

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETER AND ST PAUL RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Erdington, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103454

Headteacher: Ann O'Donnell

Lead inspector: Mr Michael J Cahill

Dates of inspection: 26 – 29 April 2004

Inspection number: 257928

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:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	221
School address:	Kingsbury Road Birmingham West Midlands
Postcode:	B24 9ND
Telephone number:	0121 373 6028
Fax number:	0121 382 8375
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Father Julian Green
Date of previous inspection:	27 April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school serves the Roman Catholic community in Erdington, a well-established urban community in north-east Birmingham that includes both private and local authority housing. The school is about the same size as most other primary school. The 221 pupils are organised into eight classes. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is about average. The school is over-subscribed and the great majority of pupils are of white-British extraction. Attainment on entry to Reception varies annually, but is generally about what is expected for children of that age and average overall. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational need. As well as a range of learning difficulties, the special educational needs in the school include social, emotional and behavioural needs. The school gained School Achievement Awards in 2001 and 2002 and is working towards Quality Mark and Healthy Schools recognition. It is an active participant in Excellence in Cities and in Children's Fund initiatives.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19623	Michael Cahill	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education
9619	Bob Miller	Lay inspector	
11419	Jeanie Underwood	Team inspector	Foundation stage English Music
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is very effective and provides very good value for money. Very good leadership and management are focused sharply on improving pupils' achievements in a very pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere. The quality of teaching is very good and pupils achieve well in attaining above average standards.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good leadership and management have created and maintain a school in which all are equally valued and enabled to achieve their potential.
- Pupils perform well in national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, making good progress from their different starting points; their achievement is good.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is high and pupils are stimulated to want to learn; they develop very good attitudes to themselves as successful young learners.
- There are very good systems for keeping track of pupils' progress in English and mathematics, but those in most other subject areas are relatively undeveloped.
- The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and is enriched by a very good range and quality of visits, visitors and out-of-school activities in sport and the arts; the use of information and communication technology resources to support and extend pupils' learning is not firmly embedded in the school's practice.
- There is a very good level of care, support and guidance and an excellent partnership with parents; this helps to make sure that all pupils are fully included in all that the school offers.

The school has achieved a good level of improvement since its last inspection, for example in helping pupils to know what they need to do to improve and enabling their parents to help them. National test results have improved at a better rate than the national picture.

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	A	B	D
mathematics	A*	A	A	C
science	A	A	C	E

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

The overall trend in the school's test results in Years 2 and 6 has been one of improvement that exceeds the national trend; standards are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. The school exceeded the demanding targets agreed with the local authority for mathematics and narrowly failed to meet them in English in 2003. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in the present Years 2 and 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science and in the other subjects that were fully inspected, art and design, geography, history and information and communication technology. **Pupils' achievement is good.** Children make a good start in the Reception class, achieving well in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding across the areas of learning. This good achievement is continued as pupils move up the school; they acquire a good range of learning skills and produce work of good quality. The school gained Achievement Awards in 2001 and 2002 in recognition of its Year 6 results, which were well above the average for similar schools. The less complimentary comparisons in 2003 are largely due to the presence of a greater proportion of pupils in that year group who had special educational needs. **Pupils' personal qualities,**

including their spiritual, moral and social development, are promoted very well. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development and stimulates an interest in learning. As a result most pupils develop very good attitudes to school and learning, behave very well and form very good relationships with each other and with the adults in the school community; attendance is good and punctuality is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality education for all its pupils. Teaching and learning are very good. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, with very good teaching and a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities in an attractive and well-organised classroom. Teaching throughout the school has many good features. Planning is very good and teachers devise imaginative ways of attracting and maintaining pupils' interest, catering very well for the wide range of abilities in classes. Very good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants makes sure that all pupils, including those who have individual learning needs, have the support and challenge that they need to be fully involved in lessons. Because they know what is expected of them and are encouraged to do their best, pupils learn well, applying themselves conscientiously to their work. They become very good at working both collaboratively with other pupils and, when appropriate, independently of adult direction. The school keeps very good track of pupils' progress in English and mathematics and this supports achievement very well; assessment and its use are less well developed in most other subjects. The curriculum is planned well, with a good emphasis on pupils acquiring basic skills. There are many opportunities for them to use their literacy skills; however, there are fewer planned occasions on which pupils exercise their developing mathematical skills. Information and communication technology resources are used effectively in some lessons; the school has rightly identified the need to embed this more firmly in its practice. The curriculum is very well enriched through opportunities for pupils to engage in sports and the arts. Pupils benefit from the high level of care, support and guidance that the school provides; teachers know pupils and their families very well and this strongly promotes the sense of the school as a caring and learning community. The school maintains an excellent partnership with parents and has good links with other schools and colleges; it has satisfactory links with the wider local community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision and sense of purpose. She provides excellent leadership of teaching and the curriculum and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. The members of staff as a whole are very committed and effective in raising the achievement of all pupils. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is very well led. It provides invaluable support to the school but some members are new to their role and the governing body as a whole does not provide as much challenge as it should. All relevant statutory requirements are met. The school runs smoothly and financial management is very good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school, valuing especially the fact that teaching is good and that their children are making good progress and becoming mature and responsible. Pupils are very proud of their school and have an excellent understanding of how they can make it a better place for the whole school community. They appreciate that their views are listened to and acted upon, for example in relation to playground games and lavatory facilities.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- develop the role and use of information and communication technology resources in promoting learning and achievement across the curriculum;

- build on existing good practice in order to keep good track of pupils' progress in other subjects as well as in English and mathematics.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Children's achievement in the Foundation Stage¹ is good because of the provision that is made in all six areas of learning. Most of the children at present in the Reception class are on track to attain the national goals for early learning by the time that they enter Year 1. Pupils now in Year 2 have also achieved well and their national test results are likely to be above average. Results for this age group over the years since the last inspection have often been above average; in 2003, results were very high in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress from their differing starting points during their time at the school; overall achievement has been good. National test results are often well above average and merited school achievement awards in 2001 and 2002. There are variations from year to year in the relative performance of boys and girls; in 2003, for example boys performed better than girls because of a disproportionate number of girls with special educational needs. On average, over time, there are no significant differences in the performance of any group of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school, making good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding because of teaching that is often very good.
- In the 2003 national tests, results at Year 2 were well above average and at Year 6 were above average, overall.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	18.4 (17.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.5 (15.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.7 (17.3)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 29 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	28.1 (29.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	28.6 (28.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.9 (30.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Commentary

1. The trend over the last five years in the tests taken at the end of Year 2 has been one of improvement that exceeds the national trend, in each of reading, writing and mathematics. Results are better than they were at the time of the last inspection. The overall upward trend of

¹ The Foundation Stage is for children who are not of statutory school age or are not old enough to enter Year 1; at this school, these pupils are in the Reception class.

results of tests taken at the end of Year 6 has also been better than the national trend. However, results in 2003 in English and science were not as good as in the previous year, largely because of the greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs, particularly language difficulties, in the year group. For example, In science, while 87 per cent of pupils achieved the national expectation of Level 4 and 43 per cent gained Level 5, these results equate only to an average national grading. For the same reason, the school's results do not compare as well as they usually do with other schools whose pupils performed similarly at the end of Year 2. In 2001 and 2002 the school's results were well above the average for these similar schools. When compared with the results of schools with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals, the school's results are well above average, as in previous years.

2. The school exceeded the demanding targets agreed with the local education authority for the proportions of pupils achieving Level 4 and Level 5 in mathematics and narrowly failed to meet them in English. Targets for this year are even more demanding in terms of the proportion of pupils expected to achieve Level 5 and given the present composition of the year group may well prove to be unrealistic. Nevertheless, inspection evidence and the school's assessment data indicate that pupils are on track for above average results and that overall their achievement has been good during the junior² years.
3. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average with considerable variations from year to year. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in both the infant³ and junior years as a result of the support provided by the school. The majority of pupils make progress at a rate equal to or above national expectations and move to different stages of the code of practice or off the special educational needs list as appropriate. Pupils who have been identified as gifted or talented also achieve well because extension activities presenting greater challenge are often prepared for them. For example, there is good encouragement to attain higher standards in creative writing or to be more ambitious in seeking solutions to information and communication technology related problems.
4. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and pupils make a good start to their full-time education. Most achieve well and will attain the early learning goals across all six curriculum areas, a few will exceed the goals and a very few will struggle to reach some of them. By Year 2, pupils' attainment is above national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils have developed a good level of competence in information and communication technology; this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Where sufficient evidence was obtained from lessons and pupils' earlier work it was judged that standards were above average in other subjects.
5. Pupils now in Year 6 also display above average attainment in each of English, mathematics and science and most are confident and competent information and communication technology users. Attainment in the other subjects inspected fully, art and design, geography, and history are also above average. No overall judgements are made about attainment in design and technology, music or physical education because of lack of evidence. Nevertheless some work of above average quality was seen in each of these subjects. In all subjects it is clear that pupils make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding as they move up the school; their achievement is good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

² The juniors are in Years 3 to 6.

³ The infants are in Years 1 and 2.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. Pupils' moral, social, cultural and spiritual development is also very good. Attendance is good and punctuality is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to work and play. They approach tasks with high levels of enthusiasm, interest and concentration.
- Pupils' relationships with each other are excellent. This is reflected in the very good behaviour in lessons.
- Because of the effective way in which the school promotes excellent relationships, including racial harmony, pupils have a very clear understanding of their individual and corporate roles and responsibilities within the school community.
- Pupils respond very well to the school's very high expectations of behaviour and understand the consequences of their actions.
- Pupils respond very well to the many very good opportunities that promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There are no significant weaknesses in this aspect of the school's work.

Commentary

6. The rate of attendance is above that of similar schools nationally and is an improvement since the last inspection.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

7. Pupils enjoy coming to school and develop excellent relationships with others in their classes. The pupils of all ages show very good attitudes to their work and their life in school. This is reflected in their very good punctuality, enjoyment of lessons and their participation in extra-curricular activities, particularly sport and drama. Pupils say that some lessons are fun and that they have lots of friends.
8. Pupils are very well behaved and co-operative in lessons. They listen to adults and follow instructions because staff set high expectations for their conduct. Pupils are encouraged to take different responsibilities as they progress through the school. Older pupils often help the younger children, particularly at lunchtimes. This leads to most pupils gaining in confidence and developing high self-esteem. The excellent focus on inclusion means that all pupils within the school feel valued and work very well in harmony with each other. Incidents of bullying and racism are rare and where they do occur, the school is quick to deal with them effectively.
9. The pupils are proud of their own background and beliefs. They are developing a good awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs through the teaching of art, music and religious education and during assemblies. They respect the views and beliefs of others and understand that this is important. Very good moral development is fostered well through clear rules and reminders of why they should consider the needs of others. There is plenty of

opportunity within and outside school for pupils to develop very good social skills, for example the raising of money for a number of charities, both local and international.

10. Pupils are very proud of their school and have an excellent understanding of how they can make it a better place for the whole school community. There have been no exclusions in the past academic year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality education for all its pupils. The overall quality of teaching is very good and assessment procedures are good, overall. The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and pupils all benefit from a very good level of support, care and guidance. The school and parents maintain an excellent partnership; links with other schools and colleges are good and with the local community are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Assessment procedures are good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good planning of lessons and very clear learning objectives are shared with the pupils and promote very good learning.
- The teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is very good and ensures that all pupils are fully included in lessons.
- Very good assessment procedures in English and mathematics enable teachers to keep track of pupils' progress; assessment is less well developed in most other subjects.
- Teachers use questions very skilfully to revise, extend and confirm pupils' learning and achievement.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4%)	17 (42%)	17 (42%)	4 (10%)	1(2%)	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.

11. During the inspection the quality of teaching in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 was almost invariably at least good, in well over half of lessons it was very good. In Years 3 to 6, teaching was again almost always at least good with a significant proportion that was very good and sometimes excellent. The quality of teaching of English, including the skills of literacy, was never less than good, usually very good and on one occasion excellent. In mathematics, including numeracy, teaching was almost always at least good and often very good. There are some good examples of the planned development and use of the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subject areas but these are too few in number. The teaching of other subjects is almost invariably at least good and often very good. As a result of the consistently high quality of teaching pupils achieve well as they move through the school and attain the standards of which they are capable. It also successfully promotes very good attitudes to learning among the pupils.

12. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to provide good learning experiences for special educational needs pupils, both when working in the classroom and in withdrawal groups. For example, the close support of a teaching assistant enabled one pupil to achieve well in a numeracy lesson when calculating the lengths of the sides in rectangles. The pupil offered several correct responses to the teacher's questions and successfully met one of the targets on his individual education plan. Although the attainment of pupils with special educational needs is monitored by teachers and teaching assistants, there is no agreed system within the school for recording the day-to-day progress of pupils and the rate of progress of individual pupils is not tracked. The teaching of gifted and talented pupils is very good. Teachers plan well to challenge the pupils, supported in part by guidelines provided by the co-ordinator. Rigorous assessment helps in the identification of pupils who have special talents across a wide range of ability areas that include sport and artistic performance as well as literacy and numeracy.
13. Teachers make their expectations of a high standard of behaviour very clear and there is a good level of consistency throughout the school in this respect. Because pupils know what is expected of them and that they are listened to and their views taken into account, they contribute very well to maintaining a pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere in their classrooms and in the school as a whole. In almost all lessons, teachers make clear to pupils what they are going to learn and what they have to do; this is based on very thorough planning and preparation. Because of this lessons, are usually well focused on improvement and stimulating, for example when a teacher enlivened a history lesson by donning a soldier's uniform. Most teachers have very good questioning skills that they use well to help pupils to re-visit what they have previously learned and then to extend that learning, finally to consolidate it. Teachers, under the guidance of the co-ordinator, are increasingly using information and communication technology resources to enhance pupils' learning; there is great potential for further development in this respect.
14. Pupils are very interested in learning and make good gains in their skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Most take increasing care and pride in their work, encouraged by what is often very good marking, sharply focused on further improvement. Pupils enjoy working together, independently of adults, once they know what they have to do and often show commendable commitment and perseverance, such as when solving control problems in information and communication technology
15. There are very good procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress through the National Curriculum levels in English and mathematics and these are consistently implemented throughout the school. Assessment is less well developed in other subjects and is a current improvement priority, particularly devising useful and workable systems for recording and using the results of assessment. Assessment during lessons and the provision of good feedback to pupils were very good features of much of the teaching observed but little was recorded in any way for future use.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum and a very good range of enrichment activities. Accommodation and resources are good, overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- The curriculum is effective in providing a broad range of worthwhile curricular opportunities.
- Equality of access and opportunity is excellent.
- Very good curriculum development makes an ongoing contribution to the learning of the pupils.
- Opportunities for enrichment are very good, extending pupils' experiences.
- There are insufficient information and communication technology resources to support and extend pupils' learning in some subject areas.

Commentary

16. Policies and schemes of work based upon national guidelines are effective in ensuring that all aspects of subjects are taught. Personal, social and health education is mainly taught through religious education, but is also developed through other subjects and in assemblies, following a carefully planned programme. The work of the school council contributes well to this area of learning. Sex and drugs education are effectively taught through the 'Family Life' programme. The school is justifiably proud of its highly inclusive nature. Pupils' behaviour, achievements and opportunities are carefully monitored, for example by ethnicity and gender, to ensure equality of access and in meeting pupils' needs. Teachers are very active in exploring ways to create motivating experiences in their lessons in order to make the curriculum live in the minds of the pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils take part in a Young People's Parliament and visit Birmingham City Council House. The school also organises days on which parents take lunch with the pupils and then take part in outside activities, promoting family values.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are very well included in the work of the school. They experience a curriculum that is broadly the same as other pupils. Literacy and numeracy support programmes are used effectively and, when pupils are withdrawn from lessons, their work is related to that of the whole class. Individual education plans are prepared for all pupils by the co-ordinator with clearly stated short-term targets and matching strategies.
18. The school provides very good opportunities for learning outside the school day. Well-attended clubs include guitar, choir, music and drama. Sports are strongly encouraged with pupils engaged in football, netball and Gaelic football. Year 5 pupils learn keyboard skills from a visiting music teacher. The school has a thriving involvement in the arts with visits from ballet and theatre companies and visits to the theatre and ballet in return. The school is visited by authors, and each year an international day is held during which the pupils are introduced to the music, instruments, dress, food and other aspects of the culture of a particular country. Pupils greatly appreciate the range and quality of extra learning opportunities that the school provides.
19. Teachers and teaching assistants are well qualified and experienced to meet the demands of the curriculum. Many other adults work in the school and all make an essential contribution to its smooth running and its welcoming atmosphere. Overall accommodation and resources are good. However, the school is aware that in some subject areas there are few opportunities for using information and communication technology to support learning and that the Reception class lacks a secure, covered playground.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides very good levels of care and attention to the welfare, health and safety of the pupils. Provision of support, advice and guidance for the pupils are very good. There is good involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very warm, caring and purposeful learning environment where all pupils are highly and equally valued.
- Pupils have an excellent and trusting relationship with at least one adult in the school.
- Pupils have access to very well informed support and guidance.
- The school is active in seeking the views of the pupils on school improvement.
- Very good arrangements with pre-school groups in the area ensure the smooth transition of children into the school.

Commentary

20. This is a very caring school where members of staff treat pupils fairly and with respect. This ensures that pupils are comfortable about approaching individual teachers or support staff for help or guidance. Pupils say teachers always take time to listen to them and they can always have their say. Pupils are extremely satisfied with the school and what it provides.
21. The members of staff know the pupils and their families very well, are sensitive to their needs and are able, therefore, to provide very good support and guidance. Parents say that the school is helping their child to become mature. The good personal, social and health education programme and assessment procedures enable staff to provide targeted support for individuals, including those with special educational needs. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is maintained well through reviews in relation to the targets set for the pupils. Very good support and guidance are helping to raise pupils' achievements.
22. Health and safety arrangements are very good and risk assessments are carried out for the premises and school trips. Very effective child protection procedures are well known to all staff. There are good links with outside agencies.
23. The school actively encourages the pupils to express their views both in informal and formal ways. There is a school council that considers matters as diverse as new playground games and the lavatory facilities. This opportunity to contribute to school improvement contributes very well to pupils' personal development. Pupils with special educational needs contribute to their annual reviews and all pupils are involved in setting personal and learning targets and assessing their own work. Pupils appreciate the fact that their views are listened to and acted upon.
24. The school has very good relationships with feeder pre-school groups and as a result transition arrangements are very good. These procedures significantly reduce any anxieties that children or their parents might have. The transfer arrangements enable the school to respond well to the individual needs of the children and ensure their first experience of school is a happy one.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has excellent partnerships with parents. Links with other schools and colleges are good. It has satisfactory links with the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are kept very well informed about the school and their children's progress.

- There are excellent procedures for ensuring satisfaction and to deal with any parental concerns or complaints.
- The good links with other schools and colleges ensure a smooth transition for pupils to their next stage of education.
- The contribution made by parents to their child's learning at home and in the school is very good.
- Formal and regular consultation arrangements with all parents are very well developed.
- Links in the wider community and particularly with local business are underdeveloped.

Commentary

25. Parents are extremely satisfied with the work of the school and what it provides. This is a continuous improvement since the last inspection. They say that their children enjoy coming to school and make good progress, that the school is led and managed well and that the teaching is good. Teachers are always available at the beginning and end of each day to deal with any concerns or complaints those parents may have. This informal contact ensures very high levels of parental satisfaction and ensures that any problems are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
26. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, regular newsletters and school notice boards. They appreciate the opportunities to discuss their child's progress at both formal and informal meetings with teachers. A helpful end-of-year academic report, containing targets to help improve, accompanies these meetings. These reports are an improvement since the last inspection. Parents are well supported by close involvement in the provision made for pupils with special educational needs, not only through review meetings but also through having very good access to teachers to discuss issues and receive support. The governors' annual report meets statutory requirements and the meeting with parents, to discuss its contents, is very well attended.
27. The school has engaged a good number of parents and other volunteers from the community to come and help in school. Some listen to children read, work alongside their child on a project or help on school trips. The vast majority of parents contribute to their child's learning at home supported by useful curriculum information and workshops provided by the school. Workshops where parents work alongside their children are a much appreciated initiative. The school has identified the need for a Parents' Room and a Parents' Focus Group as areas for future development.
28. The school links well with local infant and junior schools to ensure best teaching practice is shared and to take part in joint initiatives. There is a strong link with local secondary schools that provides opportunities for teachers' professional development, the sharing of pupil information and to discuss areas of concern to ensure a smooth transition for Year 6 pupils to the next stage of their education.
29. The satisfactory links with the community include a close liaison with the police, school nurse and Church, all of whom have a positive effect on pupils' personal development. However, the links with non-denominational organisations, community groups who may wish to use the school facilities productively and particularly with businesses, are all underdeveloped. An active Home-School Association is very effective in promoting relationships within the Catholic community and in raising additional funds.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and is well supported by the very effective leadership of other key staff, especially the deputy headteacher. The governance of the school is satisfactory, with developing strengths. All relevant statutory requirements are met. The overall management of the school is very good, ensuring the school runs smoothly and calmly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Under the very good leadership of the headteacher the school has maintained its high standards in English and mathematics.
- The governors are developing a clear understanding of the school's priorities, but have no formal strategies for school visits.
- The well developed role of subject co-ordinators is having a positive affect on standards.

Commentary

30. The governing body is well organised and manages its work efficiently through relevant committees and delegated responsibilities. All statutory requirements are met, including those relating to disability and racial equality legislation. The governors understand the school's main strengths and areas for improvement. Some visit regularly but there are no formal monitoring arrangements, partly because a proportion of them are relatively new and have had insufficient time to develop this aspect of their role. The governing body is being steered by the very capable guidance of the chairman and the chair of the finance committee, both of whom are very supportive of the headteacher.
31. The headteacher, with very good support from the deputy headteacher, leads the school very well and has prioritised a range of improvements to raise standards in writing, improve provision and teachers' understanding of music and provide for a better environment. All teachers are focused well on raising standards in writing and in developing their expertise in music. They have a good understanding that more needs to be done to develop the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. The monitoring role of all co-ordinators is well defined and each has a regular period out of the classroom to observe lessons, check planning or look at pupils' work. This is having a positive effect on the provision and standards of all subjects. The very good action plans and priorities identified in the school's improvement plan are having a positive effect on standards and the environment. The school's vision for the future is shared by everyone.
32. The headteacher has created a team of teachers who are fully committed to evaluating and improving their work. Members of the recently formed senior management team contribute positively to the running of the school, despite having been. For example, the deputy headteacher has responsibility for pastoral care and this is having a considerable affect on social development and behaviour. The creation of a positive climate for learning ensures all pupils have good opportunities for learning whether they are boys or girls or have special educational needs or are identified as gifted and talented.
33. The school has very good strategies for self evaluation. The headteacher regularly observes teachers working with pupils, as do members of the senior management team and targets are set to secure the necessary improvements. Performance management is closely linked to this programme of observations and is effective. All teachers are committed to continuing professional development that is strongly linked to the school's priorities and to furthering their

careers. Staffing has been very stable over the years because of the positive ethos and the encouragement to be involved in the school's development.

34. The financial management of the school is very good. Through the employment of a local authority bursar and the work of the very capable chair of the finance committee, the budget is carefully monitored. All expenditure, particularly for building works, is subjected to close scrutiny and the application of the principles of best value. The school spends an amount of money per pupil that is below average for its type. Given the context and provision, value for money is very good.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	638,012
Total expenditure	635,945
Expenditure per pupil	2,471

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	13,733
Balance carried forward to the next	15,800

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. The Foundation Stage provides the children with a good start to their education. They are admitted to the school in the September before their fifth birthday. The majority have already had some pre-school experiences. Attainment on entry for the present cohort is broadly average, with writing the least well developed. However, attainment tends to vary considerably with each cohort. The substantial majority of Reception children are on course to attain the expected levels in all areas of learning. A few are likely to exceed the levels and a very small number may struggle; overall standards are above average.
36. The quality of teaching overall is very good and this represents further improvement since the last inspection. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children mean they are provided with a very wide variety of experiences in all areas of learning. This ensures they make good progress towards achieving the expected standards for children at the end of Reception. Planning by the class teacher is closely linked to early learning goals. However, the plans are regularly discussed with the teaching assistant and her ideas incorporated. Questioning is used effectively to encourage children to develop their speaking skills and extend their vocabulary. Very good relationships give children confidence to respond to adults' questions and to share their thoughts and opinions. The very good support provided by the teaching assistant and other adults within the classroom means all children benefit, including those with special educational needs. The children are grouped by age and ability so work can be more closely matched to individual needs. This is having a positive effect on their learning, ensuring all have access to tasks set. Although regular assessments are carried out there is too little formal recording.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is taken to enhance children's development through well planned activities.
- Very good relationships ensure children feel happy and secure.

Commentary

37. Because of very good teaching and many opportunities provided to develop personal and social skills, almost all of children are on course to attain the expected levels and many will exceed them. Most children find it easy to conform to the high expectations of good behaviour set by the staff. Children know the routines well and settle to tasks quickly and with minimum fuss. The majority are well focused and interested, and even when working independently they sustain their concentration. For the most part, a calm working atmosphere pervades each session. The very good teamwork of all adults provides the children with good role models of co-operation, which they try to emulate in their role play and shared activities. Children play together in the sand, sharing construction kits or role playing in the Post Office. All adults expect children to listen carefully and to respect the opinions of others. Because of very good relationships, children are confident to ask questions, feel happy and secure.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good and provides the children with a wide range of experiences to develop reading and writing skills, helping them to achieve well.
- Every opportunity is used to extend vocabulary and to develop speaking skills.

Commentary

38. Early indications are that almost all children are on course to attain the expected levels. They are making good progress in developing language skills as a result of all the opportunities provided for speaking and listening. Many children are articulate, confident speakers, often replying to questions in complex sentences. All adults use every opportunity during activities, particularly those that they direct, to develop vocabulary through probing questions and insisting correct terminology is used. Children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books. During a literacy session they demonstrated their knowledge of terminology such as *author*, *title*, *blurb* and their understanding of speech bubbles and question marks. Reading has a high priority within the classroom and this motivates and encourages children to enjoy and appreciate the written word. Higher attaining children read accurately at an appropriate level and are just developing strategies for working out unfamiliar words. Lower attaining readers answer questions about their books using information and communication technology clues but do not recognise words, only a few letter sounds.
39. Examples of children's books show very good progress as they develop their early writing skills. Many opportunities are provided for writing in different areas of learning. Children were observed writing letters to "Fairy Land" in the role play area and making cards.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Every opportunity is used to develop children's counting skills, including number rhymes and songs.
- A wide range of activities is offered to enable the children become confident in understanding numbers.
- The quality of teaching is very good so that children achieve well.

Commentary

40. Because of very good teaching, almost all of the children are on course to achieve the expected standards in this area. Adults use every opportunity to develop children's counting skills, including number songs and rhymes. The higher attaining children confidently count to 20 and above and are beginning to add and subtract numbers. The lower attaining children count to 10. However most of the children found counting in two's to 20 difficult. Children are familiar with the names of both two dimensional and three dimensional shapes and some recognise that cubes and cuboids have corners and faces and straight sides. A few children

sorted the shapes by looking at straight edges and curved edges and one by whether or not they were two dimensional and three dimensional. A good range of activities support the children's development of number.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many relevant visits and practical activities help enhance the children's understanding of the world around them.
- The quality of teaching is very good so that children are enthusiastic, make good progress over time and achieve well.

Commentary

41. During the inspection the main topic was growth. Children were very excited when they could choose their own flower seeds to plant in a pot. They already knew plants need light and water, and were fascinated by the quick growth of the cress seeds on damp cotton wool. Through first-hand exploration of the school grounds they discovered more facts about growing plants. Some translated this information into a diagram naming the parts of the plant. Children visit the local shops and go for "seasonal" walks. Computers are available in most lessons and children are confident using them. A small number of children used a "roamer", a programmable robot that moves along the ground. They knew that it was a 90 degree turn that would make the roamer travel towards the opposite corner of a square.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

42. From the very limited opportunities to observe children in this area of learning it is clear that most are on course to achieve or sometimes exceed the expected standards. Children are provided with many opportunities to develop pencil control through specifically designed worksheets and colouring; many try to colour carefully within the lines. Other activities encourage them to use scissors and cut out along the lines. One activity required much skill and precision to cut out the centre of flower so each petal could be folded back: children did this very well. Children are confident riding large wheeled toys, kicking footballs and balancing on various sized plastic stepping stones. However, because there is no direct access from the Reception classroom to the outdoor area, activities cannot be planned using this area as an extension of the classroom.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

41. Most children are on course to achieve the expected levels in this area of learning because of very good teaching. Many activities are provided that help to develop skills in drawing, collage, printing, model making and painting. Some activities require patience and children were observed making paper flowers that needed some careful cutting; they were very successful. Unusual models made from wire and foil were displayed and showed how skilful some of these young children were at working on something small and complex. Children love the role play area, practising their writing skills and counting skills. The area is changed regularly to reflect the class topics, at present it is a post office. Music plays an important part and they enjoy playing the instruments and singing familiar rhymes and songs.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment in Year 2 and Year 6 is above average.
- Teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm motivate pupils to succeed.
- Literacy skills are used very well in other areas of the curriculum.
- More consistent use can be made of pupils' information and communication technology skills in literacy.
- The subject is very well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator.

Commentary

42. Achievement in English is very good. The results of National Curriculum tests have remained consistently high. In 2003 the results in Year 2 were very high in both reading and writing compared with other schools nationally and compared with schools in a similar social and economic setting. For pupils in Year 6 in 2003, results were above average compared with schools nationally and well above average compared with similar schools but below average when compared with the results of other pupils in other schools with similar results when they were in Year 2 in 1999. All pupils achieve well including those identified with special educational needs. Very good support, when available, benefits the learning of these pupils, giving them access to their tasks and enabling them to be fully involved in the lesson. Work seen during the inspection confirmed that, in both reading and writing, standards remain above average in Year 2.
43. As pupils get older their skills in speaking and listening improve so that by Year 6 the majority of them are confident, articulate speakers. They are willing to share their thoughts and opinions with their peers. This is because teachers provide a range of experiences where these skills can develop. For example, a group of pupils were invited to take part in a debate in the council house. In another lesson younger pupils questioned the Twits and questioned them about the state of their house. Pupils enjoy these activities and very well motivated to succeed. They listen very well and respectfully to their peers especially when working in groups.
44. Standards attained in reading are above average. Pupils read confidently and with expression from a wide range of genre. However, there are limited opportunities for developing research skills and becoming more independent learners as the library is rarely used for this purpose. When younger pupils meet an unfamiliar word they have a variety of strategies for working it out. These include sounding out the letters, breaking the word down into smaller words, using picture clues or finding the word from the meaning of the sentence. Reading has a high priority within the school and consequently pupils are enthusiastic about books and read them with interest. Reading diaries are well used by both the pupils and the parents to record their comments.
45. Pupils' standards in writing in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average, owing in part to the additional time allocated to extended writing and the range of opportunities pupils are given to write for different purposes. In an excellent lesson, pupils in the Year 5 class responded very naturally and positively to their teacher wearing a sari in order to set the right atmosphere for

using a story about an Indian family in order to develop their creative writing skills. The writing task was set at three different levels of difficulty and these matched pupils' learning needs very well. Pupils were very interested in their work, approaching it very conscientiously and with very good imagination and with unselfconscious use of the Indian words that they had met. The teacher has very skilfully created an atmosphere in which pupils are comfortable about being adventurous and their learning and achievement benefit greatly from this. The writing of those higher attaining pupils in Year 6 demonstrates a very good use of descriptive language and adventurous vocabulary, creating some gripping stories and moving poetry. Punctuation is used appropriately and spelling is accurate. Younger pupils are also beginning to write more descriptively and again have many opportunities to explore different types of writing. All pupils take pride in their work, which is well laid out and neatly written. The school has already highlighted writing as the weaker element of English and has taken steps to allocate additional time for extended writing. This is having a positive impact on standards across the school.

46. In Years 1 to 6 the quality of teaching and learning is very good, so pupils achieve well. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives that are shared with the pupils. Effective questioning extends pupils' understanding and knowledge and encourages them to express their thoughts and opinions. Very good relationships give pupils the confidence to respond even if they feel the answer is wrong. Teachers continually praise the pupils for their efforts and this boosts their self-esteem so they strive to achieve more. The teaching assistants provide very good support for those identified with special educational needs working on the carpet alongside them or in small groups. However, this support is not consistently available for older pupils and, in lessons where pupils with special educational needs had no support, their learning was affected. Assessment is well established and is having a positive impact as teachers can track the pupils' progress. The very good marking seen in pupils' books is constructive and helpful, giving ideas of how work can be improved.
47. The subject is very well led. The role of co-ordinator is fully developed and includes checking planning, looking at pupils' work and observing teaching and learning. In addition, writing workshops for parents have very successfully been introduced. Regular, termly, annotated assessment is now a feature and alerts teachers to pupils who fail to make appropriate progress. The quality of provision has improved since the last inspection as have national test results.
48. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the use of drama and role play within lessons, visits from theatre groups, an author, librarian, celebration of world book day and opportunities to perform for parents. However, there is limited opportunity for the use of information and communication technology within literacy; an area for further investigation.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. There are many notable examples of pupils using their literacy skills very well in other areas of the curriculum. This is particularly so in religious education where, although the context of the task is religious, the emphasis is also on developing literacy skills. Literacy skills are used to record experiments in science, evaluate a design and technology project and explain methods in problem solving. However, limited opportunity for pupils to use library skills to research topics such as history or geography makes it more difficult for them to undertake independent study. This is an area that the school is aware needs further development.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- National test results are well above average as a result of good teaching and careful tracking of pupils' progress.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and pupils of all levels of ability are catered for well and achieve well.
- There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills and understanding in other contexts.

Commentary

50. Test results were well above the national average for pupils in Years 2 and 6 in 2003; they were also well above the average for schools with a similar take-up of free school meals. In recent years the school's results at the end of Year 6 have been well above average for schools whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2. In 2003 the school's results were average compared with such schools; assessment data suggests that variations in the year group, attributable to special educational needs and some movement into and out of it, contributed to this comparison. Since the last inspection, national test results have improved significantly both in Year 2 and in Year 6, as a result of initiatives led by the co-ordinator. Pupils are well taught and build well on their earlier learning as they move through the school; achievement is good. Good assessment systems enable teachers to keep good track of the progress of individual pupils.
51. Work seen in the books of pupils in Year 2 confirms that pupils make good progress from their differing starting points, their achievement is good. There is a strong emphasis on number work, with frequent opportunities for pupils to apply what they know to money problems, for example shopping lists. Pupils also achieve well in developing their knowledge of shapes and this was the focus of a good lesson during the inspection. Good use of information and communication technology resources and a good level of adult support meant that pupils achieved well in developing correct use of the language of shape, distinguishing, for example, between *cube* and *cuboid*, *square* and *rectangular*. A task of house building using different shapes was set at three different levels of challenge and this enabled pupils of differing abilities to achieve equally well.
52. Pupils of lower ability from Years 4 and 5, including some with special educational needs, benefited from a very well taught lesson that was focused sharply on learning how to measure and calculate the perimeter of simple shapes. The quality of pupils' learning was very good because the teacher used questions very well to help them to revise what they already knew and then to build on this. Support from teaching assistants made an important contribution to pupils' good achievement as did the teacher's consistently high expectations and the very good feedback that she provided.
53. An important contribution is made to pupils' learning and achievement in Year 6 by the high quality of the teacher's marking, promoting very good learning from mistakes or misunderstandings. Pupils demonstrate above average competence in number work and there is evidence of good understanding across the mathematics curriculum. There are regular opportunities to undertake investigations, designed to promote a systematic approach to problem solving, for example in counting the number of triangles of various sizes within a triangle drawn on isometric graph paper. Pupils respond well to the challenge presented by these investigations, for example when they successfully identify the largest three-digit

numbers with particular properties - a perfect square or a prime number. There was good practical work involving working out the frequency of different coloured sweets in packets and information and communication technology resources were used well when pupils entered data that they had collected relating to physical proportions. On the evidence of the work seen, most pupils are on track to achieve the national expectation of Level 4 with around a quarter of the class showing Level 5 potential. Standards are above average.

54. The overall quality of teaching is good with a significant proportion of lessons during the inspection that were very good. Characteristics of those lessons in which pupils' learning and achievement are best include teachers making very clear to pupils what they are going to learn, using questions well to revise earlier learning and to provide further challenge and extension, and setting tasks at appropriate levels of difficulty for different groups of pupils. Teaching assistants make an essential contribution to including all pupils in the work of lessons. Pupils enjoy mathematics and achieve well throughout the school. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management based on very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject.

Mathematics across the curriculum

55. There was some evidence of pupils using their mathematical skills, for example data handling and graph drawing, in other subjects, including science. However, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to apply the mathematics that they are learning in other situations.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader provides good leadership and management, contributing to good standards.
- Very good use of practical activities is helping pupils to develop investigative skills.
- Good quality teaching enthuses the pupils who are eager to express ideas and explain processes.
- Assessment data is not used to track the progress of individual pupils.
- Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to enhance pupils' learning.

Commentary:

56. Good subject leadership has helped to produce standards that are above those found in all schools nationally in Year 6 and Year 2. These standards are the same as those found at the time of the last inspection. Overall, pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactorily in the Years 3 to 6. In Year 6, some pupils are making better progress than expected; however, a significant number of boys who attained well in Year 2 are currently underachieving.
57. Good analysis of assessment results enabled the co-ordinator to improve pupils' skills of investigation through a strong focus upon practical and analytical working tasks in lessons throughout the school. For example in a Year 1 lesson pupils explored 'push' and 'pull' forces in a variety of practical tasks involving blowing streamers, bubbles and other objects. The pupils debated their findings and recorded their observations, so developing a good understanding of forces, scientific method and their speaking, listening and writing skills.

58. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives and activities that enthuse and challenge the pupils. In a Year 6 class pupils worked eagerly to label the parts of real plants and to explain their functions in the growth of their specimens. They co-operated very well, with one lower-attaining pupil being supported by the explanation given to him by a higher-attaining boy.
59. The co-ordinator is introducing improvements to the assessment of pupils' work, but currently there is no system for tracking the progress of individual pupils to contribute to improving their achievement. Information and communication technology is used appropriately in Years 1 and 2, but its use in Years 3 to 6 is limited. The school is improving its facilities to meet this deficiency.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in Information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and support for other teachers.
- Pupils' standards throughout the school are above national expectations.
- Information and communication technology resources are not used sufficiently in enhancing pupils' learning in other subjects.

Commentary

60. At the time of the last inspection, standards throughout the school were in line with national expectations. Improvements since then, especially in terms of staff expertise, have led to pupils developing good skills across the information and technology curriculum. The co-ordinator, who provides enthusiastic and well-informed leadership, has put in place the necessary improvements to the computer stock and recognises the need to promote actively the use of pupils' skills in information and communication technology to aid their learning across the curriculum. Resources such as digital still and video cameras and interactive whiteboards are increasingly being used well to enhance pupils' learning.
61. In Year 6, pupils have enjoyed good coverage of the curriculum appropriate to their age and many are impressive in their ability to demonstrate what they know and can do. They are, for example, very comfortable when using the Excel program to examine the proportion data arising in their work in mathematics or when explaining how to develop a Power Point presentation from scratch.
62. Three lessons were observed during the inspection, one in which learning was good, one where it was very good and one where it was excellent; overall, taking into account the work seen, the quality of teaching and learning is good. A small group of pupils in Year 1 benefited greatly from the expertise of the teaching assistant and from being given enough time and individual attention to enable them to acquire skills. Their achievement is very good as they learn how to find pictures and combine pictures with text, learning to alter the size of pictures as they go. Pupils in Year 4 valued the teacher's very good subject knowledge as they also combined pictures and text while creating a document that outlines the steps in mummification. Finished work shows a pleasing attention to detail and layout as pupils illustrate the removal of the brain and internal organs.

63. An excellent lesson, taught by the co-ordinator, introduced pupils in Year 6 to control software. Organisation was very good, with a whole class introduction followed by intensive work with half a class at a time in the computer suite, with very good teaching assistant support. The quality of pupils' learning was excellent because of the clarity of explanations, task setting and individual support. Pupils demonstrated a very good level of understanding of the process of controlling the outputs of a set of pedestrian traffic lights, achieving well as they took into account order and time/delay.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. There are good examples of pupils using their information and communication technology skills in other subject areas, for example in literacy and history, but these are not well developed. The school has rightly identified the promotion of the use of pupils' information and communication technology skills to enhance their learning across the curriculum as an improvement priority.

HUMANITIES

65. **Religious education** is reported on separately in a Section 23 inspection report.
66. Standards in **geography** are above national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils are highly motivated by the practical investigations that form the core of many lessons with the result that the pupils' learning is meaningful and worthwhile. No overall judgement is possible on the quality of teaching; however, the use and outcomes of this investigative style of working were clearly seen in a very good Year 5 lesson. The focus, dealing with a country's imports and exports, can easily be very boring but this lesson intrigued the pupils. The teacher produced a wide variety of products including a pineapple, bottle of wine and coffee for them to study, find the source country and plot it on a world map. Other pupils used the Internet to find information specifically about the trade of Kenya. Through the curriculum and activities experienced by the pupils they learn to undertake enquiries into environmental change and sustainability in the local area and to make and use maps of different scales. The experienced co-ordinator monitors teaching and updates planning appropriately. She is aware that the use of Information and communication technology and the assessment system are areas for improvement.
67. Pupils attain standards in **history** that are above national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. No overall judgement is possible for the quality of teaching as too few lessons were seen. The co-ordinator supports teachers in planning active learning experiences into all the topics studied. These include producing visual work such as posters, drama and role-play, making models and undertaking fieldwork. For example, in one challenging and motivating lesson seen during the inspection pupils became either Spartans or Athenians in Ancient Greece to explore historical information and discover the advantages and disadvantages of life in each state. While in another lesson, pupils swathed clay figures in bandages and conducted burial rites on their models of Ancient Egyptian mummies to learn about the burial procedures. Pupils visit the Black Country Museum, consider opposing views of historical events and hold special historical period days. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and is developing the use of information and communication technology in the subject. He is aware that assessment is an area for development.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68. On the evidence of the work seen, standards in **art and design** are above national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6. Too few lessons were seen to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and active in improving art studies in the school. She introduced a new scheme of work at the start of the academic year with the explicit purpose of meeting deficiencies, such as the knowledge pupils have of artists. Much of the work has cross-curricular links. For example, in a good Year 4 lesson pupils were using walking route plans they had drawn with features to be seen as the base for a collagraph plate which they were constructing from string, glue and an assortment of card and oddments. They were introduced to the idea through the study and interpretation of aboriginal artwork from an Australian artist. The lesson and such teaching are effective in promoting not only the pupils' practical skills but also their appreciation and sense of wonder at the perspectives that art from other cultures develop. Pupils actively explore the use of colour, tools, materials and the use made of these by artists through time. Each pupil has a sketchbook that is added to as pupils proceed through the school to demonstrate progression in their drawing skills. The co-ordinator is aware that the design of an assessment system is an area for development.
69. The improvements led by the co-ordinator during and since the last inspection have successfully raised the profile of **design and technology** in the school. There is a good scheme of work and most teachers use the flexibility available to them to allocate time appropriately to the units of work. The subject makes a very important and planned contribution to parental involvement in pupils' learning and to the development of literacy skills. Teachers, parents and pupils from Year 2, for example, worked together, following instructions to make a glove puppet. Much of the work seen, from this and other projects was of good quality but insufficient was seen to make overall judgements about standards. Nevertheless it is clear from the design, making and evaluation of slippers by pupils in Year 6 that pupils achieve well in the development of these skills as they move through the school.
70. During the inspection lessons in **design and technology** were observed in Year 4 and Year 5. Pupils in Year 4 made good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the use of materials for packaging butter and in relation to designing a logo or label to advertise the product. Their achievement was good because the teacher's approach was imaginative, encouraging pupils to examine actual butter and spread products and to explore the use of exaggerated claims, temptation, snappy slogans and appealing adjectives as selling points. Pupils in Year 5 were greatly stimulated by the teacher's introduction to their work on making a marionette, both by an interesting and informative video and through examining a range of both traditional and modern examples. Pupils demonstrated clearly that they have developed a good understanding of the design process and how to approach a new project. Too few lessons were observed to support overall judgements about teaching and learning.
71. Although **music** was not a main focus of the inspection there were some opportunities to observe lessons but insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards at the age of seven and 11 or the quality of teaching and learning. During the inspection, pupils were heard singing in two assemblies, one for Years 3 to 6 and one for Years 1 and 2. The quality of singing by the juniors was good. They sang with clarity, in tune and making a pleasant sound, especially as the use of dynamics was encouraged. The pupils obviously enjoy singing as shown by their enthusiasm to participate. All the pupils enjoy music and are well motivated by their teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm. They particularly enjoy composing and using the instruments. Year 6 pupils rose well to the challenge to improvise a melody using the pentatonic scale to accompany the "School Prayer". This was further developed by adding a chord accompaniment as well as percussion. The co-ordinator for music has had a very positive influence on the quality and standard on music in the school. Presently, choir is the

only extra-curricular activity available, although many opportunities arise for performing within the community or in school. Keyboard tuition is available for pupils in Year 5. The school has highlighted a need to develop further instrumental opportunities for the pupils.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in games and dance is enhanced by partnerships with other providers.
- There is good leadership of the subject and enthusiasm among the staff that lead to good opportunities for skill development and competition beyond the school day.
- Provision for athletics and gymnastics is less well developed and there is no whole school system for tracking pupils' skill development

Commentary

72. Physical education plays an important part in the life of the school and there are good opportunities for pupils to attend after school clubs. There is something available on most days of the week. School teams perform well in competitions, for example netball, football for both boys and girls, and the swimming gala. Provision is strongest in respect of games, dance and swimming and is enhanced in these areas by support from partner secondary schools, a local tennis club and the Royal Ballet. The vast majority of pupils achieve the national expectation of swimming 25 metres unaided by the time that they leave the school. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 achieved well in developing the skills of Gaelic football as a result of a pacy, skill-focused session taught by a visiting coach and the class teacher.
73. Pupils in the mixed-age class containing some of the pupils from Years 4 and 5 made good progress and responded well to music and story in a lesson in dance. A very good feature of the lesson was the very thorough warm up followed by stretching that focused on different major muscle groups in turn, with good and sensitive support given to individuals by the teacher and the teaching assistant. Achievement in the lesson was good because the teacher skilfully enabled pupils to build on their earlier learning by presenting further challenges and opportunities for developing movement and group work skills. Achievement was also good in a lesson with pupils in Year 1 because the teacher was very sharply focused on skill improvement. Pupils got better at sending and receiving a ball because the teacher drew their attention to what was good about their performance and how they could improve it, for example in terms of their aim or the force with which they rolled the ball. The overall quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievements in lessons observed was good and standards were in line with national expectations.
74. The co-ordinator for physical education provides well-informed and enthusiastic leadership and management and enjoys the support of other enthusiastic teachers. She has correctly identified the need to develop further the provision for athletics, and for gymnastics in Years 3 to 6, and to construct a useful and workable assessment procedure to keep track of pupils' progress as they move through the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

75. Promoting pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship permeates all aspects of the life and work of the school. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher, who has leadership responsibility for this area of the curriculum, make sure that it has a very high profile, underpinning as it does, pupils' achievements in other areas of learning. There is a good scheme of work, taught mainly through the religious education curriculum, which was not part of this inspection because of the school's denominational status. Because no teaching and learning were observed, no overall judgement is made on provision. Nevertheless, other evidence from assemblies, discussions with pupils and attendance at a meeting of the school council all point to the school achieving a very high level of success in this aspect of its work. The organisation of citizenship weeks, regular class awards and an award from the City of Birmingham all support this view.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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