputy headteacher who has a pivotal role in raising standards. His skills and knowledge contribute significantly to the work of this team. The governing body is effective in its work in providing support and guidance to the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The leadership and management team is committed to raising standards.
- The governing body works effectively to support and guide the school.
- The financial management of the school is very good.
- Systems to monitor pupils' performance are not well established.
- The school has experienced significant problems recruiting and retaining staff.

### **Commentary**

29. Since taking over the school, the headteacher has developed a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and where it needs to move forward. However, significant changes in staff resulted in disruption to the senior management team, and as a result the strategic direction of the school was temporarily lost. For example, new initiatives in the area of assessment and monitoring of pupils' performance, and the development of information and communication technology suffered because of changes to key staff. The headteacher has put into place effective strategies to improve this situation. The appointment of the deputy headteacher in December as science and assessment co-ordinator and, more recently, the appointment of a leading mathematics teacher, a literacy co-ordinator, and a co-ordinator for special educational needs, are positive appointments. Three of these appointees now form the senior management team together with the headteacher. The general improvements in the quality of teaching are closely linked to the appointment of new staff and the support that other teachers in the school have received.

30. The headteacher has a clear vision for the development of the school and works hard to give the school a sense of direction and purpose. She communicates well and ensures that staff and governors understand the school's priorities for development. She monitors the work of teachers in the classroom and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of all staff. The headteacher has created a good management structure with teams of teachers and teaching assistants that are led by members of the senior staff. Each team has clearly defined roles and responsibilities that focus principally on raising standards. These teams are very new and it is too early to evaluate their effectiveness. To enhance the process of school improvement, the headteacher has made good use of the external expertise provided by the local education authority, representatives from the Education Action Zone and the headteacher of a local 'Beacon' school. The school development plan is a good working document that clearly identifies the school's priorities for development.
31. The deputy headteacher is very skilled and knowledgeable and complements the role of the headteacher well. He has monitored teaching and learning in science lessons and has checked pupils' learning in their science books. He has subsequently provided staff with detailed feedback with suggestions of how to improve provision in this subject. He has also begun a detailed analysis of pupils' test results as a basis for establishing a system of monitoring performance data. In all the areas where he has responsibilities he shows a clear understanding of what needs to be done and how he intends to do it. Although they have only recently joined the school, both the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators show a clear understanding about where the school needs to improve and are committed to raising standards. The whole staff are hard working, and committed to the vision and aims of the school, and to meeting the needs of all pupils.
32. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and help shape the vision and direction of the school. The chair of governors, the chair of the finance committee, and the Foundation governor are particularly active in evaluating the effectiveness of the school and supporting its work. The chair has been into school to evaluate the work of teachers new to the school. The chair of the finance committee is working alongside the deputy headteacher in developing assessment and target setting procedures. A Foundation governor frequently takes assemblies and effectively supports the pastoral work of the school.
33. The quality of the financial management is very good. The office manager provides valuable expertise in administering day-to-day spending, which is very effectively controlled. She is a co-opted member of the governing body and attends all finance committee and full governing body meetings where she keeps governors fully informed of financial matters. The school currently has a substantial underspend, but the money is clearly earmarked for improvements in the school accommodation, the purchase of computer equipment and the protection of staffing levels against falling rolls in the coming year. All the weaknesses relating to school governance identified in the last audit report have been tackled effectively. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily. The school seeks to obtain good value for money when purchasing goods and services, for example the contract for painting the school.

***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	626,900	Balance from previous year	44,589
Total expenditure	553,455	Balance carried forward to the next	118,034

---

Expenditure per pupil	2,713
-----------------------	-------

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

34. **Provision for children in the reception class is good overall.** The majority of children enter school with attainment that is very poor when compared with that of most children nationally. There are a significant number of children in the class who do not yet speak or understand English. Staff assess children's learning needs in the first weeks of entry to school in order to provide effective support where it is most needed. As a result of the good support they receive children make good progress in their learning but by the end of the reception year the majority are unlikely to have reached the levels expected for their age. The provision of two support assistants in the reception class is a major factor in ensuring that children's individual needs are generally well met. However, staff do not always have sufficient skills and knowledge to meet the complex learning of an increasing number of children entering the school who do not speak any English.
35. The curriculum and planning has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and provision for outdoor play has improved. However, planning for large-scale activities where children can move spontaneously between the indoor and outdoor environment is underdeveloped. This means that child-initiated activities and daily opportunities to improve co-ordination, control, and effective movement of their bodies are limited.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is good.** This is given high priority in the reception class and despite the language barriers children achieve well and make satisfactory progress from a very low starting point. Nevertheless, standards are poor so that by the time they leave the reception class the majority will not reach the level expected for their age.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teamwork by the reception class staff ensures strong support for children who need help in learning and adjusting to school routines or a language other than that spoken at home.
- A significant number of children who speak English have weak personal, social and speaking skills combined with low esteem which is a barrier to learning.
- Well-planned classroom activities are helping to increase children's independence.

#### **Commentary**

36. All the staff work closely together and are a very good team, introducing children sensitively but thoroughly to appropriate social behaviour. They have a very good knowledge of each child's needs and work hard to ensure that children understand what is expected of them despite language barriers. Relationships between staff and children are very good and they constantly encourage and motivate the children to take a full part in their lessons. The use of British sign language, gesture and mime is particularly effective in enabling children to communicate their personal needs and feelings. Staff are very good role models that children can respect.

37. On entry to reception children settle well and are secure and happy, learning the expected routines well. Almost all children are prepared to work as a group and take advantage of the well-planned indoor activities that the teacher and support staff provide. In the reception class children behave well and share toys and experiences such as making and sharing sandwiches and jelly for 'The Monsters' Party'.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

**Provision for communication, language and literacy is good.** Standards in this area of learning are well below the expected level but most children achieve well and make good progress given the very low standard on entry to school. Only a small minority of children are on line to achieve the expected level by the end of their year in reception class.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of British Sign Language, mime and gestures to support those children with no English and those with limited vocabulary and poor communication skills is effective.
- Good planning and teaching to support early literacy skills and acquisition of spoken language.
- Good balance between adult directed and child initiated activities.

### Commentary

38. All children settle quietly and listen attentively to stories; they try to join in with actions and familiar text or rhymes. By the time they reach Year 1 children rarely achieve the expected goals in communication, language and literacy because of their narrow vocabulary and very poor standards of attainment on entry to school. Many have not had the opportunity to receive pre- school education and this also has an effect on their poor standards in literacy skills. A minority of children 'read' familiar stories successfully by referring to the pictures or repetitive texts. All children enjoy sharing the big book with their teacher. The more able children make good attempts at copying writing and almost all pupils will make early attempts at letter shapes.
39. The teacher uses short daily literacy sessions to teach pre-reading and writing skills and the support assistants' close involvement in these sessions ensure that all children are fully included; no one is left out because they cannot understand. All children use facial expressions, gestures and eye contact to communicate and show emerging confidence in speaking to each other. Only a few children are prepared to speak in front of the whole class. Writing skills are also developed well through opportunities to paint, draw or write as for example in making party invitations.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

**Provision in mathematical development is satisfactory.** Children's skills in numeracy are slightly better than those they achieve in communication language and literacy. From a low starting point progress is good and children achieve well but the majority are well below average for their age. By the end of reception class the majority are still likely to be below the national average.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical language is systematically promoted during the school day.

- There is very good support for less able children and those for whom English is not their home language.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for children to take part in larger scale mathematical activities outdoors, for example with large construction equipment or number lines and shapes.

### Commentary

40. Planning and teaching are good and this constitutes an improvement since the last inspection. The use of a large puppet in numeracy sessions helps children to become really involved in lessons, and is a good visual aid to learning. Children are encouraged to develop mathematical skills and language in practical ways during the day. The teacher uses number songs and actions well to help support those children who are as yet unable to speak English, and those with very low attainment in mathematical development.
41. Most children can count up to 10 and a few beyond. A minority of children successfully counts up to five objects randomly arranged. Some children are beginning to attempt to write numbers. The staff focus well on children learning mathematical vocabulary such as more or less and reinforce these concepts in practical ways.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

**Provision is satisfactory.** Children have very poor communication skills and some are unable to speak English having newly arrived in this country. They have limited experience of the world beyond school and the children's levels of attainment when they enter school are very low compared to most children nationally. As a result of good teaching, they achieve well but the majority will still have poor knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they leave the reception class despite the good learning that takes place.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning and teaching with an emphasis on practical activities.
- Insufficient opportunities for child-initiated exploration and investigation out of doors.

### Commentary

42. The planned activities celebrating the monsters' party successfully showed children who may have not experienced a birthday party, what is entailed and how birthdays may be celebrated. They learn about present giving, playing games, preparing special food and sharing it fairly between friends or family. These carefully planned and inventive strategies promote children's knowledge of the world outside school or in a culture other than their own. The world of information and communication technology is less well developed. Children display curiosity and interest in the 'Our Senses' table touching, smelling and looking at various objects.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

**Provision for this area of learning is satisfactory.** Children come into school with below average skills and by the time they leave reception some pupils will be attaining the levels expected. Opportunities for outdoor play are limited and this inhibits child initiated large-scale physical activities. Fine motor skills are poor but children are making satisfactory progress overall in physical development as a result of the high level of support given by reception class staff.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Wheeled toys and a secure paved area are improvements in outdoor provision since the last inspection.
- The lack of opportunity to move freely outdoors to experience child initiated activities with large scale apparatus on a daily basis.
- The lack of a wide range of opportunities to use information and communication technology to support learning.

## **Commentary**

43. There are teacher-directed opportunities to use the hall twice each week to promote gross motor skills, but the restricted resources and space in the paved area means opportunities are missed for children to have access to the full physical development curriculum.
44. Outdoors, many children have good control of the wheeled toys and ride enthusiastically manoeuvring along a chalk line drawn on the paved area. Others play co-operatively with construction toys or sand. Some children are struggling to use scissors and some are still unsure whether they are left or right handed. The majority can use glue sticks and make marks on paper with brushes or crayons. Some children are beginning to form a few letters and numbers correctly. Planning for physical development as for example the playing of ring games does not sufficiently challenge children and raise standards in this area of learning.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

**Provision is good.** Standards of attainment in creative development are poor on entry to school. Children are making good progress and standards now are below average. A minority of children are on course to meet the goals for learning in this area by the time they leave the reception class.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teacher's planning ensures that opportunities for children to use their imagination and creativity connect with all areas of learning.
- Improvements in the role play area since the last inspection.
- Lack of opportunities for imaginative outdoor play.

## **Commentary**

45. Teacher and teaching assistants provide a wide range of interesting creative activities in which children can work with colour, for example making party hats and trumpets for 'The Monsters Party'. Children use pens, crayons, scissors, glue sticks and collage materials. They are very well supported by members of staff who work very hard to convey instructions to those with language difficulties.
46. Children enjoy making sounds with musical instruments. However, the planning for musical activities lacks clarity and emphasises the social aspect of children's learning. This means that standards of musical development are inhibited. Children enjoy familiar rhymes and songs joining in the actions and words whenever they can.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

**Provision in English is satisfactory.** The standards of Year 6 pupils remain well below average and are the same as at the time of the last inspection. Standards for pupils in Year 2 have improved.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Support assistants work effectively with less able pupils.
- Standards are still too low for pupils by Year 6.
- There is no whole-school assessment system to check pupils' progress.
- Speaking skills are not being developed systematically.
- Handwriting is not being taught sufficiently well across the school.

### **Commentary**

47. The attainment of present Year 6 pupils shows an improvement on the results recorded in recent tests. However, in spite of good teaching, results are still likely to be well below the national average by the end of the school year. Achievement over time is below what might be expected, but work from this term shows good levels of achievement. Standards in Year 2 are below average but are similar to attainment in 2002 and 2003 tests in reading and writing. Given their low starting point, these pupils are achieving well.
48. Speaking skills are below expected levels for pupils across the school. Many pupils come to school with little or no English. Native English speakers of all ages often lack the vocabulary to express themselves clearly. The school has strategies in place to develop speaking skills such as the use of 'talk partners' to share ideas, as well as the teaching of specific subject vocabulary, but the use of these methods varies between classes. There are few, planned opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills. As a result, pupils' progress depends on the emphasis given to speaking within individual lessons. Most pupils listen well, and teachers and support assistants help them to concentrate and pay attention. Pupils' speaking and listening skills have improved by Year 6 but are still below expected levels.
49. Staff uses a broad range of strategies to improve pupils' reading skills. These are well chosen to match pupils' learning needs. Resources used in the literacy hour give pupils access to a wide range of genres and quality texts are used well to develop competence. Graded reading books give structure and support to enable pupils to make progress. Basic skills, including phonics, are well taught. In Year 2, a number of more able pupils are reading above expected levels with confidence and enjoyment, using their knowledge of sounds to decipher unknown words. Pupils of average and lower attainment read simple sentences using strategies such as picture cues and initial sounds of words. In Year 6, more able and average-attaining pupils read challenging books with expression and enjoyment. They read beyond the text to find meaning. However, there are still many pupils who find reading difficult and these pupils are not helped by their limited spoken vocabulary. Pupils throughout the school are developing reference skills, but the library has been used infrequently this term.
50. In writing lessons, work is well planned to develop pupils' knowledge and skills in spelling, punctuation, vocabulary and grammar and pupils practise these skills by writing in a range of styles. Handwriting skills are not being developed well across the school and many pupils from Year 3 and above are still not using a 'cursive' joined script and are not forming letters of a consistent size. By Year 2, higher attaining pupils are becoming more descriptive in their language, for example, 'One sunlit morning.' These pupils use capital letters and full stops

correctly and use phonic strategies to help them spell words. Average attaining pupils are less adventurous in their choice of words but they use simple sentences sequentially. Less able pupils write simple sentences with support. Older pupils write for different audiences and in a wider range of styles. By Year 6 they plan, redraft and refine their own work. The work of more able and average pupils shows the development of more complex sentence structures and the correct spelling of difficult words. One more able pupil wrote, "I look the prettiest, the prince will surely go for me," said the stepmother, with a flick of her hair.' Less able pupils write mainly in simple sentences and are most successful when retelling a story or writing an account. The new marking policy is being used well to focus clearly upon what pupils need to do to improve their work. Marking is particularly strong in Year 6 and reflects the high expectations of the teacher.

51. Teaching was good or better in two thirds of lessons and is good overall. This is helping to raise standards because pupils are achieving well in lessons. Teachers plan well and learning objectives are shared with pupils so that they are involved in their learning. The positive relationships established by teachers enable most pupils to develop good attitudes to their learning. The very good use of support staff helps pupils with special educational needs to achieve as well as others. Where teaching is good or better there are high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Lessons move at a brisk pace and keep pupils on their toes. Effective questioning assesses pupils' understanding and extends it. Where teaching was satisfactory opportunities were missed to check pupils' understanding of the text.
52. At present, there is no whole school assessment system to support teachers in planning or to monitor pupils' progress through school. This is affecting progress at the beginning of each year because teachers have to find out what pupils know and can do. Good use is made of additional strategies in literacy to help less able pupils and support staff have been trained to teach these. Present initiatives in the development plan are relevant, but pupils would benefit from a more rigorous approach to the development of speaking skills. The subject co-ordinator is new in post this term, but is developing a clear view of where improvements need to be made.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

53. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length in other subjects and these contribute little to attainment in literacy. Pupils use computers infrequently for drafting, editing and presenting work.

## **MATHEMATICS**

**Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.** Since the last inspection test results have risen faster than in most schools nationally, particularly in Year 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in their learning, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Test information shows that over time pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not made as much progress they should. The recent appointment of a leading mathematics teacher as the subject co-ordinator is an important step in the school's efforts to raise standards.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Most pupils have good attitudes to their work and try hard.
- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below the national average.

- There are no whole school procedures for checking and recording pupils' progress.

## **Commentary**

54. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are currently below the national average. The school has correctly identified weaknesses in pupils' mental skills and problem solving as being key areas for improvement. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory understanding of the value of numbers to 100. They recognise odd and even numbers and identify some of the properties of common two-dimensional shapes. More able pupils use mental skills to add in 2s, 5s and 10s, but average and less able pupils sometimes struggle with this level of work, often relying on their fingers to solve the problem. Pupils find counting backwards particularly difficult. Most pupils add and subtract two single digits to 10, but do not recall them mentally. There are similar weaknesses in pupils' mental skills in Year 6. Average and less able pupils struggle to recall multiplication facts and this has a detrimental effect on their ability to calculate and compare fractions. Most pupils add two two-digit numbers accurately and can explain clearly what they did to solve the problem. But there are weaknesses in pupils' ability to subtract and divide numbers mentally. They know the value of numbers beyond one thousand and describe the properties of some two- and three- dimensional shapes. Work in pupils' books illustrates the difficulty that some have in solving written problems.
55. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers throughout the school display a thorough knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. In the best lessons, work is well planned at an appropriately challenging level. There are clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils so they know what they are going to learn. Teachers recognise well the learning needs of the pupils in their class and pay particular good attention to the development of mathematical vocabulary. In a very good lesson in Year 1 for example, the teacher illustrated a lesson on time very well, using a wide range of visual resources. This enabled all pupils, especially those who speak English as an additional language and some less able pupils, to make good progress in their learning. Teachers provide clear explanations, linking past to current work so pupils are able to make connections in their learning. Pupils are generally well motivated and most respond positively to high expectations of their concentration and behaviour. However, there is a minority who find it difficult to sit and listen for any length of time. As a result these pupils do not make the progress that they should and their levels of achievement are not as good as most others.
56. In many classes there are individuals and groups of pupils who lack confidence and are reticent to offer any answers in class. Class teachers and teaching assistants know these pupils well and patiently encourage and support their learning. In most lessons, but not all, appropriate work is provided to challenge all ability groups. However, because there is no whole school system of recording pupils' progress against 'Key Learning Objectives' in the National Numeracy Strategy, teachers are not always able to match accurately the work to the individual learning needs of pupils. Close examination of pupils' previous work illustrates the problem still further. Less able pupils are sometimes provided with the same work as other pupils with no account taken of their specific learning needs. Work is marked regularly and useful comments inform pupils of the quality of their work and provide good pointers for further improvement. There have been significant improvements in the standard of presentation of work from that seen in previous years. Pupils take pride in their work and present it well.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum but they could be improved. For example, pupils in Year 2 create picture graphs that illustrate the different food that they enjoy the most. Pupils in Year 5 measure the length of pieces of wood as they construct vehicles, as part of a project on Land Rover. The lack of emphasis on experimental science limits the opportunity pupils have to measure and record their findings.

## SCIENCE

**Provision in science is satisfactory.** Since the previous inspection pupils' attainment has been erratic and standards have remained below the national average. Improvements in the curriculum are recent and have not had an impact on standards for older pupils.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and pupils learn well.
  - Pupils enjoy science, work hard and this contributes to their achievement in lessons.
  - Science is well led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator committed to raising standards.
  - Standards by Year 6 are still well below the national average.
  - Teachers' assessments are not used yet to set targets and to enable science skills to be developed systematically.
58. National test results for pupils in Year 6 in 2002 show that standards were well below average when compared nationally and were below similar schools. 2003 results were lower. However, inspection evidence indicates a small improvement in the numbers of pupils likely to reach or exceed national expectations this year. More able pupils talk confidently about the areas of science they have studied and have acquired sound and often good knowledge and understanding. Other pupils show significant gaps in their understanding. While, for example, they have some understanding of changes in materials including evaporation, an average attaining pupil could not explain how shadows are formed. Their understanding of physical processes is weakest. Pupils' science skills are well below average because, until recently, they have been given insufficient opportunities to plan and carry out their own investigations. Achievement over time is below what is expected for pupils of this age.
59. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2002 showed standards that were well below national expectations when compared nationally and below similar schools. Teacher assessments for last year give a similar picture but discussions with the present Year 2 class show that most pupils have knowledge and understanding at expected levels. For example, they understand some of the uses of common materials such as the use of metal for table legs because it is strong. However, overall standards are still below those seen nationally.
60. Teaching is good or better in all lessons and is good overall. Lessons are well planned to build on earlier experiences and provide interesting activities so that pupils want to learn. Where learning support assistants are present they are used well to ensure that lower attaining pupils achieve as well as other pupils. Teachers are encouraging the use of correct scientific terminology so pupils can express their ideas more clearly. Questioning is often used well to develop understanding. In Year 2 pupils investigated the changes to bread when heated. They were challenged to think what might happen if toast was heated further. A demonstration, with good attention to safety, left them in no doubt! Marking is thorough and is helping pupils to clarify their ideas. However, there is as yet no whole school system in place to record what

pupils know and can do and this does not help teachers to build on pupils' experiences when they move to the next class.

61. Leadership of science is good. The co-ordinator has been in post since January and, last term, monitored teaching through lesson observation and a scrutiny of pupils' books. He found that investigation in many classes was limited, the skills of recording were not developed consistently and, in some cases, pupils copied what the teacher had written. This was limiting their achievement. Detailed feedback was given to staff with suggestions on improving provision. Since then there has been a major change in staffing in junior classes. Inspection evidence from lessons and from work this term shows that pupils are more involved in their learning through investigations or practical work. An achievable development plan is in place to improve provision for investigations and to improve assessment systems so that pupils' progress can be checked as they move through the school.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

**Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory.** Since the last inspection there have been a number of curriculum leaders who were responsible for short periods of time and then left. Many teachers lack confidence and subject expertise in this subject. As a result this subject has lacked development and standards have fallen. During the inspection two lessons were observed, both of which were taught by the subject co-ordinator.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching by the subject co-ordinator.
- Standards are below average.
- Many teachers lack confidence and expertise in this subject.
- The use of computer technology across the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

### **Commentary**

62. Standards of attainment in Years 2 and 6 are below the national average. Pupils' do not achieve as well as they could due to lack of provision and weakness in teachers' confidence and subject expertise. Pupils in Year 2 use an art program to draw pictures. They select different colours and sizes of paintbrush and use tools like 'spray' to create different patterns and effects. Although pupils write their own stories using capital letters, full stops, space bar and the 'enter' key, their keyboard skills are unsatisfactory. Pupils in this class have had very limited experiences in using control technology.
63. In lessons, most pupils in Year 4 log on and access the program they require. They draw pictures and create repeating patterns using a stamping tool. They select colours and paintbrushes to produce paintings, but many lack sufficient mouse control to achieve this task well. Most pupils in this class use drop down file menus to save their work, but a significant minority finds this difficult. In discussions, pupils in Year 6 spoke enthusiastically about 'PowerPoint' presentations they had designed as part of two projects, one with a local motor manufacturer, and the other with the fire service. They had enjoyed their visits and were clearly proud of the work that they have produced. Pupils spoke knowledgeably about the graphics packages they had used, and explained how they had imported pictures from clip art and the Internet to illustrate their work. They recalled how they had added speech to one piece of work and had presented it at a local hotel, with pupils from other local schools. Pupils collect and display information, using data handling programs, but have little recall of using

programs for controlling or monitoring events. In lessons, pupils in Year 6 successfully 'log on' and access the program they required using drop down menus. Many display good keyboard skills, but a significant minority require help to solve comparatively simple tasks.

64. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good. At the beginning of each lesson the teacher clearly explained the lesson objectives so that pupils knew what they were expected to achieve. The teacher used a computer projector well to illustrate the teaching points, linking pupils' past learning to their current work well. In both lessons, the teacher displayed very good subject knowledge through his clear explanations and expert interventions. Throughout the lessons the teacher and support teachers provided pupils with good levels of support, they monitored pupils' progress well and gave good technical advice and guidance where it was needed. Pupils in both classes enjoyed working on the computers, helping each other and taking turns. But many lack confidence, which was particularly evident in pupils' reluctance to contribute ideas at the beginning and end of lessons. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The curriculum co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and has a clear view of how and where this subject requires development. The evidence of his clarity of vision is to be seen in the school development plan.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

65. Provision is currently unsatisfactory. Computer technology is used to support pupils' learning in some subjects, for example art and design and history, but this area of the curriculum is under-developed. Pupils use the Internet to research history topics on the Tudors and the Victorians, for example, but there are missed opportunities in other subjects. The school has recognised these shortcomings and has clearly identified in the school development plan where improvements need to be made.

### **HUMANITIES including geography, history and religious education**

**The provision for Geography in Year 1 and 2 is satisfactory.** Insufficient evidence is available to judge provision for geography from Years 3 to 6 and in history throughout the school. There was no current work this term available in history or geography for Year 5 and 6. Standards in geography by Year 2 are satisfactory and pupils make good progress.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

##### **Geography**

- Pupils' attitudes and enjoyment in geography are satisfactory in Year 2.
- Pupils in Year 4 work hard and present their work well.

##### **History**

- Displays of history topics around school are effective in supporting pupils' learning.
- Multicultural aspects of history are promoted well though 'Black History' month.

##### **Commentary**

66. Pupils in Year 2 know that they live in Birmingham but only one pupil remembers that Struay is a fictional island that they are studying. Pupils can identify that Struay is different to

Birmingham but need help to draw comparisons and cannot clearly explain why. Pupils in Year 4 are learning about care of the environment and have undertaken exploratory studies of noise levels in school, ways of recycling, litter studies and waste disposal. In the books seen it is clear that these pupils are enjoying their exploratory and investigative geography work and progress can be seen since the start of term. There are missed opportunities to use computer technology, for example when recording the results of litter surveys. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning in geography and history but there are no formal assessment and tracking procedures to help raise standards in these subjects. Day-to-day marking is conscientious, and teachers often provide pupils with helpful suggestions about how they might improve.

67. Visits are made to places of interest such as the local airport, and some pupils have opportunities for additional learning during residential visits. There are few links to numeracy, information and communication technology and the low levels of literacy skills means that recording of the work is often well below that expected nationally. Work in history seen in books and on displays covers the National Curriculum. Through a planned series of topics in each year group, pupils learn about particular people, events and periods. In pupils' books in Year 4, literacy skills are fostered when pupils write about 'Invaders and Settlers'. Work is neat and well presented but the standard of handwriting is below average.

## **Religious Education**

**The provision for religious education is satisfactory.** Standards are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus, and there is good achievement from Years 3 to 6.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The use of visiting specialists enlivens religious education teaching for Year 5 and 6.
- There is good work on beliefs and faiths in addition to Christianity in Year 4.
- The poor standard of work in spelling and writing means that written work in all year groups is well below the standard expected nationally.

### **Commentary**

68. Work in religious education meets the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. In Years 3 to 6 there is satisfactory achievement for all pupils including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their home language. This is a result of the strong support provided by classroom assistants. There is insufficient evidence of work this term to make a secure judgement on standards and achievement in Years 1 and 2.
69. Pupils recall of the previous three weeks' stories, repeating words and actions is very good showing they have learnt about the chronological aspects and main facts of Bible stories. It is very effective in providing visual clues to the stories for those whose understanding of English is limited. The use of a video showing the trial and crucifixion of Jesus provides a powerful moment in the lesson as pupils reflect on the reality of such an unpleasant death. Year 4 pupils learn about different faith communities giving thanks, which links well to their forthcoming harvest celebrations. During the inspection, a speaker from the Christian Renewal Centre brought the Old and New Testaments to life as he taught pupils in Year 5 and 6. He used rhyme and actions to accompany parts of the story and the pupils joined in with energy and enthusiasm.

70. Presentation of work is generally neat but pupils' handwriting is below average for their age. Older pupils from Years 3 to 6 are not consistently using joined handwriting and their limited achievement in literacy lowers attainment levels. In discussion, pupils' poor skills in speaking are clearly evident. As a result that many are not sufficiently articulate to put over their points clearly, confidently and fluently in group discussion.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

**No design and technology, music or physical education lessons and only one art and design lesson were observed during the inspection.**

### **Art and Design**

71. From the evidence of planning and the small amount of work seen the curriculum for art and design is satisfactory. There is insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement on standards. Pupils work with a wide range of art materials.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching in Year 1 is very good.

### **Commentary**

72. Observational drawings in Year 1 show good attention to detail and the confident use of pencils to make appropriate lines and marks. The quality of this work is above that expected for pupils of this age. In Year 2, pupils' patterns and pictures demonstrate good experimentation with a computer graphics program, using drawing tools, paintbrush and spray can effectively.
73. Older pupils develop their observational skills. In Year 3, pupils' attempts at drawing a matching half face show development in their understanding of light and shade. By Year 6 pupils' drawings convey movement in the human body.
74. In the one lesson was seen in Year 1, the teaching was very good. Pupils were motivated to try their best because of the confident subject knowledge and expertise of the teacher. There was very good modelling of techniques. Pupils were fascinated and watched attentively as she drew a side view of a face. "Nice drawing!" exclaimed one child and the teacher responded with "Thank you," demonstrating the very good relationships in the class. A good range of thick and thin pencils enabled pupils to experiment and find out which worked best. The lesson finished well with pupils discussing what they had learned.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

### **Personal, social and health education**

**Provision in personal, social and health education is good.**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well planned programme.
- Good opportunities for pupils to discuss issues that are important to them.

- The school makes good use of outside agencies.

### **Commentary**

75. The school has a well-planned programme for personal, social and health education. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are monitored daily by the teachers and support staff responsible for them. Each class has a dinner supervisor attached to them, who reports to the senior dinnertime supervisor any problems that have occurred and how they dealt with them. The behaviour policy is recognised by all staff, parents and pupils as establishing clear boundaries, providing motivation for children to behave well, and laying down procedures. Each teacher keeps class records of each child's personal development. Time is regularly set aside for pupils to discuss and explore feelings and relationships and this is an important part of the school's positive approach to behaviour management. The collective worship programme is used effectively to support pupils' personal and social development and to encourage citizenship. The 'congratulations' assembly each week rewards for effort and good attitude towards their work. Outside agencies are used well to support the teaching of sex education and drug awareness.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>6</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
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).*