

INSPECTION REPORT

NEW INVENTION INFANT SCHOOL

Willenhall, West Midlands

LEA area: Walsall

Unique reference number: 104187

Headteacher: Mrs B Smith

Reporting inspector: Mr R Cheetham
2592

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 7th December 2001

Inspection number: 193257

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Cannock Road
Willenhall
West Midlands

Postcode: WV12 5SA

Telephone number: 01922 710871

Fax number: 01922 491094

Appropriate authority: Walsall

Name of chair of governors: Mrs L Staffiere

Date of previous inspection: 24 March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2592	Mr R Cheetham	Registered inspector	Mathematics, physical education, equal opportunities, English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9003	Mr B Findley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
	Mrs P Baldry	Team inspector	Art and design, geography, history	
123594	Mrs P Claxton	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology, The Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
15360	Mrs E Randall	Team inspector	English, music, religious education, special educational needs	How well does the school care for its pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Leicestershire County Council
Advice and Inspection Service
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicestershire
LE3 8RF

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school serves an area of Willenhall, in the borough of Walsall. It is an area of broadly average socio-economic character. The school's intake of pupils is mostly of white UK heritage with 14% of pupils from mainly Indian backgrounds with a few from other ethnic minority groups. It is a larger than average infant school with 302 pupils on roll that includes 39 full time equivalent children in the nursery. The school roll has increased by approximately 30 pupils since it was last inspected. Children start school part time in the nursery from the September after their third birthday and start full time in the reception classes a year later.

Pupils' attainment on entry matches that generally found. Just over 8% of pupils are entitled to a free school meal and this is below the national average. Fourteen percent of pupils are at varying stages of learning English as an additional language and this is high when compared nationally. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. Eight percent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and this is below the national average. Their needs include: specific learning difficulties, autism, Downs Syndrome and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Since the previous inspection the school has made improvements to the building and grounds. Four mobile classrooms have been replaced with modular classrooms for the nursery and two Year 1 classes. The playground has been extended and additional play equipment installed. The school became an Investor in People in 1998. It also became a Beacon School for information and communication technology and has supported the development of the subject in local schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that gives good value for money and has few weaknesses. Seven-year-old pupils' standards of attainment are high in English, mathematics and science and very high in information and communication technology. The headteacher and senior staff lead the school very well and ensure that most teaching is good. Staff work well as a team and governors are informed of and involved in the school's work. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. The school successfully caters for the needs of its pupils. It promotes their involvement in its activities well and gives nearly all of them good opportunities to learn and make progress. A minority of pupils learning English as an additional language do not get enough opportunities to practise their speaking skills.

What the school does well

- Promotes pupils' high attainment in English, mathematics, science and art and design and very high attainment in information and communication technology
- Provides good quality teaching with particular strengths in the reception and Year 2 classes
- Is very well led
- Provides a rich curriculum
- Promotes pupils' very good attitudes to learning
- Encourages a very effective partnership with parents

What could be improved

- The quality of specialist teaching with pupils who are learning English as an additional language and the overall management of the provision for these pupils
- The consistency of the quality of teaching to eliminate the few weaknesses identified in this report

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997 and it received a very positive report. It has made good progress since then and has the capacity to continue to improve. Initially, pupils'

standards of attainment in English and mathematics reached a high point in 1998. They then fell and broadly matched the national average and then rose in line with it. Recently there has been a further improvement. The school has improved on pupils' already high standards of attainment in information and communication technology. Standards in art and design, physical education and design and technology are the same as at the previous inspection. Standards in history, geography, music and religious education are below those reported then but still match the nationally expected level. The school maintains that this fall in standards was due to an increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy teaching. The school has made significant improvements to its accommodation and outdoor play space. It has maintained its very high standards of leadership and management. The overall quality of its teaching has improved so that three quarters of lessons are good or better, although a few are unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. (The table uses unvalidated data)

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
Reading	C	D	C	A	well above A average above B average C average below average D well below E average
Writing	C	C	B	C	
Mathematics	C	C	C	A	

Children start school with standards around those generally found. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children achieve well and attain the early learning goals in three areas of learning and exceed them in the other three. This table shows that over the last three years, seven-year-old pupils' standards of attainment have generally kept pace with the national annual rate of improvement. In 2001, pupils' standards in science were above the national average. Last year, the standards in reading and mathematics were well above the average of similar schools (those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal). Standards were at the average of those schools in writing. In the current Year 2, pupils standards have improved further and most seven-year-olds reach standards that are above those expected nationally in reading, writing, mathematics and science and they make good progress. They reach standards that are above those expected in art and design and in one aspect of physical education (gymnastics) and they make good progress. They reach standards that are well above those expected in information and communication technology and make very good progress. Seven-year-old pupils make satisfactory progress and reach expected standards in geography, history, music and religious education. Pupils learning English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils except in spoken English where the progress of a minority is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets in their individual education plans. The school is making good progress towards its targets in English and mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They are enthusiastic and want to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well. They take care of one another and the school environment.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. They co-operate well with one another and are unselfish.
Attendance	Attendance rates are below the national average and are unsatisfactory.

Pupils are punctual and there is no unauthorised absence. Attendance rates are lower in the reception and Year 1 classes than in Year 2. Pupils listen carefully when others are talking and older pupils build on other pupils' ideas. Pupils are attentive and respond willingly to teachers' instructions. Pupils with special educational needs are resilient and are determined to make progress. Pupils learning English as an additional language grow in confidence as they confidently take part in all the school's activities.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 - 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Most lessons are taught well and there are examples of very high quality teaching in the reception and Year 2 classes. The few unsatisfactory lessons result from unsatisfactory organisation or low expectations. Teachers plan their lessons carefully to meet the needs of all their pupils well. This planning helps them organise the use of lesson time and resources so that pupils are well motivated and concentrate well. In the reception classes particularly, teachers, classroom assistants and parent helpers work very well as a team to ask pupils challenging questions and ensure that their attention does not waver. In the Year 1 classes, teachers have not planned sufficiently different tasks for all their pupils but this is now improving. They introduce some lessons too slowly and do not ask enough of some higher attaining pupils. Some lessons involving specialist teaching of pupils learning English as an additional language do not ask enough of them or are not organised well enough to help the pupils make good progress in speaking. In one lesson, the reverse was true and pupils made good progress. Teachers and support assistants work well together to support pupils with special educational needs. These pupils respond well, try hard and make good progress. Teachers and nursery nurses have a very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum (for children up to the end of reception) and they and classroom assistants are skilled in using information and communication technology. They transfer this confidence to the pupils, who use the equipment as necessary tools for learning. Staff generally make a point of accepting pupils' ideas and encourage them to talk about them with their classmates. As a result, most pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening. The school teaches the skills of literacy and numeracy well. Good teaching of English and mathematics and regular homework helps pupils make good progress in these subjects particularly.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is good. The school makes good links between subjects to provide a rich and relevant curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good. Staff work hard to include these pupils in all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is unsatisfactory. Specialist teaching is being re-organised to provide more support in class but this is not planned well enough to help pupils make enough progress in speaking. Other support helps them make similar progress to that made by other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This provision is very good, with strengths in pupils' moral and social development. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' overall development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very effective procedures for tracking pupils' progress, setting them targets and linking these to curriculum plans. The school takes good care of its pupils.

The school has effectively included the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy into its topic based curriculum. The system for assessing and promoting their progress in English is excellent. The procedures for assessing and recording the progress of pupils who are learning English as an additional language are being re-organised and not yet fully effective. Their progress in speaking is not integrated into the school's system. The school works very well in partnership with its parents and they hold its work in high regard. The school actively involves all its pupils in all aspects of its work and offers them a good range of extra-curricular activities. The school has very good relationships with other institutions and has helped many local schools to improve their information and communication technology provision.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff lead the school very well and set strong personal examples of commitment and quality of teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors carry out almost all of their duties well. They work effectively with the school's senior managers and are well informed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates what it does very well and takes prompt action to make improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of most of its resources by planning carefully over three years.

The school has good levels of staffing and resources and the accommodation is adequate. The school's leadership gives it a very clear educational direction and staff with delegated responsibilities make an excellent contribution to its development. The management of the provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. The management of nursery nurses teaching in the nursery needs improvement. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but an element in their annual report to parents is not detailed enough. The school's evaluation processes are very good and have had a significant effect on the quality of English and mathematics teaching. However, there are a few aspects of teaching that have been in need of improvement but have not been followed up rigorously enough. There are very good links between the school's performance management procedures and the school's targets for improvement. The school makes excellent use of the new technology in teaching, learning and administration. The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils like school • Pupils make good progress • Parents feel comfortable approaching the school with problems or suggestions • Teaching is good • The school is well led and managed • The school helps pupils become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more interesting range of activities outside lessons

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views of the school. The school provides a good range of activities outside lessons and the inspection team does not agree with parents' comments. The activities include visits to local places of interest and visitors to the school such as the artist in residence. Staff also run a gym club in the spring term and these activities enliven the curriculum. The school does not run any other clubs and this is usual in most infant schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

The Foundation Stage (children under five)

1 Children begin in the nursery with a range of skills similar to those generally found. Teaching is good and children experience an interesting variety of activities. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children achieve well and attain the early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Children make very good progress in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. A significant minority of pupils exceed the early learning goals in these areas. This is because teaching in the reception classes is often very good or better. Teachers successfully plan to develop literacy and numeracy skills throughout the Foundation Stage curriculum as part of the school's high priority in recent years. Children with special educational needs make good progress. Children learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because the staff are sensitive to their needs. However, there is insufficient specialist language support in the nursery for these pupils to make better progress in acquiring spoken English.

Key Stage 1 (pupils from five to seven)

Recent trends

2 Over the last three years, seven-year-old pupils' standards of attainment in English and mathematics have been around the national average and kept pace with the national rate of improvement. In 2001 they matched the national average in reading and mathematics and were above it in writing. When compared with similar schools, the standards were in line with them in writing and well above them in reading and mathematics. This improvement is partly due to the way the school has successfully introduced the literacy hour and daily mathematics lesson, improved lesson planning and carefully monitored the quality of teaching. It is also due to how well the school analyses its results and uses this information to set targets for specific pupils. This worked well and helped raise the attainment of some pupils in 2001. The school has made good progress towards its targets in English and mathematics and has set them at a suitably challenging level.

The current seven year olds

3 In English, at this stage in the year most pupils in Year 2 are working above the level expected for pupils of this age. Standards of attainment are improving for several reasons. The school has introduced a very effective literacy strategy, it has sustained good quality teaching since the previous inspection and the subject is managed excellently. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are good and most pupils make good progress. A few pupils with English as an additional language do not make enough progress because teachers do not help them enough with the vocabulary they need. Most pupils speak clearly and confidently because teachers give good opportunities for practice. Pupils ask and answer questions and make comments in a way that shows they have listened well. All classes have set times to talk about feelings on such things as school rules or bullying and these enable pupils to speak out about their ideas and discuss what to do. Standards in reading are good because teachers show pupils how to improve. Most pupils make good progress. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 make satisfactory progress. They read accurately but teachers do not give them books, which challenge them enough to think about what they have read. Most pupils use sounds and pictures to help them to read and this has improved since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 read fluently and are happy to talk about what they have read. They do this with enthusiasm and show that they have understood. Standards of attainment in writing are good and most pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional

language. An increased proportion of higher and average attaining pupils are making good progress. This is because teachers have identified precisely what pupils need to improve and are setting work to make sure they do this. Teachers give very good opportunities to write in English and in other subjects so that pupils see that there is a real reason for writing. Pupils' handwriting is good and their spelling is usually accurate. Overall, pupils' standards of literacy are good.

4 In mathematics, seven-year-old pupils are working at least within the level expected of pupils of this age and some beyond it. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress in all aspects of mathematics except in using and applying their knowledge in other subjects where their progress is satisfactory. The school is aware of this and is extending its range of problem-solving work in mathematics and is developing further the way pupils use their mathematical skills in subjects such as science. In the mental and oral sessions at the start of each lesson, most pupils answer the teachers' questions quickly and confidently. Classroom assistants sit alongside pupils who lack either the confidence or the words to respond as quickly as their classmates. The assistants encourage the pupils to try their answers out first with them before speaking to the teacher. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils can think beyond simply adding numbers to understanding rules and principles of addition and finding patterns in number sequences. Using computers they can convert block graphs into pie charts and recognise that the latter is less detailed than the former. Average and higher attaining pupils make very good progress in logically working out such things as the name of a square based pyramid and are beginning to classify three dimensional shapes by their properties. Lower attaining pupils can use tallying skills to add data they collected and with a little support, convert this to horizontal bar charts. Generally pupils are very confident in using information and communication technology to present and analyse their mathematics work. Overall, pupils' numeracy standards are good.

5 In science, seven-year-old most pupils' standards of attainment are above that expected nationally. Since the previous inspection the school has maintained its high standards. The majority of pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs. This is because science lessons are generally well planned and taught. However, staff do not always expect enough of higher attaining pupils. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress because staff support them well, but there is little specific language support for them in the subject. Year 2 can carry out research into the properties of materials and use the correct technical terms such as *transparent* and *opaque* to describe them. They can suggest how objects might behave when bent, squashed or stretched and run fair tests to try out their ideas and note the differences. Most pupils in Year 2 can record their findings accurately on worksheets.

6 All pupils make good progress in art and design because the subject is very well led and teaching is good. Most pupils develop very good artistic skills and can evaluate and improve their work. In design and technology Year 1 pupils' design and evaluation work is weak because staff place too much stress on the finished article. In geography, pupils know a good deal about their local area and about the effects of humans on the environment because this is taught in a lively and interesting way. In history, most pupils have a good idea of chronology because it is mentioned regularly and of famous people in history because they remember the stories associated with them. Pupils are enthusiastic and confident users of information and communication technology (ICT) because the school is very well resourced, staff are knowledgeable and pupils are encouraged to use the equipment as a necessary part of their learning. In music, pupils' standards of singing are good because of good, enthusiastic teaching. In gymnastics, seven-year-old pupils make good progress because they are encouraged to evaluate their work and improve on it.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour remain very good in all age groups. They enjoy coming to school and soon settle ready for work at the start of the day. Pupils are keen to

be involved, mainly because activities are made interesting and the pace of work is usually fast. This was the case in most lessons and even the very youngest were eager to answer questions. A few pupils learning English as an additional language do not play a full part in class discussions but generally listen intently. All pupils in a reception class were fully involved in a physical education lesson because they were given good support. This was also the case for pupils with special educational needs, who have very good attitudes to work due mainly to the correct levels of work and support they are given. Pupils enjoy challenging work and take a pleasure in succeeding, such as a pupil in a Year 2 religious education lesson who wanted to repeat the work because he wanted it to be better. All parents who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated their child liked school.

8 Pupils' behaviour is very good. They soon learn to understand and follow the school code of conduct, because staff make clear what they expect, consistently reinforce the message and set a good example. There is a settled sense of discipline and a genuine interest in what they are to learn that creates an atmosphere in which pupils can make progress. They behave very well even when for example, sitting very closely together using instruments in a Year 1 music lesson. Pupils take very good care of specimens in science and look after their environment well, such as cleaning and tidying after a Year 2 art and design lesson. They keep the dining hall tidy and use the litterbin in the playground properly.

9 Pupils form very good relationships with other pupils and members of staff. They work co-operatively in lessons and share space and equipment very well, such as when taking turns and listening attentively to each other in a Year 1 history lesson and when sharing computers. There are many examples when pupils are courteous and respectful to each other when working in groups or pairs. Pupils play happily together in mixed groups in an atmosphere that is free from oppressive behaviour such as racism. There is little need for sanctions beyond positive prompts from staff and there have been no exclusions in recent years.

10 Pupils develop very well during their time at the school. They build up sensible and mature values through which they show respect for others. Examples of this were in the nursery when pupils readily share equipment without a fuss and in a Year 1 mathematics lesson and a Year 2 English lesson. In both lessons pupils showed concern and gave support to their partners. In a Year 2 art and design lesson, pupils willingly helped each other by moving pears around to alter the angle for drawing them.

11 Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory and was below the national average for the academic year 2000/2001, although attendance was satisfactory for the year before that. Most Year 2 pupils have a good attendance record but too many younger pupils are slow to establish a regular attendance pattern. Pupils' punctuality is good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12 Most lessons are taught well and there are examples of very high quality teaching in the reception and Year 2 classes. The few unsatisfactory lessons result from unsatisfactory lesson organisation or low expectations of what higher attaining pupils can do. In these lessons, a minority of pupils' progress is slower than it should be but their attitude to learning remains positive. The excellent lessons are planned meticulously, taught confidently, expect a great deal of all pupils, and finish by recapping on what pupils have learned before, showing them how this fits into what they will learn next. Eight percent of lessons were excellent, 27 percent were very good, 39 percent were good, 18 percent were satisfactory and eight per cent were unsatisfactory. Staff teach the skills of literacy and numeracy well. The school supports pupils with special educational needs well. Classroom support assistants sit alongside small groups of pupils during whole class lessons and encourage them to answer the teachers' questions and put the questions in a different way. This

fosters pupils' confidence and helps them play a full part in lessons. In the best practice, classroom assistants have a clear understanding of individual pupils' needs. They provide care and challenge in equal measure and enable pupils to experience success and make light of their difficulties. Some of the specialist teaching of pupils learning English as an additional language is unsatisfactory, although one lesson was good. This variation is because the school is changing how it works with these pupils. Formerly, most lessons involved pupils working away from their classmates with the specialist teacher. After advice from the local education authority, most teaching now takes in small groups in the classrooms. When this is well planned with the class teacher, the quality of teaching and learning is good. When the activity does not fit well with the others that are going on pupils make slow progress because they are distracted. In one lesson taught away from the class, although the learning activity was related to the other pupils' work, the teacher did not expect enough of them and there were not enough opportunities for the pupils to discuss their work.

13 Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good overall, with a higher proportion of very good and excellent teaching in reception classes. Teachers' planning is good. The nursery planning is much improved this year with the school's integration of the nationally recommended Foundation Stage Stepping Stones (detailed stages of learning) into the curriculum. Staff plan a very interesting range of activities to which the children respond enthusiastically. The planning is based around learning themes such as a *bear hunt* and speaking and listening or mathematics activities are related to this. For instance, children count bears or think of new words to describe them. This makes learning relevant to the children and ensures they remain interested in what they are doing and intrigued about what they might do next. Staff plan a good balance between activities that the teacher directs and those that children choose for themselves. Staff and parents who help in class routinely ask children questions about their work. This encourages them to think about what they are learning as well as developing their vocabularies. It also helps teachers check children's understanding and knowledge and helps them plan activities to meet individual needs. Staff take great care in planning their classrooms to be exciting places to learn. Good quality equipment is readily to hand and both staff and children use it well. Children listen with awe about the dark recesses of a *bears' cave* before examining it closely later. They turn readily to activities on computers to extend what they have learned in other ways, such as manipulating three-dimensional shapes. They use the classroom resources confidently and work and play well together, such as when children in the nursery chose different types of model power tools without any fuss. They then went on to make some pretend alterations to the building and talked about their work with staff and other children.

14 Most teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. It is of higher quality in Year 2 and there is a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching in Year 1. All teachers have good knowledge of most of the subjects they teach and this helps them plan well to help all pupils learn. In the literacy and numeracy lessons, there are high levels of direct teaching to the whole class and groups. Teachers ask probing questions to encourage pupils to think more deeply and in the best of these lessons, all pupils make very good progress. In some lessons such as mathematics in Year 1, the introductions are too slow and the level of questioning not deep enough to challenge the more able pupils and they make slower progress as a result. The issue of the slow pace of learning was mentioned in the previous inspection report and is still an issue in a few lessons such as physical education. All teachers work well with classroom support assistants. They share the planning and complement one another's work. Pupils then always have someone to support them or on many occasions to spur them on. Teachers assess pupils' progress well either during the lessons or afterwards. They use this information to set new work if pupils finish before expected or to alter subsequent lessons. Staff use the good quality resources very well. Although the central library is small, classrooms are well equipped with books that are closely related to what the pupils are learning. Staff use the information and communication resources to excellent effect and routinely integrate them into their lessons. For instance in mathematics, some

Year 2 pupils drew block graphs while others created them and pie charts on the class computers.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

15 The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for the National Curriculum and religious education that is relevant to pupils' needs and meets statutory requirements. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Most pupils learning English as an additional language have satisfactory access to the full curriculum because their reading and writing skills are assessed and promoted sufficiently. However, a minority of these pupils are slow to develop fluent speaking skills because not enough emphasis is placed on this. A wide range of extra-curricular activities and links with the community enrich the learning opportunities for all pupils. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum except for a minority of pupils learning English as an additional language who do not have enough opportunities to practise their speaking skills.

16 Children in the nursery and reception classes have a broad and balanced curriculum based on national guidance, which has been implemented effectively. The school encourages pupils to have a positive attitude to learning from an early age and this permeates all areas of the curriculum. The school has successfully integrated the national strategies for literacy and numeracy into the school's thematic planning, which enlivens pupils' interest and motivation. Pupils make good progress, and standards in English and mathematics are good. Reading, writing and number work are emphasised and parents are encouraged to play an active role in the learning through helping in school and supporting at home. The school provides good quality homework that makes an effective contribution to children's learning in English and mathematics particularly. Parents support their children well and the school's good strategies for supporting parents, such as the book sacks in the reception classes, are helping to improve pupils' skills in reading and number.

17 Teachers use national guidance to plan for all subjects. Since the last inspection they have sustained the good quality of their planning and improved the planning for the nursery curriculum. Planning ensures that learning builds up, meets the needs of all pupils and helps them make good progress. The exceptions to this are the detailed planning in mathematics in Year 1 and science in Years 1 and 2. In these subjects planned activities are not sufficiently different to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly those of the higher attainers. Teachers plan co-operatively in year groups and share ideas so that all pupils have the same opportunities to learn. Pupils' standards of attainment and progress in ICT are exceptionally good because teachers very effectively plan to teach the skills in all subjects, as well as teaching them separately. Computers are in constant use for both teaching and learning. Teachers are very aware of the support and motivation ICT can bring to the curriculum. Teachers place a strong emphasis in their planning on developing pupils' speaking skills by highlighting key vocabulary and questions highlighted. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' progress. The same is not true of teachers' planning for improving the vocabulary of pupils learning English as an additional language and they do not routinely plan to reinforce particular key words for these pupils. As a result a minority make slow progress in speaking.

18 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Staff identify pupils' needs early and track their progress towards targets in their individual education plans. These plans set targets for pupil achievement and progress is monitored efficiently. The co-ordinator for special educational needs shares this information with class teachers so that they teach these pupils well. The teachers work closely with classroom assistants to provide further good support and parents also come into the school to help. This provision raises pupils' confidence and encourages them to work hard to improve, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.

19 Teachers set time each day to encourage pupils to talk about their feelings on issues such as behaviour and bullying. This is still developing. Lessons make a good contribution to pupils' speaking skills but are less effective in exploring issues of personal development. The practice of finishing snacks during this time diverts pupils' attention from the purpose of the discussion. However, there are good opportunities to talk generally about social and moral issues throughout the curriculum and teachers constantly emphasise respect for each other. A good example of this was when a reception class pupil was upset when her model went wrong and another pupil put her arm around her and said, "Don't worry, if it goes wrong you can make it again." The governing body has decided that sex education and drugs education will be taught mainly through the science curriculum. Personal, social and health education is integrated well into other subjects, such as science and religious education.

20 The school has built up good relationships with the community and has a wide range of extra-curricular activities including visitors and visits that add to pupils' learning. For example, pupils have worked with an artist in residence to design murals and models for the corridor walls and ceilings. Besides adding to the interest of the school's learning environment, pupils gained an understanding of how a professional artist works and tried out techniques for themselves. Pupils take part in a dance festival, football coaching, experience theatre groups and African Caribbean music as well as visiting Tamworth Castle and the local library. Other visitors include the police, dentist and ambulance personnel who talk about their jobs and how they help the community. This adds to pupils' cultural development and their understanding of community.

21 The school builds strong bonds with the wider community. There is a good partnership between the school and local industry. For instance, the school held a sponsored day of activities when pupils explored environmental issues, including designing posters to carry a public message. The school has a very good relationship with the local junior school. Teachers liaise regularly, pass records on and teachers have supported their junior school colleagues in developing ICT. These procedures help the junior school staff have a good understanding of pupils' needs before they transfer. As a Beacon School for ICT, teachers have trained staff in local schools in planning and teaching ICT. Staff encourage pupils to communicate with the wider world through the Internet to access to information and ideas. There is a very good home-school agreement that gives guidelines for parents on home use of the Internet and how to protect children from undesirable communications and websites.

22 Provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' development. The school is a caring community and this is evident in everything it does. Pupils are happy to come to school and enjoy what it offers. This has a very positive effect on pupils' development and learning. When one boy was asked why he liked school, he said, "I like the work."

23 Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Assemblies, acts of collective worship and religious education lessons make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Teachers cherish pupils' sense of wonder and are good at using pupils' natural curiosity to make learning fascinating. A good example of this was when pupils were making popcorn. Their faces lit with delight as they saw the change from seeds to pop corn. In a science lesson, the movement of iron filings when a magnetic force was applied fascinated pupils. They have opportunities to appreciate and discuss the beauty of paintings by Seurat and the uplifting effects music has on them. Teachers show that they value pupils' ideas and feelings by listening to them and praising their efforts. This encourages pupils to respect the beliefs, feelings and achievements of others. A good example of this was in a whole school assembly when pupils were awarded certificates for their achievement during the week. Pupils sat with rapt attention as the various achievements for pupils from each class were celebrated.

24 The school provides very well for pupils' moral and social education. It promotes a very good understanding of right and wrong. Teachers and adult helpers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond very well. Teachers and other adults are good role models for the pupils. All classes have rules and teachers help pupils to develop a sense of fairness and justice through positively reinforcing appropriate behaviour. They encourage pupils to co-operate by varying the make up of groups so that pupils learn to work with different personalities and abilities. The school promotes a clear moral and social code which teachers take every opportunity to emphasise. They encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions and show respect for people and property. The school uses its links to develop pupils' understanding of community rules, for example, through exploring the role of a police officer.

25 There is good provision for cultural development. Pupils learn well about their own and other cultures through an extensive range of learning opportunities. The school's cultural values are reinforced through displays and exhibitions of artefacts. Good examples of this in nursery were the Diwali paintings and candleholders that the children made. On another occasion, the children dressed up and celebrated Mardi Gras. Other pupils listen to Hindi music and sing songs for Diwali and Hannukah in their music curriculum. In addition, the pupils experience music from an African Caribbean group invited to perform in the school. Music and dance groups that have visited the school include the Walsall Strings and a storyteller has shared a range of stories with the pupils. The school provides culturally diverse reading books for individual and shared reading. It promotes opportunities for pupils to explore their own culture through visits, events and visitors. For instance, after learning about the tradition of giving gifts at Christmas to celebrate Christ's birth, a helper of Santa Claus visited the nursery children. Staff were careful not to frighten these young children and so the helper, rather than just appearing in his costume, brought it into the class and put it on in front of them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

26 The school has continued to care for its pupils very well since the previous inspection. It provides pupils with very good levels of support and guidance. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress which meet statutory requirements. There are good arrangements for pupils' safety and welfare. Procedures are effectively based on well-defined policies and there are clear roles for members of staff. Staff manage health and safety effectively through a system of recorded site inspections. They make proper arrangements in the event of illness or injury and there is adequate expertise in first aid. Child protection arrangements are in line with local procedures but lunchtime supervisors are not trained to the same level as other members of staff. The school has safe procedures regarding pupils' access to the Internet.

27 The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and good procedures for punctuality. The school has a very effective system of recording attendance and analyses the information well to follow up individual cases of concern. The school works well with the Educational Welfare Officer and there have been examples of improvement in some cases. Overall attendance rates have fallen back recently and the school has not achieved satisfactory rates for pupils in Year 1 and for younger pupils.

28 Staff promote good behaviour very well and base their work on a positive ethos of respect and consideration for others. Staff insist on high standards and set very good role models of behaviour and consideration. There is a very effective system of awards, which is flexible to meet particular need. A good example of this is the *walker of the week* award to promote good conduct in the long corridor. Sanctions are usually nothing more than a reminder about appropriate behaviour because pupils respond so well to the school code. The school is successful in eliminating oppressive forms of behaviour such as bullying or racist and sexist comments.

29 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Formal monitoring in the Foundation Stage effectively tracks their progress. Teachers of older pupils monitor their personal development informally and any concerns are referred to the headteacher to agree a course of action.

30 Teachers accurately assess pupils' attainment and stage of development on entry to school. The system of continuing assessment in mathematics and science is very good. In English it is excellent. Teachers make notes on plans and in their notebooks to show how well pupils have achieved or if they are having difficulties. They then organise tasks and adult support for the next lesson. In English, teachers use this information very effectively to plan for pupils' needs so that most make good progress. In mathematics and science lessons in Year 1 and science lessons in Years 1 and 2, teachers do not always use the information they have to match tasks well enough to pupils' capabilities. This means that higher attaining pupils do not make enough progress. Teachers keep very good records to show when pupils have achieved what they want them to learn. The school uses a range of standardised tests to analyse pupils' annual progress. Teachers use these and their regular assessments particularly well to decide where extra support is needed. This very good use of information means that teachers can give support at an early stage with tasks that are closely matched to pupils' needs. Assessment is satisfactory in most other subjects. Teachers use it to build on what pupils have learned. In religious education, music and history teachers do not record enough information to be sure that pupils are making enough progress.

31 The assessment co-ordinator and senior staff track each pupil's progress very closely and keep the staff well informed. They then make sure that teachers have the resources they need to deal with any difficulties. A good example of this is buying new books to encourage boys to read more. They also use the information on progress to identify where teachers need to improve, and plan training to help them. This means that the school can aim for higher attainment and teachers are well equipped to help pupils to make good progress. The system is successful. Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are rising. Last year, a significant minority of pupils did better than expected and the school met or exceeded its English and mathematics targets.

32 The school supports pupils with special educational needs by identifying their difficulties early and working on them well in class. Pupils with the greatest need are given a high level of support. This helps them to make good progress. The school is changing how it assesses and records the progress of pupils learning English as an additional language because it has recognised that its current arrangements are unsatisfactory. They do not enable staff to see the progress pupils make in spoken English nor set targets for their improvement.

33 Teachers regularly discuss pupils' progress with parents and make sure that pupils know what they must do to achieve more highly. This encourages them further and raises standards of attainment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34 The school promotes a very effective partnership with parents, who express considerable confidence in the school in most areas of its work. All parents who answered the pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that pupils like the school and make good progress. Almost all parents feel teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed. They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem and think the school expects pupils to work hard. Most parents consider behaviour to be good and that pupils are helped to become mature and responsible. The inspection team confirms these positive views. A significant minority of parents feel the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons and a few parents would like more information about pupil progress and want to work more closely with the school. These views are largely

unfounded. The school provides a very wide range of events and activities that enrich the curriculum and there are also opportunities for swimming, music and a gymnastics club.

35 The quality of information given to parents is very good. Publications are thoughtfully presented and the school website provides ready access for parents and also contact with a wider audience, such as past pupils. The annual report of the governing body does not provide enough information about provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school holds regular curriculum meetings to bring parents up-to-date with current issues, such as target setting and homework. Annual progress reports on pupils are very detailed, especially in English and mathematics. The school organises three consultation evenings each year for parents to discuss their child's progress.

36 The school works very closely with parents and provides a wide range of opportunities to be involved. Before the children start the nursery, parents are invited into the school to meet the nursery staff and provide information of their child's learning needs. There is an open door policy and parents are kept well informed on their child's progress both informally and formally. Staff encourage parents to be active partners in learning and support work at home through information about class work each term. The contribution they make is evident in the dialogue with teachers in the reading record. There are very good arrangements for involving parents of pupils with special educational needs and the school makes every effort to inform and involve them. Most parents respond well by encouraging their children at home, which helps them make good progress. Not enough priority is given to developing informal links with parents of pupils learning English as an additional language. A very active 'Parents in Partnership' group works closely with the designated teacher and the school to organise joint events and there is a large core of regular helpers in the classroom. Not enough parents follow up sufficiently on links the school has established with the local library. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is very good and contributes significantly to the high standards achieved.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37 The headteacher and senior staff lead the school very well. Curriculum leaders make a strong contribution to the development of teaching and learning. The school monitors and evaluates its work very well. It has a very good idea of its strengths and weaknesses and is committed to further improvement. It makes good use of its resources and most of its additional grants and applies the principles of best value well. The governors have a good involvement with the school's development and fulfil the vast majority of their responsibilities well with one small exception.

38 The headteacher has a clear view of what the school does well and how it should improve further. She works very effectively with the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher as the school's senior management team. The deputy and assistant headteachers are also class teachers and they set fine examples of high quality teaching. This hardworking group reconcile well the day-to-day management demands with effective strategic leadership. The school has an effective management structure that delegates responsibilities excellently to include other teaching staff. For instance, the co-ordinators of English and mathematics have helped the school introduce the national schemes for literacy and numeracy well. The co-ordinator for special educational needs manages the provision well and pupils make good progress against the targets in their individual education plans. The school has done well to anticipate forthcoming national initiatives on gifted and talented pupils and on personal, social and health education and citizenship by promoting two teachers to take on the responsibility for planning the school's provision in these aspects.

39 All teachers play important parts in the whole school management team. A good example of this is the school's approach to school improvement planning. The school has very good systems for monitoring and evaluating its work and uses them to help decide

school priorities. Staff review the school's performance by using analyses of pupils' test results and then work out how to raise standards and improve pupils' progress. In the past, the school has focused on increasing the proportion of seven-year-old pupils attaining within the nationally expected level in English and mathematics. However, last year's results showed that not enough pupils were reaching the higher level. This became a school priority. The school made some changes to its teaching and this is now bearing fruit and the school is on course to meet its challenging targets for seven-year-old pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. This shows the effectiveness of the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress and for monitoring the quality of teaching. However, a few aspects of teaching such as increasing the pace of lessons that needed improvement after the previous inspection have not been properly remedied. The school should examine more closely how its monitoring and evaluation procedures for teaching feed through into consistent improvement.

40 The school recognises that two elements of its management need improvement. The first concerns the deputy headteacher who fulfils a number of onerous management duties very well. Her management of the Foundation Stage is good overall but is more influential in the reception classes, where she has daily contact with the other two reception teachers. Her management of the work of the nursery nurses in the school's nursery is good but made more difficult by two factors; the distance between the nursery and the reception classes and the weight of her other responsibilities. While the work of the nursery nurses is good, it could be improved by the deputy headteacher's closer involvement. The school is considering how to make that involvement more effective. The more significant area that needs improvement is the management of provision for pupils learning English as an additional language. Earlier this year, the school took on this responsibility from the local education authority and sought its support in making the provision more effective. Although some changes have been made, not enough has been done in the time available and this aspect of the school's management needs further improvement. For instance, the role of the specialist teacher needs to be more clearly defined so that her in-class support role can be more effective, the assessment of pupils' progress can be linked into the school's current systems, targets for pupils' progress can be clearer and teachers and classroom assistants can be given better guidance on how to meet the particular language needs of a minority of these pupils.

41 The school has good arrangement to induct staff who are new to the school and they are quickly made to feel part of a committed staff team. Part of this team approach is a good system of staff consultation so that individuals' views are taken into account when major decisions are made. A good example of this is the school's introduction of the literacy hour and daily mathematics lessons. This new planning format did not fit easily with the school's existing curriculum plans. However, having made the decision, the staff worked together well to develop a system that blends the best of their previous practice and the best of the new. This shows the school's very good commitment to make changes and its capacity to make them work well.

42 The governing body is well organised and well informed. Governors have particular responsibilities for different aspects and subjects and are beginning to develop this part of their role well. They recognise that a more systematic approach would fit in well with the school's monitoring and evaluation systems. They play an important part in the school's improvement planning, firstly by analysing school performance with the senior staff, examining the school's resources and finances and scrutinising the school's proposals for development. After these discussions, they agree the school's improvement plan and carefully match the priorities to school finances. This has ensured that the school has been able to maintain good adult pupil ratios, good levels of resources and make incremental improvements to the school's satisfactory accommodation. However, the main corridor floor is uneven and needs further attention. In line with local education authority guidance and timescale, they are planning to appoint a teacher to work in the nursery with nursery nurses. Governors have overseen the school's excellent provision for information and

communication technology and helped ensure that it is put to best use. Governors oversee the school's spending of specific grants and recognise that while most of them are spent well, their spending of the grant for pupils learning English as an additional language is not fully effective. They have set up excellent systems for performance management and ensured that the school's professional development targets tie in with school priorities. They supported the school's bid for Beacon status and are rightly proud of the school's work in information and communication technology with other schools. They listened carefully to the school's reasons not to re-apply for a further period. While recognising that the work had brought significant benefits to the school, they sensitively endorsed the headteacher's view that the staff now needed to devote more time to the school's priorities. In this they showed mature and timely judgement. They fulfil the vast majority of their responsibilities well and recognise the need to include a little more detail on the provision for pupils with special educational needs in their annual report to parents.

43 The school seeks good value for money from its major purchases and services by tendering where it can and monitoring the quality. It consults formally and informally with parents and they are pleased that they can approach the school with queries. It compares its performance with that of schools locally and nationally to judge how well it is doing and it tests out its decisions through its system of setting priorities for improvement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

1. Improve the quality of the specialist teaching of pupils learning English as an additional language and the management of the provision for these pupils

Paragraphs: 14, 32, 36, 40, and 42

2. Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching to eliminate the few weaknesses identified in this report *

Paragraphs: 14, 15, 17, and 30

In addition to these Key Issues, the governors should include these other aspects in the school's action plan:

- Reduce the proportion of pupils with unsatisfactory attendance *

Paragraph: 11

- Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents contains all relevant information on the provision for pupils with special educational needs

Paragraph: 42

* This indicates that the school currently has plans to deal with these issues

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	26	40	16	8	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39	263
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	19

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	44

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (based on unvalidated data)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	46	44	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	40	45
	Girls	43	41	44
	Total	85	81	89
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (80)	90 (83)	99 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	41	45	44
	Girls	43	43	43
	Total	84	88	87
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (82)	98 (90)	97 (88)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	20
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	151
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	160

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39 FTE

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	98

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
--------------------------------	----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	596216
Total expenditure	589872
Expenditure per pupil	1935
Balance brought forward from previous year	61702
Balance carried forward to next year	68046

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	301
Number of questionnaires returned	68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	30	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	73	27	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	44	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	48	2	2	2
The teaching is good.	69	30	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	55	15	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	25	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	25	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	40	44	12	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	66	32	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	30	1	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	30	20	8	22

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44 Children spend a year in the nursery and then transfer to the reception classes. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and this is in line with the judgement in the previous inspection. The nursery is now in new, satisfactory accommodation and has an outside play area with a soft surface. This addition to the facilities is a good response to the previous inspection that found outdoor play facilities for nursery children were inadequate.

45 Children begin in the nursery with a range of skills similar to those generally found. They are taught by 3 nursery nurses whose work is overseen by the deputy headteacher who is also the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. Teaching is good in all the areas of learning and children experience an interesting range of activities. In the reception classes teaching is often very good or excellent except in creative development where it is satisfactory. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children achieve well and attain the early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. These standards are satisfactory. Children make very good progress in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. A significant minority of pupils exceed the early learning goals in these areas. These standards are good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual plans because their work is well planned and they are well supported. Pupils learning English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils except in communication, language and literacy where they make satisfactory progress because their spoken English is not encouraged enough.

Personal, social and emotional development

46 The school places considerable importance on this area of learning and children make good progress. The nursery staff work closely together to promote children's understanding of community and to establish a calm working atmosphere. Each child belongs to a *family* led by a nursery nurse and this helps children relate well to others and develop a sense of belonging. All staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and they provide a range of activities to encourage good attitudes to learning. A good relationship between the children and the staff encourages the children to discuss and explore their feelings and behaviour and the effect these have on others. Staff expect children to co-operate in group activities and to take turns and share. A good example of the effects of this was in the nursery during an activity making Christmas wrapping paper. One child carried the glitter container around the table and asked another child, "Would you like this?" Activities and resources are well organised to encourage children to be independent learners as well as developing their ability to work productively in groups and as a whole class. Staff encourage children to support each other. For instance, in the nursery children take turns to be the *Little Helper* who serves the milk and biscuits and makes sure that all children have equal shares. Teachers take every chance to remind children about respect for each other.

Communication, language and literacy

47 Most of the children make good progress. Children for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. However, there is not enough targeted support to make the most of opportunities to develop these pupils' spoken English. The children enjoy listening to stories and concentrate for sustained periods of time, joining in with familiar phrases and offering suggestions as to how the story will develop. Nursery nurses encourage the children to read the story using the pictures to work out what is happening and they ask questions to help to improve children's speaking and reasoning skills. For example, when sharing a Christmas story, the children were asked, "Why do you think Rudolf has a red nose that glows?" The answers were diverse and thoughtful. When

working with smaller groups staff routinely ask the children questions that move their learning forward. Many of the children recognise and speak the sounds of individual letters. Children are encouraged to try out simple writing through the daily message board and the Christmas list table in the role-play area and this gives the confidence to have a go at writing. The role-play area is changed regularly to present a range of stimulating environments for language and communication. In the current guise of *Santa's Workshop*, adult helpers invite children to discuss what they were doing.

48 In the reception classes, the higher attaining pupils are beginning to read independently. They can read and write words they use currently such as *his, my, short* and *bear*. In addition they can copy write simple sentences. For instance, one child had copied *Bear shared his cake* neatly into his book. Most children can retell a story in the correct order from memory. The majority of children can write their names, form recognisable letters and copy simple sentences. Children with special educational needs make good progress and are developing letter formation by drawing lines and circles to represent letters. They can retell what they have written and can match pairs of simple words by recognising the visual similarity. Most children make good progress and teachers create exciting presentations and introductions to motivate them and stimulate language and writing. For example, one teacher had prepared an interactive version of *The Bear Hunt* on the computers, to which the children could add their own ideas. Children used the structure of the original story and changed the main character into a shark with appropriate words. Teachers use shared reading well with small groups to increase children's understanding and enjoyment. The *Bear Cave* role-play areas in the reception classes provide exciting environments for children to explore language through different activities. Teachers use assessment very effectively to track children's attainment and progress and to plan for the next steps in their learning.

Mathematical Development

49 Children make good progress in this area of learning. Higher attaining children in nursery can count up to eleven and then add one. They can name some shapes, for example circle and rectangle. Most children understand basic positional language and correctly use words such as *over, under* and *on top*. When colouring in a snowman they could count the buttons on his stomach up to five. The majority have good colour recognition and can add one onto low numbers but find it more difficult to take one away. Although higher attaining pupils in the nursery can match a number to the right amount of objects, most others do not understand the idea so well. In the reception classes, higher attaining children can count to twenty and a small number can count beyond this. Most children can sort objects into sets such as *big, small* and *smallest*. They count confidently to ten and can add and take away low numbers. Teachers make good use of ICT to develop children's learning in mathematics. A good example of this was in the nursery, when on the computer screen, children dragged and dropped decorations and presents on top or under a Christmas tree or beside the snowman. Staff take every opportunity to reinforce number concepts through counting rhymes and songs and include counting in everyday activities such as working out how many children are present in a group.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

50 Children make good progress in this area of learning. Staff plan a wide range of good activities, events and visits to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them. As a result, children are developing a good sense of place and time. In the nursery they explore change in natural materials through an autumn walk and their work on autumn leaves. They put plants into a small garden area and watch them grow and flower over time. They explore natural events by making wind sticks and blowing bubbles to observe the effect wind has on them. In both the nursery and the reception classes, the children confidently use the simpler aspects of technology to support their learning. In the nursery, they use the computer mouse and keyboard to make drawings, select icons and move and place objects. Most children in the reception classes can also change graphics,

save and print their work. In the reception classes they explore light and dark through role-play in the *bear cave* and most can sort objects into those that create a light source and those that do not. Teachers make activities both exciting and fun and this holds children's interest and accelerates their learning. This area makes a good contribution to children's spiritual development. For instance, children exploring light and dark in the *bear cave* were full of wonder at the different shadows and strength of light created by various light sources.

Physical development

51 Children make good progress in this area of learning. The quality of teaching and children's rate of progress is better in indoor structured lessons than that in outdoor play areas. For instance, in a very good movement lesson in the hall, the nursery children moved confidently, showed good awareness of space and changed pace and direction. They listened very carefully to instructions and refined their movements to meet the teacher's requirements. In the nursery outdoor play area there is a good range of wheeled vehicles that is used to develop children's skills and they are closely supervised to ensure their safety. However, there is a limited structured play to develop children's confidence and stamina in using large play equipment. Reception classes have a separate outdoor area that has large-frame adventure equipment that is used to encourage sound development of children's confidence, strength and an understanding of safe behaviour. Children make rapid progress in this area of learning in the reception classes and teaching is of very high quality. Lessons are full of activity and teachers are good at coaching simple games' skills. Children are very involved in their work and are keen to improve. Pupils with special educational needs do particularly well because they are so well supported and challenged by classroom assistants.

Creative development

52 The quality of teaching and children's progress in their creative development is good in nursery and satisfactory in the reception classes. Teachers' planning covers a wide range of interesting activities that covers art, design, music and imaginative play. However, there is not enough difference in some of the activities in the nursery and reception classes because this work is not co-ordinated well enough. For example, children in the nursery were decorating bear masks that had been prepared for them. Meanwhile in the same activity in reception, the only difference was that children could decide how to fix the masks on their heads. In the nursery, staff encourage children to choose from a good range of resources to design and create their finished products. They think about their choices and explain why they have chosen them. In the reception classes, much of the creative work is over prepared and consequently children have fewer opportunities to make decisions on shape, design, materials and assembly. However, the teaching of music is excellent in the reception classes. For example, in a lesson based on *The Bear Hunt*, children copied clapping accurately, suggested and made changes in pace and pitch to match actions in the story and built a whole class composition in sound.

ENGLISH

53 Pupils' standards of attainment in English are high because of good teaching and excellent management. Most pupils make good progress and at this stage in the school year most pupils in Year 2 are working above the level expected for this age. Standards of attainment are improving because the school has introduced a very effective literacy strategy based on the National Literacy Strategy. This has maintained the good quality of teaching since the last inspection.

54 Most pupils' standards of attainment in speaking and listening are very good and most pupils make very good progress. A few pupils with English as an additional language do not make enough progress because teachers do not help them enough with the vocabulary they need. Most pupils speak clearly and confidently in small and large groups because teachers give them good opportunities to express themselves. Pupils ask and answer questions and make comments in a way, which shows they have listened well. For

instance, when one pupil in a group explained that *chopping* is a doing word, another quickly commented, "Yes it is, and we really should say it's a verb because that's its proper name." Teachers consistently ask pupils to explain their work and ideas and help to correct their vocabulary where necessary. They praise and encourage them and this helps them to feel confident and at ease with what they have to say. All classes have set times to talk about feelings on such things as school rules, bullying and looking after the school properly. These give good opportunities for pupils to speak out about their ideas and discuss what to do. Teachers encourage pupils to act out scenes from stories and play with puppets. All these opportunities help them to make good progress and develop their skills. School performances and the theatre in the playground give further good opportunities for speaking and listening activities.

55 Pupils' standards in reading are good because teachers consistently show them how to make detailed improvements and most pupils make good progress. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 make satisfactory progress. They read accurately but teachers do not give them books that challenge them enough to think about what they have read. Most pupils use sounds and pictures to help them to read. They build words up well. Teachers give them a thorough grounding in using these different ways. This part of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 read fluently and are happy to talk about what they have read. They do this enthusiastically and show that they have understood. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to read in class and encourage them to read at home. During literacy lessons pupils read with their teacher. They learn well from the teacher's example by copying expression and talking about what they are reading. In one lesson in Year 1 when reading *The Blue Balloon* a pupil noted, "The words sound like what they mean – stre-e-e-tch – and that makes it fun!" By using a range of different books, teachers make reading interesting and enjoyable for all pupils. This has particularly helped to enthuse boys. One Year 2 boy said about reading an information book, "This is real stuff. It's not a story and I really like it." This attitude to reading is helping pupils to improve their attainment. Pupils take reading books home regularly and most parents support the teachers in helping their children to read. Pupils use the school library to choose books they like. Both the school's small library and the more extensive classroom book collections make a good contribution to the school's literacy strategy. Higher attaining pupils can find books using the number system and can then find information quickly. The school has enrolled all pupils in the local library and visits to it and visits from the librarian for lively story reading underline the importance teachers place on learning to read.

56 Pupils' standards of attainment in writing are good and most pupils make good progress including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. An increased proportion of higher and average attaining pupils are making good progress. This is because teachers have identified precisely what pupils need to improve and are setting work to make sure they do this. Teachers give very good opportunities to write in English and in other subjects so that pupils see that there is a real reason for their writing. Pupils know that different kinds of writing have to be done in different ways. For instance, in Year 2, pupils know that written instructions need to start with a verb or a time word. One pupil, thinking about this said, "I know I can't write *you must* so I want to start with *first tear the paper* or just *tear the paper*." In this lesson, pupils were writing instructions on how to recycle paper after undertaking the activity of recycling. All the pupils showed great enthusiasm because they were writing about something they had experienced in design and technology. Other pupils learned how to write using bullet points. Pupils make comparisons in history, describe places in geography and write about feelings in religious education. At all times, teachers make sure that pupils know that writing is for a particular purpose. In a Year 1 class, pupils learned the difference between captions and labels and used these correctly in their writing. The teacher explained carefully that this kind of writing is useful in science.

57 In literacy lessons, teachers read examples of good writing to the pupils to show them how to make their work more interesting and accurate. In one Year 2 class, pupils

who were finding information from books were asked to write specific questions on what they needed to find out. One pupil commented, "It's harder to ask questions than answer them but it makes you think about what you want to know. Then you can use the right words." He then changed his question from, "Is there anything about plastic?" to, "How is plastic made?" Teachers encourage pupils to use wordbooks to try spellings and this helps them to spell more accurately. All pupils learn to use capital letters and full stops correctly. Lower attaining pupils often forget to use them when writing independently. Higher and average attaining pupils frequently use question marks and commas, which make their sentences longer and more interesting. Pupils do not tackle story writing with as much skill and confidence as they do their other work because they have not yet had enough opportunities to do this.

58 Teachers make sure that pupils know that writing is for someone to read. They encourage pupils to read their work to the class and display it prominently so that pupils know that they value it. Writing in other subjects makes a strong contribution to progress in literacy. This helps pupils understand that there are ways of writing for different reasons. Pupils generally present their work neatly. The standard of handwriting is good. Teachers show pupils how to form letters correctly and keep a consistent size. They give them time to practise, which helps them to present their work well. As a result of good teaching, standards of writing are high and a greater proportion of pupils are now attaining above nationally expected levels.

59 Most teaching is good but staff do not give pupils learning English as an additional language enough practice in speaking. In Year 2 there is some very good and excellent teaching. Teachers plan lessons very well and are clear about what they want pupils to learn. They carefully match stimulating activities to pupils' needs that help to keep their interest and enthusiasm. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher encouraged different levels of writing instructions to challenge pupils to achieve as well as they could. One group used pictures, another a flow chart and another asked to use bullet points. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed matching their writing correctly and made very good progress. They learned how effective different ways of writing could be. Lessons are well managed with a balance of demonstration, group and individual work. This means that pupils learn new skills and have time to practise them. An example of this is when pupils are asked to look at words and see how many different ones they can make by rearranging the first or last letters. All teachers teach pupils to use sounds, pictures and other clues to help build up words and understand their reading. One pupil said, "You know, when you look at that picture he looks like a real friendly cat with his eye patch – but he must be naughty because the book's called Mossop's Last Chance." Building up words by sound also helps pupils improve their spelling. Pupils pay particular attention to this and do it well. The standard of literacy teaching is good and is helping to raise the standard of reading and writing.

60 Teachers question pupils well to see what they have learned. They make notes about what they can and cannot do and change their plans if necessary. They very carefully set targets for pupils to reach and they talk about these with the pupils and parents. This makes sure that pupils know what they have to do to improve and teachers and parents support them in this. In this way teachers are raising standards of attainment. Staff use ICT very well to help pupils make good progress in English skills. Teachers show pupils how to draft and organise their work on a computer and then how to write and print it. Most pupils are successful in doing this and are encouraged to experiment with vocabulary and different kinds of writing. Classroom assistants and other adults play an important part in helping pupils with their lessons. They give particularly good support to pupils with special educational needs and help them to concentrate and make good progress. Pupils enjoy their English lessons and their regular homework. They are well motivated and very well behaved because the teachers make the work interesting. They concentrate very well and try to improve. This helps them to make good progress. "I really want it to be right," said one Year 2 pupil.

61 The co-ordinator provides excellent leadership. She supports teachers very well with their planning to make sure it is clear and matches the needs of all the pupils. She has been responsible for building up very good resources and guiding the staff in developing a very effective literacy strategy based on the National Literacy Strategy. She has given considerable time and thought to what is best for the pupils. She has an excellent view of standards and quality of teaching because she observes lessons, checks planning and pupils' work and thoroughly examines test results. This excellent management has helped to raise standards over the last eighteen months.

MATHEMATICS

62 Over the last three years, seven-year-old pupils' standards of attainment have been around the national average and kept pace with the national rate of improvement. In 2001 they were well above the average of similar schools. Pupils in the current Year 2 are at least at the level expected and in some instances beyond it. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress in all aspects of mathematics except in using and applying their knowledge, where their progress is satisfactory. The school is aware of this and is extending its range of problem solving work and is developing further the way pupils learn mathematics in other subjects. The school has made good progress in this subject since the last inspection.

63 This improvement is due to the way the school has successfully introduced the daily mathematics lesson, improved lesson planning and carefully monitored the quality of teaching. It is also due to how well the school analyses its results and uses this information to set targets for specific pupils. This works well and helped raise the attainment of some pupils in 2001. The school also saw that its higher attaining pupils were not reaching high enough standards. It then set specific work for these pupils and this strategy is currently working well.

64 In the mental and oral sessions at the start of each lesson, most pupils answer the teachers' questions quickly and confidently. However, a few of these sessions in Year 1 are taught too slowly and do not ask enough of the higher attaining pupils. Classroom assistants sit alongside those pupils who lack either the confidence or the words to respond as quickly as their classmates. The assistants encourage the pupils to try their answers out first with them before speaking to the teacher. This builds their confidence, and pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets in their individual education plans. Those learning English as an additional language also make good progress in their number work and do not find that their occasional lack of fluency in spoken English a barrier to their learning.

65 Higher attaining Year 2 pupils can think beyond simply adding numbers to understanding rules and principles of addition and finding patterns in number sequences. For instance, when using a *virtual dartboard* on computers they could quickly see what would be the highest and lowest numbers that could be scored by using three darts. Again using computers, they could convert block graphs into pie charts and could recognise that the latter gave a quick overview of the data but the former was more useful for picking out the details. Average and higher attaining pupils make very good progress in logically working out, for instance, the name of a square based pyramid and are beginning to classify three dimensional shapes by their properties. Lower attaining pupils can use tallying skills to add data they collected and with a little support, begin to convert this to horizontal bar charts. Generally pupils are very confident in using information and communication technology to present and analyse their work.

66 Most teaching in Year 1 is good and it is very good in Year 2. The best teaching is lively and challenges pupils to think hard. In these very good lessons, teachers expect a lot of their pupils and they respond with interest and are so well motivated that they continue with their work while the teacher works with other pupils. All teachers plan very well using

national guidance so that pupils learn the basic skills of numeracy well. They get the chance to explain their working out in a minority of lessons and these opportunities should be increased. Teachers and classroom assistants prepare the classrooms well and make good use of the school's excellent resources. This strategy saves time but sometimes does not allow the higher attaining pupils to make some choices from different equipment. Teachers have very good systems for assessing pupils' progress and recording it. This gives them a very clear view of pupils' progress so that they can set work to challenge pupils of all abilities. Year 2 teachers set learning targets for groups of pupils and for individuals and this has been a major factor in improving pupils' progress. This has begun in Year 1 and previously too little was asked of higher attaining pupils. Teachers regularly set interesting homework and follow it up in class. This very good practice has a significant effect on pupils' progress. The best teaching takes the form of an extended mathematical discussion among pupils, teachers and classroom support assistants. Pupils readily respond to this teaching strategy since it arouses their curiosity and invites them to think more deeply to justify their answers. They listen readily to other pupils' ideas, build on them when developing their own answers and behave very well.

67 The subject co-ordinator manages the subject in an excellent way. She has a clear view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses and plays a major role in its development that builds on the work of her predecessor. She recognises the need for pupils to extend the application of their mathematical skills in other subjects. The quality of teaching and learning is evaluated thoroughly and this has led to helpful discussions with staff about the general improvement they should make. This process now needs to be more specific. In this way improvements mentioned in earlier lesson observations would be quickly addressed. The co-ordinator works well with the assessment co-ordinator to analyse test results in the quest for further improvement. All staff are fully committed to raising standards further to meet the challenging targets in the school's improvement plan. They work very well as a team to support one another's planning and evaluate their work.

SCIENCE

68 Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its high standards. By the time they are seven, most pupils' standards of attainment are above those expected nationally for pupils of their age. Standards in both Year 1 and 2 are good and the majority of pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs. This is because science lessons are generally well planned and taught. Pupils clearly enjoy the subject and the co-ordinator leads it effectively. Pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because they are well supported during activities by teachers. However, there is little specific language support for them in the subject.

69 Pupils enjoy lessons and tackle activities with enthusiasm. In a Year 1 lesson on magnetism, pupils considered which materials a magnet would attract. They sorted objects into two groups, tested out their theories and developed their understanding of a fair test. They looked back at their original ideas when some objects, such as aluminium cans did not respond in the way they had thought. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils researching the properties of a range of materials such as plastic, wood and play dough, used a good range of scientific language including *transparent* and *opaque* to describe materials. They made good suggestions about how objects would behave when bent, squashed or stretched before testing them out. They were excited to find that even objects made from the same material, such as plastic, behaved differently when bent or squashed. One higher attaining pupil exploring the range of objects said, "Your skull is hard and squashing will break it but some things can be easily squashed without damaging them." Another one knew that a rubber band would twist but would be hard to break. Most pupils in Year 2 can record their findings on worksheets and higher attaining pupils could spell correctly words such as *plastic*, *fabric* and *foam* correctly.

70 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers make the work exciting and fun and they know how to encourage the pupils' curiosity and sense of investigation. Much of the work is based on finding out and there is a good balance between independent, group and whole class work. Teachers' planning is very good quality and weekly planning is based on good quality assessment that tracks pupils' progress and attainment. However, the information is not used to set more challenging work for the higher attaining pupils. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson clear to the pupils at the beginning of lessons and make sure pupils know what they are expected to achieve. Teachers have high expectations of most pupils and they respond well. For instance, pupils deciding which materials would be best for stuffing a teddy bear handled the fragile materials, such as feathers, with great care. Teachers use science lessons to improve pupils' literacy, number and ICT skills. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher checked the spelling and handwriting of written work and used a program on the computer for pupils to log the data they had collected. They also use ICT in science, for instance to label diagrams.

71 Science is well led by the co-ordinator, who was in post at the time of the last inspection. She monitors and evaluates teachers' planning and has previously checked the quality of teaching and learning across the school. She identified weaknesses in the teaching of life processes and living things and the planning of activities for higher attaining pupils. She has succeeded in strengthening the first aspect but has not addressed the second sufficiently. Consequently higher attaining pupils do not make enough progress. The co-ordinator leads formal assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in investigative skills each term and puts into place teaching strategies to address any problems identified. She advises teachers and gives them good ideas for planning and activities. Teachers new to the school have not had any additional training in the subject because of the school's emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Possibly as a result, a few teachers use incorrect terms to pupils, for example, talking about objects *sticking* to magnets.

ART AND DESIGN

72 All pupils make good progress in art and design because the subject is very well led and teaching is good. Most pupils achieve above expected standards, with some more able pupils achieving well above expectations by the age of seven.

73 The school has made good progress in developing the art and design curriculum since the last inspection. Pupils are enthusiastic and work with care and confidence. All pupils make good progress and develop their skills very well. For example, Year 2 pupils can apply pastel a little at a time, selecting the most appropriate shade and dotting it on the paper. They use techniques of blending and smudging until they have a very close match to the colour of the object they are copying. Pupils evaluate their work and improve it. They use the ICT Colour Magic program to create pastel and water colour effects in their pictures. To improve further pupils need more opportunities to apply their skills in less directed activities, with freedom to choose the most appropriate materials and use their own ideas.

74 The quality of teaching is good and lessons are well planned. Teachers have high expectations, which pupils try very hard to meet. In Year 2 lessons the teachers modelled the art technique clearly, asked questions to promote the pupils' understanding, and pupils knew exactly what they had to do to succeed. Teachers show that they think art and design is important by carefully displaying the pupils' work throughout the school. Pupils are proud of their work and talk enthusiastically about it. They have access to a very wide variety of activities, including, candle making, clay, photography, and work with a local artist to improve the school environment. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

75 The subject is very well led. There is a clear and detailed scheme of work, with a very good collection of examples of pupils' artwork to show what pupils are aiming for in each year group. The subject leader generates enthusiasm. She has very good knowledge

of the art and design curriculum and her colleagues go to her for advice and inspiration. She has observed lessons and advised colleagues on ways to further improve their teaching. She has noted where more resources are needed and made plans to purchase them. She regularly reviews the work around the school and discusses the quality of work the pupils have been doing. She is aware of the over-emphasis on skills teaching, and has plans to redress the balance.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

76 By the age of seven, most pupils reach standards in line with those expected nationally of pupils of that age. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall but Year 1 work in design and evaluation is weak. Pupils who achieve at an average or higher level have designed an item of clothing using research on patterns and professional designers from the Internet. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. They record their ideas with adult support and guidance. The school has made satisfactory progress in developing the subject since the previous inspection but has not totally put right the weakness in design and evaluation highlighted in that report.

77 The teaching of design and technology is satisfactory. Teachers plan for pupils to work with a wide range of materials and tools. In Year 1, pupils make pop up cards and paper teddies with jointed limbs and spring actions. They design and make miniature playground equipment which rocks or turns by using a range of papers and fixing methods. Using their designs, pupils go on to recreate their ideas using large construction equipment. However, teachers over-direct many of the design and technology tasks in Year 1. They overemphasise the perfection of the finished product and this restricts opportunities for pupils to experiment and learn from the design process. Pupils have little opportunity to make design decisions, especially when activities are confined to assembling and decorating finished products.

78 In Year 2, teachers know and understand more about the design aspect. For instance, pupils have designed and made waistcoats for pirates as part of their pirate theme. They researched silk designs and pirate motifs on the Internet and watched a video of designers at work in Paris. They produced drawings of their ideas from which they created paper patterns. They evaluated and altered these to take into account the pirate life style. The pupils designed their own motifs to decorate the fabric and experimented with different types of fixing to put the pieces together, including gluing, sewing, stapling and taping. They evaluated the effectiveness of the different types of fixing to decide their fitness for purpose. Pupils are enthusiastic and concentrate well. They listen carefully to instructions, work productively together and the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' social development.

79 The co-ordinator's management of the subject is good. She manages resources efficiently and has increased the range of resources available since taking up the post last year. She has monitored the quality of teaching and learning in all Year 1 and 2 classes. This has led her to review the scheme of work that now has a greater emphasis on the design aspect. However, this review and additional training are too recent to have improved all the teaching of design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

80 The school has made satisfactory progress in developing the geography curriculum since the previous inspection. The quality of geography teaching is satisfactory and the pupils make satisfactory progress. Seven-year-old pupils' attainment is in line with that expected nationally, with a few more able Year 2 pupils making good progress and reaching a higher standard. Pupils in Year 2 talk knowledgeably about their local area. They use geographical language such as *environment*. They know what they like and dislike about their local area and the effect people have on the environment. For example one child wrote, "I don't like it at our shops, people have set fire to the bins and there's graffiti on the

wall. I'd paint the wall to make it look better." They can locate Wales on a map of the United Kingdom and talk about the differences between living in a town and in a small village.

81 It was not possible to observe any geography lessons during the inspection because it is taught alternately with history and so no overall judgement on the quality of teaching is made. There is a detailed scheme of work covering all the aspects of the National Curriculum. Teacher's lesson plans show a clear understanding of what it is the pupils need to learn, and work in pupils' books is marked up to date and acknowledged. The school makes good use of the local area and recently held a successful environmental awareness day that made a good contribution to the pupils' learning.

82 Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator monitors planning and buys resources in consultation with colleagues. She has observed some lessons in Year 2 and made suggestions to improve the breadth of the curriculum based on these observations. She does not yet have a clear appreciation of pupils' level of attainment in geography across the school. She has sensible plans for future developments including introducing a simple record keeping system.

HISTORY

83 The school has made satisfactory progress in developing the history curriculum since the last inspection and teachers make good use of a wide range of resources. Pupils make satisfactory progress and attainment is in line with that expected nationally, with some less able pupils making good progress. Pupils in Year 1 can sequence a collection of toys correctly from the past to the present day. Pupils in Year 2 know that historical figures such as Guy Fawkes and Neil Armstrong lived at different times and explain how they work this out. They can explain how news of what famous people had done was circulated differently in diverse historical periods.

84 Teachers plan lessons well with a clear appreciation of what it is the pupils need to learn. However, some lessons in Year 1 are too biased towards developing pupils' writing skills rather than their historical knowledge and understanding. Pupils are very enthusiastic about history and they take good care of the resources, some of which are precious personal belongings. Teachers are successful in finding appropriate resources to catch the pupils' attention. For example they use a well-illustrated calendar to make a very effective *bear time line*. They get pupils to ask parents and grandparents about toys they played with. They take pupils to visit the war memorial to find family names and investigate paintings and websites. Classroom support assistants help less able pupils to make good progress, for example widening their vocabulary so that they can describe new and old bears in different ways.

85 Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. There is a clear scheme of work covering all the requirements of the National Curriculum. The subject co-ordinator has not had time to observe any lessons or look at work samples, but she does collect planning from colleagues and has established a portfolio of exemplar pieces of work. She has sensible plans for the future development of the subject and is aware of the teaching weakness reported above. She has a simple record keeping system ready to implement. History has not been a priority for the school recently and for pupils' standards of attainment to improve, the subject co-ordinator needs to have time allocated to work with her colleagues.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

86 By the age of seven, pupils' standard of attainment is well above those expected nationally for pupils of this age. Their rate of progress is very good. This is due to the priority the school has given to the subject and the very good quality of teaching in ICT across the school. Since the previous inspection, when standards were above expectations, the school has raised standards even further. This is a significant achievement. Pupils with

special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language also make very good progress.

87 Pupils in Year 1 use graphics and drawing packages effectively to develop their ideas across the curriculum. For instance, they explore volume, data handling and number in mathematics using drawing tools and data programs. In English, they add graphics, drawings and a range of presentation styles to their work. Pupils access multimedia CD ROMs to develop their knowledge and understanding in other subjects. They open and close programs, select icons and save and print their work. They use the drag and drop function to select graphics to place in their work. Pupils working on the *Animated Dictionary* know how to open the program, use the computer mouse to select the icon to produce sound and create specific effects by selecting options on the screen. In Year 2, pupils use the Internet in science to research information on the astronaut Neil Armstrong. They download text and graphics to enhance their work. In a lesson on using email, the pupils very confidently used the interactive whiteboard to show how to put in a password to gain access to the email function. One pupil said, "It shows as stars because it's a secret." They add speech bubbles to writing, wrap text around graphics, use tools to add labels to science work and use drawing and painting tools to experiment within the art and design curriculum. They use digital photography to enhance and explain their work. This all adds to pupils' understanding of how to choose appropriate presentations to meet the needs of the audience and purpose. The aspect of controlling equipment through a series of instructions is not as well promoted as the rest of the ICT curriculum.

88 Pupils are enthusiastic and confident users of ICT. They are very aware that information can be gained from the wider world community to improve their knowledge and understanding about a wide range of subjects. They respond very well to the challenges presented to them and are eager to help each other. The majority can work independently and all pupils treat the equipment with respect and behave very well.

89 The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are confident in their use of the technology. Planning is thorough. It shows how ICT is used in other subjects to raise standards and provides for all levels of pupils' abilities. Teachers evaluate their lessons and use the information effectively to improve future lessons. Teachers integrate ICT into all subjects very well to raise standards in both teaching and learning. They create multimedia presentations and tasks within subjects to motivate, engage and challenge the pupils. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and this is reflected in the quality and extent of pupils' work. Staff monitor access to computers to ensure that all pupils have good opportunities to use them. Teachers use assessment well to monitor and improve pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers use the Internet to download good quality teaching materials for all subjects and they regularly exchange ideas and planning by email in order to improve further teaching and learning.

90 The co-ordinator manages the subject excellently. Her enthusiasm and expertise has been instrumental in raising standards in ICT to well above those expected nationally. She has led the planning of the skills curriculum and the integration of ICT into all subjects with excellent effect. Under her leadership, all members of staff undertake training. She focused on raising the confidence and proficiency of subject co-ordinators to ensure effective integration of ICT. The success of this strategy is clear in how well pupils use their ICT skills in other subjects. Resources are very good and the school has recently added an interactive whiteboard in order to improve teaching to large groups of pupils. The school was a Beacon School for ICT and the local education authority has used staff's expertise to train and support teachers in local schools.

MUSIC

91 Seven-year-old pupils' standards of attainment match those expected nationally. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Standards of singing are good because of good, enthusiastic teaching. The school's aims and values are reflected well in the subject because pupils are taught to work together well and to take care of instruments. This is satisfactory progress since the previous inspection.

92 Pupils sing with vitality and enthusiasm. Teachers make sure that the songs have a good rhythm and melody so that pupils are keen to practise and perform well. Most pupils sing tunefully and with a good sense of rhythm. In one session, pupils sang a calypso in syncopated rhythm. They kept the beat well and sang in tune. They recognised they had done well and enjoyed it so much that they gave themselves a spontaneous round of applause. It was well deserved. They can hold their part when others are playing a different rhythm. They make good progress in keeping a melody and accompanying their songs because teachers give them many opportunities to practise. Most pupils follow the teacher well when she is conducting. They can adapt their pace and volume at a signal. They thoroughly enjoy using instruments to play rhythms and beats and this helps them to make satisfactory progress. In one lesson in Year 2, pupils were disappointed when they could not have an instrument and this caused them to lose interest for a while. The teacher realised this and quickly involved them in other forms of accompaniment such as clapping and clicking. When active, their interest returned and they made satisfactory progress. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress in exploring sounds to make their own music. Teachers do not give them enough opportunities to do this. Pupils rely too much on the teacher instead of trying their own ideas. Higher attaining pupils can talk knowledgeably about music. When comparing two songs, one Year 2 pupil said, "It's harder because it's quicker but it has to be because of the sort it is – it's a happier song." Average and lower attaining pupils make comments such as "I like it because it's jumpy" or "I can remember the tune - easy." Most pupils make satisfactory progress in this and higher attaining pupils make good progress.

93 Pupils enjoy their music because teachers make lessons interesting and all pupils are involved. They like to learn the catchy songs and rhythms and they try hard to sing and play them well. This attitude helps them to improve their performance and make satisfactory progress.

94 Most teaching is satisfactory. Teaching of singing and rhythm work is good. Planning is very clear. Activities chosen to teach pupils are interesting and keep pupils active. They make good progress in these activities. Teachers do not plan enough to let the pupils explore the sounds instruments make and try out their own music. Because of this pupils rely too heavily on what teachers tell them to do and are not learning for themselves how music can be made. Teachers check what pupils can do and help them to make satisfactory progress in lessons. They do not record enough and so do not have enough information to decide whether they need to change their plans to help pupils make better progress. They do not know for certain how well pupils are attaining in the subject. Teachers effectively use ICT, such as a CD ROM, to help pupils with their musical knowledge.

95 The co-ordinator has been absent for some time. There has been little monitoring during this time so that the school is not fully aware of what pupils are achieving. The headteacher has rightly called in Walsall Music Support Service to help with teaching in Year 2. This is supporting teachers in keeping standards of attainment in line with national expectations. Other visitors, such as the Walsall String Group and a performer playing Garage Music, help to maintain pupils' interest.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

96 During the inspection it was only possible to inspect gymnastics although the school teaches all aspects of physical education. In this part of the subject, most seven-year-old

pupils make good progress and reach good standards. Most of them are working within the level expected of them and a minority are working beyond this. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 1 and good progress in Year 2. The reason for this difference is that teachers in Year 2 have good subject knowledge and ask pupils to make judgements about the quality of the movements and think how they might improve them. In Year 1, teachers emphasise this aspect less. Pupils learn to set out and put away the equipment safely and quickly so that little time is wasted. All pupils know about the effect of exercise on their bodies and carry out safety checks on the hall floor before starting the lesson. Most follow the teachers' instructions quickly but a few pupils in Year 1 become a little boisterous in the warm up sessions at the start of lessons because the teacher does not structure them well enough. Most pupils are developing balancing skills and simple controlled movements and those in Year 2 are making good progress in sequencing their balances and movements across low apparatus. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of how to improve their techniques. School records show that pupils in Year 2 make good progress in swimming.

97 In the three lessons seen, two in Year 1 were satisfactory and one in Year 2 was very good. All lessons have a good structure in which pupils warm up, learn and practise new skills and then cool down. All teachers know enough of the subject to teach technical language in the subject well. They also assess pupils' progress at the end of each module of work so that the school is developing an overall picture of their progress. The Year 2 teacher was quick to spot good practice. While all teachers give pupils praise for their efforts, this teacher picked out the crucial details of what makes for a very good balance for instance, and then did three things. She asked the pupils to demonstrate to others and told those watching to pick out what was done well and how a good balance could be improved further. The pupils were good at this and pointed out, "She could point her toe a bit more." She then made specific coaching points to give pupils something to aim for, "I'm really looking for tension in this balance. I want to see very tight tummies." As a result, pupils tried very hard to improve and kept concentrating through a range of intricate mirrored balance work with their partners. All teachers provide good role models and demonstrate some movements if the pupil demonstrators are not advanced enough. Generally pupils learn at a good pace but occasionally, in Year 1 lessons, this slows and although pupils continue to try, they are practising but not always improving.

98 The physical education co-ordinator manages the subject well. She has introduced a new scheme of work that runs alongside national guidance and this helps teachers plan their lessons well. She monitors the quality of teaching satisfactorily through reviewing teachers' planning. She helps organise the annual sports day so that all pupils experience success. Similarly, when the school selected 42 pupils to represent it at a local dance festival, it was careful to include those not chosen to dance at a later school fete. The school offers swimming to all its Year 1 and 2 pupils although this is extra to the statutory curriculum. Pupils receive certificates to mark their progress and this encourages them to try harder. This attention to detail ensures that all pupils are valued and is a good example of the school fulfilling its aims. In the spring term, the co-ordinator runs a gym club that makes use of the school's good physical education equipment. This is augmented by the extra playground space and new outside equipment that together represent a good response the previous inspection report.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99 Seven-year-old pupils reach standards that are in line with expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress because teachers plan well from the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The school effectively links personal and social and religious education with assemblies. Through this the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to think about the beauty of the world and the importance of life.

This has improved since the last inspection. The school's aims and values are reflected well through the subject. Pupils are taught the importance of good behaviour and of respecting the beliefs of others.

100 Pupils know about festivals in different faiths. They can talk about what happens at Diwali, Hannukah, Christmas and Easter. They are beginning to understand that there are some things that are similar in all faiths, such as light as a symbol of worship, joy and goodness. Most pupils know that different faiths have holy books such as the Bible and the Qu'ran. They know that there are particular clothes and food for special occasions. For example Year 2 pupils make potato latkas when learning about Hannukah. Higher attaining pupils remember the names of special objects such as the menorah in Judaism. When they discuss these things, pupils are interested because teachers explain well and show them pictures and objects which they can handle. This helps them to understand and remember. Most pupils understand the need to care for the world and other people. One good example of this is a group of pupils working together to suggest ideas for improving the environment. They have a clear idea of their own and others' responsibilities for caring for their surroundings. Most pupils are beginning to realise that some people are very important in their lives. In a Year 2 class, the teacher asked the pupils to dedicate a Hannukah candle to someone special. Most were able to decide whom. One pupil said quietly, "This will be for my Mum because she loves me." Most pupils make good progress in learning about religion. They make slower progress in learning from religion because teachers do not use opportunities well enough when they arise. This does not give pupils enough time to think about and discuss what is important in the lives of religious people and relate this to their own experiences. They are not confident when talking of feelings about religion and what can be learned from it. All pupils show respect for other people's faiths because teachers set a good example and encourage them in this.

101 Most teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan well from the Locally Agreed Syllabus to give balanced learning opportunities. In a few lessons, teachers rely too much on teaching the facts about religion. They miss opportunities to encourage pupils to think more why certain practices are important. All teachers stress the importance of respecting the beliefs of others and this develops pupils' understanding and attitudes well. Teachers often question pupils to find out what they have learned but they do not record this regularly enough. They do not collect enough information to be sure of what the pupils know and understand. This means that they are not certain that they are building on what pupils can do. Teachers effectively use available resources, including ICT. However, there are not enough resources for pupils to handle and talk about. The school does not use visits and visitors enough to give pupils first hand experience of other faiths. This limits their opportunities to understand what faith can mean to people.

102 The co-ordinator gives good support to teachers guiding them well with their planning. She has developed effective planning based on the new Locally Agreed Syllabus. She has a good view of the quality of teaching because she checks pupils' work and teachers' plans and talks to pupils and teachers. This and the plans to improve assessment are giving her a good base for helping teachers to understand what they need to do to raise attainment.