

# INSPECTION REPORT

## VILLIERS JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

Bilston

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104318

Headteacher: Mrs S Lanni

Lead inspector: Ted Wheatley

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005

Inspection number: 268182

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	570
School address:	Prouds Lane Bilston West Midlands
Postcode:	WV14 6PR
Telephone number:	(01902) 558 993
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Green
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The school has 570 pupils, 67 of whom are part time in the Nursery. The school is much larger than the average size primary school and has more boys than girls, particularly in Years 5 and 6. A little over half of pupils are from white British backgrounds and about one fifth are from Indian backgrounds. There are smaller numbers of pupils from Caribbean, mixed, Chinese and other white backgrounds. Twenty-two pupils have English as an additional language, though few are in the early stages of acquiring English.

The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average and the socio-economic backgrounds of pupils are broadly average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is well below average and the proportion with special educational needs is broadly average. Special needs provision is mainly for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and very small numbers of pupils with physical difficulties. The percentage of pupils leaving and joining the school after Year 1 is below average. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is below average with children having poor language and literacy skills and attainment on entry to Year 1 is below average overall.

The school has significant partnerships with the University of Central England for initial teacher training, with St Thomas More Secondary School in school sports development, with Morrisons Supermarket for business and community links and with St Leonard's Church for religious and community links. The school is part of the Sure Start Initiative.

The school has the Artsmark Gold (2005), Activemark Gold Award (2004), Investor in People (2003), Schools Achievement Award (2001) and the Wolverhampton Healthy Schools Award (2005).

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10013	Ted Wheatley	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology
19720	Deborah Granville-Hastings	Lay inspector	
2626	Marion Thompson	Team inspector	English English as an additional language
7084	Jack Haslam	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology
7269	Peter Kemble	Team inspector	Geography History Religious education Special educational needs
16773	Raminder Arora	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Music Physical education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Villiers Primary School is a **very good school** with some outstanding features and no significant weaknesses. Pupils achieve well and frequently very well. Teaching is rarely less than good and often very good. Leadership and management are very good and governors play an active part in the school's development and improvement. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well and frequently very well because of consistently good teaching.
- The very effective partnership between teachers and support staff leads to good and often very good teaching and learning.
- The headteacher's clear vision for the school, underpinned by excellent evaluation and strategic planning, results in a very effective school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, leading to pupils' good and frequently very good achievement of the targets in individual learning plans.
- Assessment is good overall and assessment information is used very effectively in English, mathematics and science.
- The ethos for learning is excellent, with pupils having very good attitudes and behaviour.
- The care and support for pupils is very good, leading to happy, relaxed pupils who achieve well.
- The quality of professional development and support for staff is outstanding and leads to their high level of commitment.

Since the school was last inspected in November 1998 improvement has been good. There were no significant weaknesses but the school has made noticeable improvements in the minor issues raised. It has improved assessment procedures and the use of assessment information to plan teaching and meet individual pupils' learning needs. It has improved the consistency of marking and ensured that information in the governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus meets statutory requirements. Teaching and learning have improved and standards have risen and continue to rise.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	C	A	D	A
mathematics	E	C	D	A
science	C	B	C	A

*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 good.** Children start Nursery with below average skills and well below average skills in language and literacy and there is variation from year to year. By the time they enter Year 1 the great majority of children have reached the early learning goals (ELGs) in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. They have exceeded the ELGs in creative development and in personal, social and emotional development, but do not reach the ELGs in their communication, language and literacy skills.

In the national tests taken by Year 2 pupils in 2004, results were well below the national average. They were below average in reading and well below in writing and mathematics. In teachers' assessment in science, results were below average. Results had improved over recent years and,

compared with their attainment on entry, achievement was satisfactory. The unconfirmed results for 2005 show further improvement with good achievement. In the current Year 2, standards are above average overall. They are average in reading and writing, above average in mathematics and science and exceed expectations in design and technology, history, music and religious education. Pupils' achievement is good and often very good. They meet expectations in information and communication technology (ICT), where achievement is satisfactory.

In the national tests taken by Year 6 pupils in 2004 results were average overall. They were below average in English and mathematics and average in science. Compared with pupils of similar prior attainment in other schools results were well above average and pupils achieved well. The unconfirmed results for 2005 showed further improvement. Currently in Year 6, standards are above average and pupils achieve well and frequently very well. Standards are above average in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, history, music and religious education. They are average in ICT and here achievement is satisfactory.

There was not enough evidence to make judgments in art and design, geography or physical education.

Pupils of all levels of prior attainment and from all backgrounds achieve well, and frequently, very well.

**Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is excellent.** This results in very good attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around school. Attendance is steadily improving and is satisfactory; a very small number of parents take their children away on holidays in school times. Punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good.** Teaching and learning are consistently good, often very good and occasionally excellent. Teachers' subject expertise is very good, they have very high expectations, insist on high standards of behaviour and work very effectively in partnership with support assistants to provide effective teaching and learning. Assessment is good overall and very good in English, mathematics and science. The teaching of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory but inconsistent. The curriculum is good and there is a very wide range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation, resources and staffing are good overall. The school provides a very good level of care for pupils through creating an atmosphere of trust and respect. There is a strong and active partnership with parents. Very good communication ensures that parents know how well their children are doing. There are very good links with other schools and the local community that enhance pupils' learning and personal development very well.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are very good.** The headteacher has an outstanding understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has set very clear, ambitious targets for improvement. The support she receives from senior staff is excellent and from other staff is very good. Governance is very good. Governors meet all statutory requirements. Governors' knowledge of the school is very good and they play an active part in planning improvements.

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

Parents' and pupils' views of the school are very good. Parents are extremely supportive of the school and appreciate the work and attitude of teachers. Pupils really enjoy being at the school and mature and develop well as a result.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are no significant areas for the school to address.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement throughout the school is good. Standards are above average overall in Years 2 and 6.

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

- Pupils throughout the school, whatever their prior attainment or ethnic background, achieve well and sometimes very well.
- Achievement is improving as a result of the school's work to improve teaching and raise standards.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children enter the Nursery with below average skills and well below average skills in language and literacy. Attainment on entry fluctuates from year to year, with language skills being the single most important factor inhibiting the pace of learning while children are in the early years of school. By the time pupils enter Year 1 the majority of pupils have achieved the early learning goals (ELGs) in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Pupils have exceeded the ELGs in creative development and in personal, social and emotional development. However, in their communication, language and literacy skills, the majority of pupils do not reach the ELGs.
2. In the end of Year 2 national tests in 2004, results were well below the national average, but this reflected satisfactory achievement overall as these pupils entered Year 1 with well below expected skills overall. Results in reading were below average and in writing and mathematics they were well below average. Compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds results were below average overall, but above average in reading. Results were lower than in recent years, although the trend in the school's results has been better than the national trend. The school was concerned by these results and immediately introduced strategies that have resulted in improved (but unconfirmed) results in 2005. Inspection evidence supports the picture of rising standards.
3. In Year 2, standards are above average overall and pupils achieve well. In reading and writing standards are as expected, but pupils have achieved well and sometimes very well, taking their below average starting point. In mathematics and science, standards are above average and pupils achieve well, frequently very well. In design and technology, history, music and religious education standards exceed expectations and pupils achieve well. Consistently good teaching and very positive attitudes by pupils mean that achievement is often very good. In ICT standards are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory and here the personal enthusiasm of some pupils means that they achieve well. It was not possible to make judgments about standards and achievement in physical education or art and design because not enough lessons or other evidence were seen.
4. In the national tests taken by pupils in Year 6 in 2004 results were in line with the national average overall; they were below average in English and mathematics and average in science. Compared with pupils in schools with pupils of similar prior attainment results were well above average overall. While the trend in results over recent years has been downwards against the national trend, this is more a reflection of fluctuations in attainment on entry to the school than a reflection of anything the school has not done. The unconfirmed results of 2005 show a marked improvement on those of 2004 – the positive impact of changes in teaching and use of assessment to identify learning needs.



5. In Year 6, standards are above average overall and pupils achieve well and frequently very well. In English, mathematics, science, design and technology, history and music, standards are above average and in religious education they exceed the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. In all subjects there are pupils who perform at well above average standards and achieve very well, either through their own enthusiasm and positive attitudes or because of engaging teaching that motivates them. In ICT, standards are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards and achievement in physical education and art and design. Year 6 pupils study French, but have not studied the language long enough for secure judgments to be made.
6. Pupils who are in the early stages of English language acquisition, and those from ethnic minority groups achieve well and reach standards in line with their peers.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in language and literacy and mathematical skills and make particularly good progress in developing confidence and self-esteem. Those with difficulties in confidence, literacy, numeracy or behaviour, develop well during their school life and leave with a very positive image of themselves. Good achievement is largely due to two factors. Firstly, the excellent support pupils receive in small groups both in and out of the classroom is well planned and matched closely to individual needs. Secondly, individual education plans have achievable targets that are regularly monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), teachers and support staff, to determine rate of progress.

### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.5 (15.4)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.1 (13.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.9 (17.3)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 74 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 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (28.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.6 (26.9)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.2 (29.3)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 67 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their personal development are excellent overall. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school and to learning are very good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils really enjoy being at school and join in lessons and activities with great enthusiasm and gusto.
- In lessons, pupils work hard, enjoy succeeding and want to do well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent and they thrive and mature in their time at the school.

- Relationships throughout the school are excellent and create a dynamic and happy atmosphere.
- Excellent opportunities to take part in musical events throughout the year give many pupils confidence, self-pride and a great sense of achievement.
- Year 6 pupils take on their responsibilities maturely and effectively.

## Commentary

8. Pupils' personal development has the highest priority and the school's commitment to the values of respect, trust, honesty and love are successfully incorporated into all aspects of school life. From the Nursery onwards, pupils are valued as individuals and for their contribution to school life. Pupils arrive in the morning with smiles on their faces, looking forward to the day ahead.
9. Relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils themselves are excellent. From the first day, pupils are encouraged to listen to one another, respect others' needs and to try their best. This has a great impact on pupils' responses and attitudes in lessons and to school in general. Pupils are interested in their lessons, eager to learn and enjoy their own and each other's success. Most pupils take part in the great range of lunchtime and after-school clubs and are keen to talk about what they are doing and learning. In the Foundation Stage, children are on course to reach or exceed the ELGs in their personal, social and emotional development.
10. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is very good. Pupils (and parents) have a clear understanding of the very high standards expected of them and respond accordingly. Last year there were five fixed term exclusions. Some were for persistently defiant behaviour towards staff and some related to unacceptable haircuts which parents persisted in permitting despite clear guidelines and warnings. Staff work very well together and consistently reinforce good behaviour. Breaks and lunchtimes are relaxed and comfortable with pupils playing easily together. In lessons, pupils' behaviour ensures that learning takes place at a good rate contributing to their good achievement. There is no indication of any unsociable or racist behaviour whatsoever.
11. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent and their cultural development is very good. Many opportunities exist for pupils to think, reflect, celebrate and grow together and individually. Music is used constantly and with great success throughout the school and is extremely effective in building pupils' self-confidence. From the youngest to the oldest, pupils sing naturally and joyfully, often performing in front of others. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were putting the final touches to their production of *The Pirates of Penzance*, just one of many musical events of the highest quality. The school is justifiably proud of the commitment and dedication, together with the beautiful sound, of their pupils. Through assemblies, religious education lessons, and special events, pupils enjoy celebrating festivals from all faiths together, taking pleasure in new experiences. Indeed, a strength of the school is the way in which pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds live and work together happily.
12. All pupils contribute well to school life. They fetch and carry registers and have jobs around the classroom. Year 6 pupils are given many responsibilities around school and they carry them out responsibly and sensibly. At lunchtime and break, they help look after younger pupils. They help their teachers prepare for lessons and look for jobs that need to be done. The house captains and vice-captains take their roles and responsibilities very seriously. They know that through their work and good example, they are helping to improve not only the quality of school but pupils' personal development too. Each year, they prepare and present an assembly for their own house on a topic of their choice. These are thoughtful, sensitive and invariably focus on helping and supporting others.

13. The school values pupils' opinions and tries to act on what they say. A suggestion box allows pupils to put forward ideas, many of which have been sensible and practical. This year saw the establishing of a school council. As yet, only Year 6 pupils are involved directly but they themselves are looking at ways they can gather the opinions of and represent the views of younger children. As yet, the council has had a limited (but growing) influence on the development of the school.
14. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to their work and these make a significant contribution to their good progress and achievement. These pupils mix well with their peers in classrooms and at break time and lunchtime. The school places a very strong emphasis on promoting friendship between all pupils in assemblies and during class discussions and this is successful.
15. Attendance is steadily improving and is now broadly in line with the national average. The school has worked hard to reduce the number of term time holidays and clearly and frequently reminds parents of the link between good attendance and achievement. Punctuality is good and parents mostly ensure their children arrive on time.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.0	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	352	3	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	9	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	24	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	6	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	13	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	114	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	33	1	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0

Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	9	1	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of the education provided by the school is good. Teaching, learning and assessment are good. The school's care, welfare, support, advice and guidance are very good, as are the links with parents, community and other schools.

### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. Assessment is good and is used well to plan lessons and set targets for pupils.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good and frequently very good teaching is leading to good and very good achievement.
- The effective partnership between teachers and support staff enhances the quality of pupils' learning.
- Teaching in music is very good and results in high standards of performance.
- Assessment information is used well to plan effectively and to help pupils to improve their work.
- Teachers' high expectations and support encourage pupils to develop into confident and motivated learners.

### Commentary

16. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and has improved since the previous inspection. It is very good in music, where teaching encourages creativity and enthusiasm. It is satisfactory in ICT, where the pace of developing new skills is satisfactory, but not as fast as in other subjects. In all other subjects teaching is good and is leading to improved achievement. No teaching is unsatisfactory. Teachers and support teachers collaborate very effectively to provide good support for pupils when working in small groups or as individuals. The specialist teaching in art and design, design and technology and music is very successful.
17. Lessons are well planned and include a range of activities which meet the learning needs of all pupils. There are frequent well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas through discussion. Questioning by staff is skilful and elicits good quality responses. Pupils develop skills in independent research and plan investigations well. The best lessons, often conducted by senior staff, are conducted at a fast pace. Pupils respond to the high level of challenge by producing work of very good quality, working diligently and confidently.
18. Overall, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and pupils' skills are enhanced. Particularly good attention is paid to developing pupils' skills in speaking to large audiences, for example in school productions and assemblies and in listening and responding to each

other. In many lessons pupils are encouraged to take notes and present information in a variety of ways. Occasionally, however, opportunities are missed to develop writing skills, particularly in history, geography and religious education. Pupils are encouraged to use computers regularly in lessons across the curriculum. However, tasks set rarely enhance their skills in the use of ICT.

19. Teaching staff form good and trusting relationships so pupils are confident in taking risks and expressing views. Behaviour is managed very well and a calm, purposeful atmosphere is evident in most classrooms, although very occasionally, pupils are treated in a slightly brusque manner.
20. The quality of teaching and learning of pupils with English as an additional language is good. It is well matched to pupils' needs and they achieve well. As with other pupils, speaking and listening are developed very well.
21. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is good and often very good in target groups in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are very well supported by class teachers and teaching assistants. Teachers are very aware of pupils' needs and plan conscientiously and carefully to make tasks relevant, enjoyable and helpful. Teamwork amongst teaching and non-teaching staff is very good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' good achievement. All staff have a very clear knowledge of pupils' progress through careful assessment and record keeping. As a result, learning is linked closely to targets in pupils' individual education plans and this helps them to make good progress.
22. Teachers vary skillfully the way support for pupils is given, sometimes mixing them with pupils of differing capabilities and sometimes grouping special educational needs pupils together. One advantage of this approach is that pupils feel fully included in the whole class activities. For example, a small group of Year 4 pupils benefited from the close attention and guidance of a support teacher as they prepared for a science investigation.
23. Gifted and talented pupils are challenged well by their tasks and teachers work hard to provide activities to extend their learning in lessons and through extra-curricular activities. Gifted and talented pupils sometimes benefit from focused support from teaching assistants.
24. Assessment is good overall. It is good in design and technology and satisfactory in religious education, art and design, music, physical education and ICT. It is very good in English, mathematics, science, geography and history, where assessment information is used effectively to group pupils and to ensure they receive the support they need. It is also used to set fairly ambitious targets for each pupil. Progress is closely monitored and is recorded half termly. Pupils are aware of their targets and work confidently towards them. Oral feedback and marking are helpful in providing good quality guidance on how to improve their work.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 79 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (1%)	12 (15%)	56 (71%)	10 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good and opportunities for enrichment are very good. Accommodation and resources are good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Curriculum enrichment is very good, with a very wide range of clubs and activities, educational visits and visitors to school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- The procedures for curriculum review are effective, fully involving all staff and governors.

## Commentary

25. The subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are covered very well, including pupils' personal, social and health education. All statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and for the local agreed syllabus for religious education (RE) are fully met. Coverage of the ICT curriculum is only satisfactory because there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their skills through other subjects. The national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been adapted very well to closely match the needs of the pupils in this school. The school provides a comprehensive personal, social and health education programme and meets statutory requirements for sex and relationships and drug education. Effective use is made of external agencies to support the programme.
26. Pupils benefit effectively from all that the school has to offer. There are very good opportunities for pupils to participate in an extensive range of additional activities including sports, after-school clubs and booster classes. Many pupils learn to play musical instruments, are members of the choir and take part in drama productions. Older pupils have the opportunity to experience a flavour of French. The many visits to places of interest extend pupils' first-hand experiences and make a significant contribution to their learning. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to take part in residential activities where they experience a wide range of adventurous activities.
27. The headteacher and the senior management team review and refine the curriculum very effectively. Subject co-ordinators manage their areas of responsibility very well. As a team they are committed to ensuring the very good provision for all subjects, although in ICT this has not yet been achieved. They share a whole school perspective for each subject and check that there is good progression within subjects through long-term planning, supported by medium and shorter-term evaluation.
28. The programme of learning provided for pupils with English as an additional language is good. Good assessment of needs, well-focused teaching in small groups, and individual attention in reading promote good achievement.
29. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and reflects a very positive approach to inclusion. All pupils are given a fair opportunity to participate and shine. The withdrawal work provided for pupils experiencing learning difficulties is very good, providing them with a quiet area and relevant and enjoyable activities. Provision has improved since the previous inspection because of more effective use of assessment procedures to identify needs and to set achievable but challenging targets. A study of pupils' individual education plans and discussions with the special educational needs co-ordinator indicate that pupils are provided for very well and make good progress towards meeting their individual learning targets.
30. Staffing is very good, with well qualified and experienced teachers, support teachers and classroom assistants, all who take active roles in teaching. The school deploys all of its staff very effectively and pupils achieve well as a result.
31. The good accommodation creates a pleasant learning environment and it is used and managed well. Classrooms are attractive and well organised and there are many extra teaching areas that are used effectively with small groups of pupils. Specialist art, music and ICT rooms are a good resource and are exciting places in which to learn. A large playing field and playgrounds provide good space for lunchtime, break and physical education but the

Foundation Stage does not have direct access to an outdoor play area. The building is fully accessible for all pupils and priorities for development are clearly linked to the school's improvement plan.

32. There is a good range of fiction and non-fiction books for pupils' personal research. There is a plentiful supply of good quality resources for all subjects, including a good facility in the computer suite. Every resource is readily accessible to pupils and teachers and is used imaginatively to support pupils' learning.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The quality of care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance for its pupils. The school's work to involve pupils in its work is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a very strong emphasis on the care and welfare of pupils which is underpinned by the excellent relationships between staff and pupils.
- Pupils receive very good support to help them progress in their academic and personal development.
- Healthy living is a key part of school life and very good maintenance ensures the building is clean and safe.

### **Commentary**

33. The school has a strong and clear commitment to creating an environment in which pupils feel happy, safe and stimulated. Pupils are very well cared for on a day-to-day basis, a view shared by most parents. All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, take a genuine interest in pupils and work hard to make sure they are valued and supported. As a result of these excellent relationships between adults and pupils, pupils are confident that if they have a problem they will be listened to and helped.
34. The school places importance on pupils' views and consults them over a number of issues. The school council currently includes only Year 6 pupils but there are effective methods for other pupils to communicate their opinions and ideas to them.
35. There are many adults around school and they work together very well in a cohesive team. Information about individual pupils and their needs is shared freely and pupils always know what is expected of them. Staff know pupils' capabilities well and the good quality assessment procedures are used effectively to enable early identification of any difficulties pupils may be having. The concept of supporting and developing the individual child permeates the whole school, from the headteacher through to all teaching assistants. The pupils' very good attitudes and positive behaviour are measures of the success of the school's support systems.
36. The site manager and his team maintain the school to a very high standard with regard to health, safety and hygiene, and risk assessments around the school site and for off-site visits are rigorously applied. Child protection issues, accidents and sickness are handled conscientiously and sensitively. The school is very keen to encourage pupils and families to adopt healthy lifestyles and takes every opportunity to pass on advice and information. Nursery and reception pupils begin the day with keep fit and dance and the breakfast club is open everyday. The cookery club makes healthy snacks and the gardening club grows a

variety of vegetables. Parents have had advice on 'healthy lunch boxes' and the health week earlier in the year saw many people in school promoting exercise and healthy food.

37. Parents are very pleased with the way in which their children are helped to settle in when they join the Nursery. Staff quickly get to know families and ensure that the individual needs of children are met. As a result children in the Nursery are happy and achieve well. The Nursery is well integrated into the school and pupils move up to each year smoothly and confidently.
38. The care, guidance and support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Staff use information about pupils very effectively to make sure that they are looked after in a happy environment and that they have access to well-informed support, guidance and advice. Pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils are supported very well and benefit from teachers' effective liaison with outside agencies. As a result, relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and make a significant contribution towards pupils' good achievement.
39. The quality of support for pupils with English as an additional language is very good. There is very good liaison with support services and homes to ensure provision meets the particular needs of pupils.

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

The school has a very good partnership with its parents and involves them very well in their children's learning. Very good links with the local community and with other schools contribute very effectively to pupils' personal development and achievement.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have a very good opinion of the school and the school is very good at consulting parents on a wide range of issues.
- Very good reports and regular communication keep parents well informed about their children's progress.
- Very good links with other primary schools are helping improve standards in literacy and numeracy.
- Very good links with secondary schools ensure Year 6 pupils are ready for the transition.
- Very good community links enrich the curriculum and provide pupils with exciting and varied experiences.

### **Commentary**

40. Parents are very pleased with all aspects of the school and hold staff in very high regard. They express strong support for the school and very few have any concerns at all. The committed partnership with parents reported in the previous inspection has grown and developed further. There are very good relationships between parents and staff and parents are welcomed to discuss any queries or worries they may have. This is particularly evident at the beginning and end of the school day when staff are on hand to talk to parents. This informal exchange of information ensures that any problems are sorted out early. Parents appreciate the warm and friendly atmosphere and are very positive about what the school provides.
41. Parents' views are canvassed regularly, giving the school a valuable insight into what pleases parents most and what they would like to see improved. The school values parents' views and ideas and takes them into consideration when drawing up the school improvement plan. Recently, parents have been asked for their views on the breakfast club, ICT workshop, changing the venue of the Year 6 residential trip and the quality and content of school meals. Parents are quick to respond, knowing their views are taken seriously.



42. Parents are closely involved in their children's learning in many ways. Reading diaries, homework diaries and termly information about topics to be studied during the term help to keep parents aware of what is happening. The annual reports are very good, giving parents a clear indication of progress and achievement and practical targets which will enable them to help their children improve.
43. The school actively works to improve its own standards through seeking advice and help from other primary schools. For example, observing teaching, talking to subject specialists, joint training and exchange of ideas with teachers in two primary schools have helped to raise standards in writing and mathematics (two areas the school had identified as needing improvement). There are also many opportunities for pupils to work and play with pupils from other schools. For example, friendly and competitive sports events are frequent, pupils joined with other schools in a multi-faith festival at the Civic Centre and pupils from other schools sometimes join the after-school clubs. Very good links with secondary schools mean that Year 6 pupils are well prepared for their move. Transition units, visits by secondary staff and taster days together with joint projects in design and technology and sporting activities give pupils plenty of occasions to get used to secondary school.
44. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the school's processes to meet pupils' needs. They have sight of the individual education plans and sign them and they are invited to all meetings and reviews concerning their child's progress. All statutory requirements are met in respect of those pupils with statements. All procedures are in line with the directions of the current Code of Practice. Parents are appreciative of the school's efforts.
45. Teachers liaise effectively with the parents of gifted and talented pupils, providing them with suggestions and guidance about opportunities outside school for these pupils to extend their learning, for instance by joining sports clubs or to attend out-of-school classes for gifted mathematicians.
46. The school has very good links with its local community and pupils benefit from an exciting variety of trips, visitors and activities. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 can go on residential trips where they try many outdoor activities. The venue for Year 6 changed this year to take pupils a little further away from their own environment. Local supermarkets, leisure centres, sports clubs, churches and charities are all used very well to supplement the curriculum and the school actively supports the Bilston Carnival and Business Action Zone. The school is very well thought of in the local area and events such as the summer fayre and concerts are always very popular. Such good use of the community makes learning fun. The school is aware that they have few links beyond their own environment, either in this country and beyond, and is looking at ways to improve this next year.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are very good. Leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is very good. The school is very well managed. Governance is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher's vision for how the school should improve is outstanding.
- The senior management team provides excellent support for the headteacher.
- Governors provide very good support for the headteacher and school and play a very active part in helping the school improve.
- The procedures for staff induction and professional development are excellent.
- Staff work very closely together to ensure the school improves.

### **Commentary**

47. The headteacher has a comprehensive and thorough knowledge of the school's many strengths and the very few areas that need improving; her leadership is excellent. She has set high standards for the whole school that are readily adopted by almost all staff and supported strongly by governors and parents. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are very good and focus on ensuring that the school provides the best possible education for all pupils, whatever their backgrounds or prior attainment. The headteacher, senior staff and subject co-ordinators are all involved in the processes of evaluation, and findings are used effectively to guide teachers, to change classroom practice and to improve provision throughout the school.
48. Leadership of the senior team is excellent. Each member brings a wide range of skills and experience to the team. They work closely together, give excellent support to the headteacher, consult with her and staff and ensure that the school runs smoothly and efficiently. The deputy headteacher in particular provides significant support for the headteacher. Consequently, overall the management of the school is very good. Staff in other management roles also provide very good leadership overall and good management that is leading to generally all-round improvement. The exception is in ICT, where otherwise good management has not ensured a consistent approach to developing pupils' ICT skills across the curriculum. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good, although there is no person with overall responsibility for coordinating the work of the Nursery and Reception classes.
49. The school's strategic improvement plan, arrived at through ongoing consultation with staff and governors, clearly identifies those areas for improvement and sets realistic targets, identifies costs, procedures and changes in provision that need to happen to bring about required developments. The headteacher and senior team along with other staff have introduced necessary changes. For example, having recognised that results were not as the school wanted them to be in some areas, changes in teaching to deploy support assistants so that teaching groups are smaller than whole class groups, has led to improved achievement because it has been possible to plan work more effectively for individual pupils.
50. The inspection team identified no real weaknesses and those areas needing work to bring them into line with other areas of the school's work are already part of the school's improvement plan for following years.
51. Governors meet all of their statutory obligations. Their knowledge of and support for the school is impressive. They have initiated professional development for all staff so that staff are equipped to carry out their own roles effectively, but also to prepare them for promotion or career development. The staffing structure they have set in place already meets the requirements of workforce reform regulations and provides a salary scale that recognises staff's responsibilities. Governors support and challenge the headteacher, leading to the high quality provision identified in this report.
52. The school has close links with two teacher training institutions and the support and professional guidance for teachers in training it provides is very good.
53. Provision for special educational needs is led and managed very well. The co-ordinator supports teachers in their work and ensures that the statementing and assessment processes are carried out efficiently. The co-ordinator works closely with the special educational needs governor. Funds identified for pupils are used appropriately and the school has shown impressive willingness to spend additional funds on staff and resources to support special educational needs pupils. Both teachers and support staff receive training when it is required. The school has fully implemented the current Code of Practice.
54. Financial management is very good. The school receives less than the average amount per child, but plans its expenditure wisely, linking it closely to improving provision for pupils and to obtaining best value for money. Financial monitoring is very good; governors and the school office manager maintain effective control over financial procedures.

**Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,359,991
Total expenditure	1,342,025
Expenditure per pupil	2,532

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	6,320
Balance carried forward to the next year	24,286

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

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

Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is **good**.

The school has very good arrangements for children starting school and very positive links with parents. Children are well prepared for their start in the Nursery, with frequent visits beforehand. Most children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is below average for their age in most areas of learning and for most well below average in language and literacy.

By the time they reach Year 1, children have made good progress and achieved well. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also achieve well and often very well. Most have met the early learning goals (ELGs) in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Most reach or exceed the ELGs in creative development and in personal, social and emotional development. Overall, children do not reach the ELGs in communication, language and literacy. The improvement since the last inspection has been good. Individual needs are identified early and the children with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language receive very good care and support.

The curriculum is good and staff have a good understanding of how young children learn. There is a rigorous approach to monitoring children's progress on a regular basis. The Nursery and Reception Year leaders provide good quality leadership. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. However, although children have access to a secure outdoor play area, which is used well, it is not freely accessible to all children or used as an effective outdoor classroom to enhance children's learning in all areas of the curriculum. The staff plan together and share resources for a variety of activities.

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

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

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

- Children achieve very well because of the consistently good teaching.
- Trusting and warm relationships between all adults and children result in a very pleasant learning environment.
- Children are given good opportunities to use their initiative and develop their independence.

#### **Commentary**

55. Children enter school with immature personal and social skills, but they settle quickly and feel both happy and secure. By the end of Reception children have reached or exceeded the ELGs. Children of all backgrounds achieve very well and work and play together in harmony. They are taught effectively the difference between right and wrong, and guided to behave sensibly at all times through well established rules and expectations.
56. Teaching is good and often very good and teaching assistants are deployed particularly well alongside teachers. Staff create a supportive atmosphere where each child feels very special. Space and resources are used effectively to organise a stimulating range of activities to encourage independence. Children are encouraged to develop confidence about what they can achieve in a variety of learning situations, such as cooking, daily sharing of refreshments or playing a game of 'Snap'. Children have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy being in school.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All children achieve well compared to their limited language skills on entry.
- Teachers have a clear focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills.
- The well-planned activities provide interest, stimulation and challenge for children to explore writing for different purposes.
- The school/home reading system is well established.

### **Commentary**

57. All children achieve well in relation to their prior attainment but only a small minority of higher attaining children are expected to reach the ELGs in reading and writing. Most children in the Nursery show improving control in developing early writing skills; a few can write their own names with support. In the Reception classes, children benefit greatly from the regular practice of attending to letter formation. The regular and skilful teaching of the initial letter sounds helps children to associate sounds with words and letters and use these in their independent writing. Children talk about their experiences and develop new vocabulary in all aspects of their work. Sharing favourite stories and talking about pictures support children's language development well. Higher attaining children successfully apply their knowledge of letters to record short meaningful sentences.
58. Teaching and learning are good. The learning environment is rich with simple labels and captions and displays of children's attempts at mark making. Very good emphasis is also placed on developing children's speaking and listening skills. Very good use is made of learning resources, such as the interactive whiteboard. Class discussions and well-focused play activities provide good opportunities for children to try out their ideas in words. This sensitive approach ensures time for thinking so that the children gain in maturity and achieve well. Reading is also taught effectively. Children make regular visits to the school library, handle books carefully and take them home to share with adults. By the end of the Reception Year, some children begin to recognise simple everyday words and express themselves confidently and articulately.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most children achieve well and reach standards expected for their age by the time they transfer to Year 1.
- Children are eager, with very positive attitudes to learning.
- Teaching is good and very well supported by classroom assistants. Children are provided with a good range of practical opportunities.

### **Commentary**

59. Children achieve well in relation to their low skills on entry. The consistently good teaching and children's very good attitudes to learning, contribute well to their achievements in this area of learning. Children gain some knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. In the Nursery, children match, sort and count using everyday objects. Children count and make sets of items of different colours and sizes. The use of number rhymes, games and songs further enhances children's learning. Most children

in the Nursery are adept at jig-saw puzzles; they do not know the basic shapes or count accurately yet, but by the time they enter Year 1 the great majority can count competently to 20 and beyond. A significant number of children can solve simple problems using vocabulary such as, 'add one more' or 'take one away', 'how many altogether?' and 'how many left?', by the time they enter Year 1.

60. Teaching and learning are good. In both Nursery and Reception classes, number is well emphasised in a good range of situations. Teachers and support assistants work very closely together to provide work that is well matched to all children's learning needs. They provide stimulating and challenging opportunities for children to use mathematics in a range of contexts, for example, good practical opportunities to count people or objects. Teachers encourage children to apply what they know to practical problems, for example, counting the number of children, or fruit items to be shared.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most children achieve well and reach standards expected for their age.
- There is a good range of opportunities to explore the world around them.
- Resources are good and used well for extending children's knowledge and understanding.
- Very good support is provided in small groups by the classroom assistants.

### **Commentary**

61. Children enjoy learning and remain totally absorbed in the range of activities inside and outside. They achieve well as a result and most reach standards expected for their age. Children acquire satisfactory knowledge of a wide range of topics and learn to be observant. Most children are beginning to develop understanding of different properties of materials through, for example, cooking activities and making models out of a variety of recyclable materials.
62. Teaching and learning are good. The support staff make effective interventions and support children's understanding in group activities. They extend children's responses through appropriate questions. Resources are good and are used very well. Pupils develop a wide range of practical skills, but they do not speak enough about what they do or ask questions to find out how things work. Most children have satisfactory computer skills and can use the mouse to move items on the screen.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All children achieve well, and most are on course to meet the ELGs.
- Resources are good and used effectively for both indoor and outdoor group activities.
- The outdoor accommodation is not fully developed into an outdoor classroom with a free and regular access to enhance children's progress in all areas of learning.

### **Commentary**

63. Most children achieve the expected standards for their age. They move with confidence around classrooms and show appropriate control when outside. Children show very good

levels of behaviour and co-operation as they ride bicycles, tricycles and fast powered cars around a road system marked on the play area. Children share equipment with others and learn how to use space efficiently. Most children demonstrate reasonable hand and eye co-ordination. They hold pencils correctly and paint carefully with brushes. They are developing confidence in the use of different tools such as scissors and joining materials such as glue.

64. There is good and often very good teaching. Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and monitor children's development well. Teachers and other staff plan a good range of activities and this has a positive impact on children's learning. Staff have a sensitive awareness of children's safety, for example, all children using bikes are encouraged to wear protective helmets. The range of large and small outdoor resources is good and used well.
65. The outdoor play area is spacious but currently only used by groups of children in mainly adult directed activities. The use of the outdoor facility is not fully developed into outdoor classroom to include all areas of learning, ensuring regular and free access and a good balance of teacher-directed and children's self-initiated play.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve very well and exceed the ELGs by the end of the Reception Year.
- Children are provided with very good quality resources and make very good gains in learning.
- Teaching is good and often very good in providing plenty of opportunities for children to develop their creative and imaginative skills.

### **Commentary**

66. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children have reached the relevant goals and many have exceeded these. They are well able to use a range of materials to produce attractive and interesting creative work, for example, the bear masks by the Nursery children. Children use a variety of media and tools to create a three-dimensional effect, for example, the well decorated musical 'shakers' by Reception classes to represent low, high, loud and soft sounds. Children have a very good repertoire of songs, which they sing enthusiastically and frequently very tunefully and rhythmically. Their participation and concentration are good.
67. Teaching and learning are good and often very good. Teachers stimulate the children's curiosity effectively through role-play which children particularly enjoy. Activities are well organised with challenging activities. In music, for example, children are expected to sing in tune together and to concentrate for a long period of time, which they do with considerable enjoyment. The music lesson for both Nursery and Reception classes led by the music specialist was much enjoyed by children.

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

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

French was sampled and English is reported on in full.

#### **Modern foreign languages - French**

68. During the inspection an interview was held with the subject co-ordinator and a discussion took place with a small group of pupils about their work. However, there was insufficient evidence to form overall judgements about standards, achievement, teaching and learning.
69. French has recently been introduced to pupils in Year 6 for half an hour a week. Pupils benefit from the early start to learning a foreign language and enjoy it tremendously. The learning is well planned, with an emphasis on developing oral work and learning about the country. Pupils count well, understand and use everyday greetings and respond to simple questions about themselves and their families with reasonable pronunciation. They undertake independent research about life in France with enthusiasm and produce work of a good standard. Work is assessed well. However, the short time available limits the progress pupils make. Plans are in place to extend the time available and to further develop teaching methodology.

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- Reading is good throughout school because pupils benefit from the good quality individual attention provided.
- In a very small minority of lessons lower attaining pupils make less progress than others.
- Very good use of assessment and very good subject management contribute to raising standards.

#### **Commentary**

70. In the national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2004, results were below the national average in reading and well below in writing. Compared to similar schools, results in reading were above average as they have been for several years. In writing, results remained below the average of similar schools, maintaining the trend of the past few years. In the tests taken by Year 6 pupils in 2004, results were below the national average, particularly for writing. Compared with similar schools, results were well above average, maintaining the positive trend of the last few years. Unconfirmed results for 2005 show a significant improvement in the national tests taken at the end of Years 2 and 6.
71. Standards have risen since the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 2 reach the expected level for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve above average standards for their age. Pupils achieve well throughout the school.
72. Improving the quality of writing has been a major priority, which the school has successfully accomplished. This is because teaching time for writing has increased, groups of pupils and their teachers have been set challenging targets and intensive staff development has improved teaching techniques.



73. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their ideas well to produce well-sequenced and structured work. By Year 2 standards are broadly average. Some pupils begin stories with sentences which engage the attention of the reader. Older pupils make good and occasionally very good progress. By the end of Year 6, pupils reach average standards, but a large minority of pupils produce work of higher quality. Pupils write in a variety of styles and know how to adapt their writing for different audiences. Linguistic devices, such as the use of metaphors and similes, are effectively incorporated into children's own writing. On rare occasions, lower attaining pupils, whilst still making satisfactory progress, do not achieve as well as their peers, as assessment is not used to identify their difficulties and help them improve, and teaching is not sufficiently focused.
74. Throughout the school, new spellings are taught and tested regularly and pupils improve steadily. Handwriting is joined, clear, neat and legible by the end of Year 6 as a result of a sustained focus in every class. Most pupils produce extended writing with correct punctuation by the end of Year 6.
75. The quality of pupils' speaking and listening skills is good throughout the school due to frequent, planned opportunities for discussion in class and the wide range of strategies, such as 'talking partners' used. Pupils in all classes develop their ideas well and listen attentively to others. Even the youngest children predict, discuss their choices and give and justify opinions. In formal situations, such as the school production of *The Pirates of Penzance*, pupils perform with aplomb, delivering their lines clearly and confidently.
76. Standards in reading are above average throughout the school due to skilful, individual teaching which combines a good balance of encouragement, support and instruction. Support teachers make a valuable contribution to this process. Older pupils read fluently and expressively, and have regard for punctuation. They use their voices expressively to engage the listener. Younger pupils use a wide range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. Pupils have good library skills: they are aware of the differences between fiction and non-fiction books, locate books in the library using the Dewey system and know how to use books to find information. Parents hear their children read at home and this supports learning in school. Pupils enjoy their reading and most older pupils have a favourite author and provide reasons for their choice.
77. Overall, pupils achieve well and many achieve very well. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve equally well and this is because the quality of support and the use of pupils' individual targets to plan work is very good.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is good, frequently very good and pupils achieve well. With very few exceptions, suitable work is planned for pupils of all abilities, ensuring everyone is engaged in productive learning. Support teachers are deployed very effectively to increase the time available for individual pupils and small groups to receive more attention. Teachers have high expectations and in the best lessons the level of challenge is very high and the pace fast. Pupils respond by working with commitment and enthusiasm and make very good progress. Relationships are good and pupils are diligent and highly motivated learners. Assessment is very good overall, despite occasional lapses in using assessment information to focus the work of a very small number of lower attainers. The accurate use of assessment to set targets in the great majority of lessons supports pupils' good achievement. Marking consistently provides guidance on how to improve work, and individual feedback, particularly in reading, helps pupils to improve. ICT is a regular feature of lessons and teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to use computers. However, while there are very good instances of teachers helping pupils improve their ICT skills this is not consistently the case.
79. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator has a clear view of what is working well and what needs to be done to improve, as a result of thorough self-evaluation and monitoring. Improvement since the last inspection has been good: standards have risen,

particularly in writing, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved, and strengths have been maintained.

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

80. Language and literacy are used and developed well across the curriculum and support effective learning. In all classes pupils listen attentively to each other and to the teachers. In science, for example, they develop their ideas confidently through discussion and debate. Writing too develops well but occasionally too many worksheets are used and opportunities are missed to develop extended writing, particularly in history, geography and religious education.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Pupils achieve well and sometimes very well.
- Teaching is good and teachers have very high expectations of pupils.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The assessment, monitoring and tracking of each pupil's work are very good and contribute to the good or very good achievement.
- The good opportunities for investigative work, and the extensive application of numeracy to other areas of the curriculum, develop pupils' understanding very effectively.

#### **Commentary**

81. In the end of Year 2 National Curriculum tests in 2004, results were well below the national average overall and below the average of pupils from schools with a similar proportion of free school meals. Compared with their attainment on entry, achievement was satisfactory. Results fell in 2004 after several years of improving results. Unconfirmed results for 2005 show a significant improvement, showing good achievement from when pupils entered the school. In the end of Year 6 National Curriculum tests in 2004, results were below the national average but well above average compared with pupils of similar prior attainment. Results have fluctuated in recent years but currently they are improving, with the unconfirmed results for 2005 showing an improvement on those of 2004. The school has a focus on improving standards and the impact of its work is good.
82. In the present Year 2, standards are above average and pupils achieve well, and some very well. Pupils have a good understanding of place value to 100, and higher attaining pupils understand place value to over 1,000. Pupils have very good mental recall of multiplication tables and mentally add and subtract two-digit numbers quickly and competently. Pupils apply their number skills very effectively to all aspects of mathematics. They tell the time to quarter-to- and quarter-past- the hour and classify a wide range of two- and three-dimensional shapes using a range of properties, including symmetry, well. Their data handling skills are also well developed. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils become very confident mathematicians. They rise to the challenges set by the teachers, try different approaches when solving problems and show high levels of mathematical reasoning.
83. By Year 6, pupils are working at levels above the national average, with higher attaining pupils achieving higher standards. Achievement is good overall and for those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and many gifted and talented pupils, achievement is very good because of additional provision of a very high quality. The majority of pupils select from a very wide range of methods for problem solving and planning investigations. They multiply and divide accurately using decimals to two places. Their understanding of the equivalence of fractions, decimals and percentages is very secure.

When solving number problems mentally, they use a very wide variety of methods and explain their reasoning. Pupils have a very good understanding of the properties of triangles and quadrilaterals and construct angles with high levels of accuracy. They organise their work very methodically; they justify their reasoning and manipulate numbers easily and confidently. During discussions the pupils in Year 6 showed a very good understanding of the magnitude of numbers and the need for methodical working in calculations and investigations.

84. Pupils of all levels of attainment show tremendous enthusiasm for the subject. They are highly motivated and extremely well behaved. Pupils' relationships with each other and their teachers and teaching assistants are very good. The school has very successfully and rigorously introduced and developed the National Numeracy Strategy to meet the challenging ethos and high expectations of all pupils.
85. Pupils' high achievement levels are a direct result of good teaching. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding and these are reflected in good teaching of basic and advanced skills, which contribute to pupils' good levels of understanding. Planning for all groups, including gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs, in all classes is very good and is based on very good tracking of pupils' attainment and achievements. Teachers include a very wide range of investigations in all classes and pupils expect to be challenged. Earlier learning is consolidated effectively and, as a result, pupils are very secure in the numeracy skills they acquire. Teachers question pupils and use their responses to assess their understanding. They have very high expectations of pace of work and presentation. Consequently pupils know how well they have achieved and their presentation is very good. Teaching assistants are pivotal to pupils' achievements and they engage actively in all aspects of planning and teaching and make very strong contributions to the high standards. ICT is used frequently, but the quality of support given to pupils to help them develop ICT skills varies between good and satisfactory.
86. The very good leadership and management by the co-ordinator and senior management team have successfully raised standards and improved achievement, consequently raising the profile of the subject throughout the school. The very good systems for assessment, monitoring and tracking give all teachers secure evidence from which to plan. Target setting is very well founded on a wide range of information about each pupil. The leadership and management of the subject ensure that all pupils achieve equally well because of the very good ways in which work is matched to each pupil's ability. Daily planning, year group organisation and curricular changes are soundly based on very good analysis of standards. The school is constantly seeking ways of improving all aspects of mathematics.
87. The involvement of governors is very good and plays a key role in aiding the very effective leadership and management of the subject. The link governor has an outstanding knowledge and insight into the strengths and areas of development due to her rigorous involvement in all aspects, including monitoring of standards and performance management within the school.
88. There have been good improvements in standards, the quality of teaching and learning and in the leadership and management of the subject since the last inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

89. Pupils frequently use mathematics as an integral part of their work in other subjects. This is carefully planned to match the abilities of all pupils and extend their understanding of mathematics in the world. Pupils select from a wide range of options using graphs and charts when recording and displaying data. They skillfully use their knowledge to present shape and pattern in art and design and undertake calculations with numbers when comparing and contrasting historical periods and important events in religious education.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well and standards are rising.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- The quality of investigation work is good and pupils have a good understanding of investigation procedures.
- Resources are good and are used well.

### Commentary

90. In teachers' assessments at the end of 2004, results were below average overall but this indicated satisfactory achievement from when pupils entered the school. The unconfirmed results for 2005 show a marked increase, reflecting good achievement compared with attainment on entry. Inspection evidence supports this; standards are currently above average in Year 2 and achievement is good. In the end of Year 6 national tests in 2004, results were in line with the national average (though almost all pupils reached the average Level 4), but were lower than in 2003, because the attainment on entry of this particular group of pupils was lower than in the previous year. Results were well above average compared with those of pupils of similar prior attainment in other schools. Inspection evidence shows standards to be above average and for achievement to be good and sometimes very good.
91. In Year 2, standards are above average and pupils achieve well, whatever their prior attainment or ethnic background. Pupils have a good grasp of the investigation process and, with the exception of a few who need help, predict outcomes and design simple investigations to test out their ideas. They understand the principles of 'fair testing' and apply them to investigations they conduct. Most pupils measure competently and many do so accurately in comparing and contrasting heights, hand spans and feet sizes. The great majority have a fair understanding of how sounds travel and the highest attainers associate the vibration of strings in instruments with the production and transmission of a sound.
92. In Year 6, standards are above average and pupils achieve well, and frequently very well. Pupils have a good understanding of investigations, predicting and fair testing. They identify more than one factor that could be tested in investigations, record results well and the highest attainers often use graphs well to illustrate relationships between scientific quantities. Pupils' knowledge of the factors affecting the growth of plants is extensive and they write well, when given the opportunity, about their knowledge and understanding. They use computers to produce graphs and to word-process some other work.
93. Teaching is good overall, with some very good features. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good and the way teachers and support assistants work together to plan work and teach pupils according to their capabilities is very good and leads to good and frequently very good achievement. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations though on occasion they gave a little too much direction. Teachers assess pupils' work well and use the assessment information to plan teaching, adapt the curriculum and to set pupils targets for improvement. Pupils respond well to this and have a good grasp of what they need to do to improve. The range of activities and the way resources are used are good. Teachers mostly encourage pupils to write independently, which helps their understanding, but this is inconsistent (though not unsatisfactory).
94. The subject is very well led and well managed. The co-ordinators have a very clear view of what is needed to bring about further improvements based on excellent evaluation procedures, and have already done much to improve the quality of investigative work successfully. Their monitoring and evaluation procedures are generally good, though they

missed the occasional 'over direction' in investigation work, but have done much to identify the areas of support teachers need and have dealt with them. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have many opportunities to use computers in lessons other than specific ICT lessons, though they do not always learn new ICT skills.
- Resources are good overall, though access to digital cameras and robotic equipment is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

95. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations by Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment and also those with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily.
96. In Year 2, pupils use the keyboard competently to create text for word processing tasks. They create a simple database to identify different types of animals and then print their databases competently. The highest attainers produce quite detailed 'branching' databases. The majority of pupils use the 'yes/no' questioning technique to find information from their databases competently. All pupils find and load their own work from the school computer system. In Year 6, pupils use a wide range of applications well. Many pupils create simple presentations for topics they study in other subjects and a few of the higher attainers add animations and graphics to make their work more attractive. All pupils use spreadsheets to present information in a variety of ways, including graphs and pie charts. Pupils use the Internet to research work for other subjects and some have skills in this area beyond what they are taught in school. Word processing skills are average overall and pupils illustrate and enliven their work with photographs and artwork they download from the Internet and from other sources. They cut, move and paste work well. They take great pride in their work and almost all of the work around school and in folders and books reflects great effort by pupils. Overall, all pupils achieve satisfactorily and a small number achieve well.
97. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers' subject skills are good and lessons are well planned. Activities are carefully designed in the main to develop pupils' skills, although occasionally the activities either duplicate skills pupils already have or involve other subject work that pupils have already done, for example, work on ancient Greece. This does not stop pupils working hard and with enjoyment. Mostly lessons are conducted at a good pace, and evidence of previous work done in lessons confirms this. However, too long is sometimes spent recalling previous work that pupils already have a good understanding of, for example, when using a programmable toy. Nevertheless, work is planned to cover all aspects of the subject comprehensively, and this is done well. Teachers' relationships with pupils are very good and this results in good behaviour by pupils and positive attitudes to work.
98. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The quality of support and help for other teachers is good, ensuring teachers are sufficiently knowledgeable of the subject to teach it successfully. Resources are good, have improved in recent years and are improving further. They are maintained effectively so that teachers rarely experience difficulties with equipment. Curriculum development is satisfactory overall but digital cameras and robotic equipment are underused. Overall, improvement has been satisfactory since the previous inspection.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

99. Use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory overall. Computers are used frequently to support pupils' work in other subjects, and for the most part pupils use computers confidently. Teachers plan opportunities for all pupils to use computers. In the best practice teachers help pupils to develop their ICT skills. For example, in a Year 3 lesson on writing letters, the teacher prompted and guided a pupil on how to position the cursor and 'justify' text in order to improve the layout of the letter. However, this is not always the case and occasionally teachers leave pupils to struggle for themselves, which slows down their learning in the subject and in developing ICT skills.

## HUMANITIES

Geography was sampled and history and religious education were inspected in full.

### Geography

100. Only one lesson was seen in geography and in this lesson teaching and learning were good. However, there is every indication from pupils' work that standards are above average, an improvement on those reported at the time of the previous inspection.
101. Evidence from pupils' past work, work on display, the lesson seen and discussions with pupils indicates that they make good progress in developing a range of knowledge and facts about the local area, different parts of the world and physical and climatic features. Teachers make effective use of a wide range of resources to develop pupils' depth of understanding by posing key questions, for instance about mountains, world climates and environmental issues. As a result, pupils use books, pictures, photographs, maps and the Internet well to search for information. Learning is often linked closely to other subjects, helping to make studies relevant. For example, a residential field trip for Year 2 pupils to a woodland area included work related to mathematics and science.

### History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Lessons are stimulating and well planned and, as a result, pupils' attitudes to their work are very good.
- Effective use is made of visits, visitors and residential experiences to extend pupils' learning.
- The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator.

### Commentary

102. In history, evidence from pupils' past work, teachers' planning and lessons seen indicates that pupils' standards are above those expected by Years 2 and 6 and that they make good progress and achieve well, whatever their prior attainment or background. Standards are better than at the time of the previous inspection and are due to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and assessment procedures.
103. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to study artefacts, photographs, maps, books and Internet sites to find out about how people lived in the past. Year 2 pupils made good gains in their knowledge and understanding of life in ancient Egypt as they looked for evidence about how the worship of a particular god

affected people's daily lives. Pupils read through the information competently and were successful in extracting appropriate information to answer key questions.

104. Pupils' learning is extended very well through a programme of visits, visitors and residential experiences. Year 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about learning opportunities they had had to live as Vikings for a day, to take part in an archaeological dig and to experience life as a child in Victorian times.
105. These events are part of teachers' careful planning in all classes to try and make history lessons stimulating and interesting. As a result, pupils' attitudes to their work are very good. Concentration and effort in lessons are good, making a significant contribution to the good progress they make. An important element of teachers' plans is the way that tasks are successfully adapted to meet the needs of pupils of differing capabilities. For instance, in all the lessons seen, support teachers made a significant contribution to the progress made by groups of pupils. A small group of Year 1 lower attaining and special educational needs pupils made good gains in identifying similarities and differences between seaside holidays 60 years ago and those of today because of the very good guidance and encouragement they received from a skilful support teacher.
106. Teachers are well supported by the subject co-ordinator, who helps to maintain the good standard of planning and extra-curricular activities from which pupils benefit. She has a good knowledge and understanding of standards because of her regular analysis of pupils' work and teachers' assessments of pupils' progress.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths.
- Effective links with other subjects, such as English, geography and history, bring relevance to pupils' activities.
- Pupils' varied backgrounds are used well to support learning about different faiths and religions.
- The subject is used very successfully to promote pupils' personal development.
- Teachers receive good support from the co-ordinator when planning lessons.

### **Commentary**

107. A scrutiny of pupils' work, a study of assembly themes and evidence from the lessons seen indicate that pupils' standards exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Years 2 and 6. All pupils make good progress and achieve well and standards are better than at the time of the previous inspection. Many pupils achieve very well. Standards have risen because of improvements to the quality of teaching and learning, teachers' planning and the range of resources available to staff and pupils.
108. The quality of teaching and learning is good. For example, an effective link is made with the personal, social and health education curriculum and is one of the many ways that teachers relate religious education themes to other parts of the curriculum. The impact of these links was seen in a lesson for Year 2 pupils. After watching a video about the story of Zacchaeus pupils wrote about and discussed the value of friendships, often using their own experiences to deepen their own and others' understanding and their personal development was promoted very well as a result.
109. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to express views and opinions through whole class and small group discussions. As a result, most pupils talk confidently about issues

personal to them and do not hesitate to share their thoughts with others. For instance, a Year 5 teacher promoted discussion and written work of a good standard from her pupils because of the interesting moral dilemma she set them and of her very good use of questions to encourage debate.

110. Pupils have a good knowledge of the Christian faith and its history and of other faiths and religions. Work, assemblies, discussions with pupils and a study of teachers' planning show that pupils have a wide range of opportunities to reflect on how different groups of people interpret life. Pupils have a good knowledge of festivals and places of worship from other cultures. One of the main reasons for this is the effective way that teachers encourage pupils and their parents from the many different cultural backgrounds represented amongst the school population to talk about their traditions and beliefs to pupils in class lessons and assemblies.
111. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and well informed. Staff and pupils benefit from her very good leadership through the advice she gives to teachers as they plan their lessons and through the development of a wide range of resources, visits and visitors to school to extend pupils' learning.

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

Art and design and physical education were sampled. Design and technology and music were inspected in full.

### **Art and design**

112. In art and design, curriculum planning, displays and samples of pupils' work were examined. Planning is good, ensuring that pupils' skills build progressively as they move through the school. The displays and record of children's previous achievements confirm this.
113. The quality of work around the school is good. Pupils are encouraged to develop their observation skills through pencil sketching, shading and the use of watercolours. The work on display indicates that work is effectively linked to other subjects. For example, the relief prints for creating textures using the 'Etching press', link to design and technology, and the wrapping paper designs by pupils in Year 4 indicate their good use of ICT in the subject. The work demonstrates good development of design as well as painting, drawing and collage making skills. Pupils thoroughly enjoy exploring the visual elements to include colour, pattern, tone, line and texture. Most lessons are led by the subject leader in the art room, which is well organised with a good range of high quality resources that are used to good effect to assist pupils' learning and to engage their interest in the subject.

### **Physical education**

114. In physical education only one lesson was observed and some extra-curricular activities were sampled. In the one lesson observed, teaching and learning were good and standards were as expected. Pupils were well managed in their practising of throwing the javelin, under- and over-arm throwing at a target and passing balls through hoops held at different distances. The lesson developed at an appropriate pace, but offered little opportunity to improve skills through comparing and evaluating their own and each other's performance during the lesson.
115. Strong contributions to learning are made through extra-curricular clubs and other provision. These activities include a very good range of sports, including football, athletics, rugby, hockey, cricket and tennis. Various activities are supported by the external coaches and are very well attended. The school has recently secured the Active Mark Gold Award in physical education.



116. All pupils receive a well balanced programme of work which includes gymnastics, dance, games and athletics. There is very good provision for swimming lessons for all pupils in junior classes. Most pupils can swim the required length of 25 metres by the time they leave school. Swimming galas are held each year. The school has held the Bilston Swimming Championship for the last 14 years. Accommodation for physical education is very good. There is plentiful grassed area and hard surface for outside games. A well planned adventure playground is used regularly by all classes to enhance learning further.

### **Design and technology**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching and high expectations.
- The subject is well managed, with good planning between teachers and a clear direction for improvement.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic, proud of the articles they make and committed to producing work of a high standard.
- There are good links with work done in other subjects.

### **Commentary**

117. The small number of lessons observed, together with the extensive collection of completed work, indicate that standards are above the national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is because teachers work together very well with the skilled guidance, support and advice of the very well organised subject leader. Work is clearly linked to a practical purpose and ideas are carried through effectively to fruition. The items are designed to meet a need and have to be functional and durable. During the processes of designing and making, teachers ensure that pupils' ideas are tested, modified and refined so that the items they produce are of a high standard. In this way pupils learn that only high quality work is acceptable. Links with science, history, and art and design are good. Pupils know which subject they are working in but slip easily into a pattern of using and selecting information learned in other subjects in order to complete their present task.

118. In Year 2, the range of working models pupils made included the use of an axle and drum as a winding mechanism and was linked very successfully to the story of 'Incy Wincy Spider'. Pupils used their creativity and imagination to good effect, modelling with card and other decorative materials. In Year 1, pupils prepared a range of fruit smoothies and fruit salads as part of their theme for a 'Teddy Bears' Picnic' and experimented with different ingredients until they achieved the desired flavours. Overall, all pupils achieve well.

119. By Year 6, pupils have developed a good range of skills. From work in Year 3 focused on the construction of picture frames, pupils accurately measured and cut different materials. Later on they construct simple electric circuits to switch a lamp on and off as part of their project to make safety hats. They work together well, discuss their problems and persevere until they achieve the outcomes they want and are justly proud of what they complete. Pupils are eager to share their work with others and were keen to explain how they had developed their earliest ideas and seen them through to completion. Pupils achieve well and often very well. Those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and those who are gifted and talented achieve well.

120. Teaching and learning are good. The way in which designs in sketch books are marked and the quality of completed work on display indicates that across the school all teachers work to high standards and set demanding work for pupils. ICT is used regularly in lessons. Leadership of the subject is very good, setting a good example for teachers and pupils.

Resources are good and their use carefully planned to enable pupils to construct items successfully. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

## Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and sometimes excellent, leading to good and frequently very good achievement by pupils.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject.
- Resources are very good in range and quality.
- Provision for extra-curricular activities in music is very good.
- Pupils' singing is accurate and enthusiastic, but occasionally very high volume makes it less melodious.

### Commentary

121. Only one music lesson was observed during inspection, however, ample evidence was available in the form of rehearsals for the end of year productions, the school orchestra, singing assemblies and various, well attended lunchtime and after-school musical activities. The overall standards show that pupils of all capabilities and from all backgrounds exceed expectations in music by Years 2 and 6. Overall, they make good progress. The improvement since the last inspection has been very good. The school has recently secured an Arts Mark Gold Award.
122. The school is fortunate to have several music specialists with excellent musical expertise. This was seen in an excellent session led by one of the music specialists, supported by another two in a very well planned team teaching situation. Pupils in Year 6 rehearsed songs for their production of *Pirates of Penzance*, with selected boys and girls taking part in harmonies of excellent quality. The soloists showed their real talents and sang out loudly and proudly, well directed by the teacher, who focused effectively on the element of 'expression' in the singing. The teacher used effective questioning technique and demonstrated perceptiveness when responding to pupils' responses. In another lesson, Year 3 music specialists skillfully combined the development of musical elements in everyday life. Pupils in this lesson confidently used a variety of percussion instruments to portray pictures in a 'Theme Park' or a 'Zoo'.
123. Pupils enjoy music and many are keen performers with great potential to achieve well. Pupils of all ages also participate in regular choir practice and improve their control of diction and the musical elements such as phrasing and breathing. As noted in the singing assemblies and the choir practice, pupils sing with considerable amount of accuracy, enthusiasm and volume, but occasionally sing just a little too loud so that there is a risk of the tunefulness and sweetness being lost. Pupils are well drilled, well rehearsed and well directed by the staff and gain obvious enjoyment from singing. Teachers' own enthusiasm and encouragement are significant in promoting a good standard of singing.
124. There are very good opportunities for instrumental work in woodwind, brass and string instruments. An excellent performance by the orchestra was seen in one of their rehearsals. The school also provides a very good range of clubs that includes recorders, choir, orchestra and a percussion group. The leadership and management of music are excellent. Both the co-ordinators are very enthusiastic and committed to the high profile of music within the school. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good.

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

125. Personal, social and health education and citizenship were sampled and very little separate teaching of the subjects was seen. Discussions with pupils and teachers and examinations of teachers' planning took place. The programme is well established and very effective in supporting pupils' personal development, giving them many opportunities to think about their own reactions, emotions and feelings to situations as they grow up. The local police and school nurse are often used to add an extra dimension to topics such as health, sex and relationships education, drugs and alcohol and pupils have a sensible and mature attitude to life. The school meets statutory requirements in respect of provision for sex and relationships and drug education. Resources are appropriate and used well and the school places a high value on preparing and helping pupils become good citizens.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>1</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
<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	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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
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).*