

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ASHCROFT INFANTS' SCHOOL**

Tamworth, Staffordshire

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124147

Headteacher: Mrs M Demain

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Schaffer  
23698

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2001

Inspection number: 195173

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school:              | Infant                                  |
| School category:             | Community                               |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 to 7 years                            |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                                   |
| School address:              | Mildenhall<br>Tamworth<br>Staffordshire |
| Postcode:                    | B79 8RU                                 |
| Telephone number:            | 01827 66461                             |
| Appropriate authority:       | The governing body                      |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mr R Hewitt                             |
| Date of previous inspection: | February 1997                           |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |            |                      | Subject responsibilities   | Aspect responsibilities   |
|--------------|------------|----------------------|--|---|
| 23698        | J Schaffer | Registered inspector | Mathematics<br>Information and communication technology<br>History<br>Music<br>Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage | What sort of school is it?<br>School's results and achievements<br>How well are pupils taught?<br>How well does the school care for its pupils?<br>How well is the school led and managed?<br>What should the school do to improve further? |
| 11450        | L Kuraishi | Lay inspector        |  | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development<br>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?  |
| 30559        | J Taylor   | Team inspector       | English<br>Art and design<br>Design and technology<br>Special educational needs  | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?  |

|       |         |                |   |  |
|-------|---------|----------------|---|--|
| 30439 | M Heyes | Team inspector | Science<br>Geography<br>Physical education<br>Religious education<br>Equal opportunities<br>English as an additional language |  |
|-------|---------|----------------|---|--|

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a community infant school for children aged from four to seven. In the Spring and Summer term there is an Early Years class which admits children on a part-time basis the term after their fourth birthday. Situated on the north west of Tamworth in a modern housing estate, the school is located in a pleasant and quiet road. There are 120 boys and girls on roll. Currently the school has the capacity to admit a greater number of children. Class sizes are small and there is spare accommodation. The great majority of pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. There is a very small percentage of pupils from other ethnic groups and all speak English fluently. Approximately nine per cent of pupils are on the special needs register, mainly because they have moderate learning difficulties. This percentage is well below the national average. Six per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is below the national average. On entry to the school children generally have an average level of attainment.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school achieves high standards in a great deal of its work. Good teaching and provision for children's well-being helps the children in reception to settle quickly into school and become confident and happy to learn. This continues throughout the school. There is a carefully planned curriculum which pupils find stimulating, and there is skilful teaching in all classes. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school which is communicated well to others. Staff and governors all make a good contribution to the school's development. Pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and information and communication technology are very good. Overall, the school provides very good value for money.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- Pupils achieve a high standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There is a rich and varied curriculum which stimulates children's interest in learning.
- The provision made for pupils who need extra help with their learning is good.
- Pupils are taught very well to use information and communication technology in their work and their understanding of computers is much greater than is usual for their age.
- The headteacher's leadership of a committed staff team is very good.
- The school's relationship with parents contributes much to pupils' eagerness to learn.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

- The attention of those pupils in Years 1 and 2 who find it hard not to call out during whole class teaching time.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

There has been very good improvement since the last inspection in February 1997. Standards as measured in national tests have risen consistently over the four-year period. The quality of teaching has made significant improvement in that there was 11 per cent unsatisfactory teaching at the previous inspection and currently there is none. The amount of very good or better teaching has increased considerably. At the previous inspection, the school was asked to identify and publish its aims. It has done so, and they now provide a driving force for school improvement through very well directed school development planning, which was also identified as an area for improvement. Monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject managers was not sufficiently well developed and this is now very good. The school has addressed the issue of improving pupils' attainment in listening in a very comprehensive manner but there is still some room for improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

| Performance in: | Compared with |      |      |                 |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |
|                 | 1998          | 1999 | 2000 | 2000            |
| Reading         | C             | A    | A    | A               |
| Writing         | B             | A    | A    | B               |
| Mathematics     | C             | B    | B    | C               |

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Key</b>         |   |
| well above average | A |
| above average      | B |
| Average            | C |
| below average      | D |
| well below average | E |

In the three years shown above the school's results improved faster than the national rate. Consideration of the above table together with the standards of pupils in Year 2 shows that:

- reading improved significantly in 1999 from average to well above the national average and this high standard has been maintained in the present year;
- writing has always been a strength of the school and this has been maintained and current standards are well above average;
- mathematics improved considerably in 1999 and the current picture is even better as the standard is now well above average.

Pupils are achieving above average standards in science, information and communication technology, religious education, art and design, music and geography. In other subjects pupils work well and are achieving satisfactory standards. No judgement was made on the standard by the end of Year 2 in physical education but provision is good. Children in the reception are on course to meet the learning goals set for children at the age of five, and a significant number have already exceeded those goals. Pupils are encouraged to work hard and achieve standards that are at or near their capability. Pupils' achievements from the time they are admitted to the time they leave are very good.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Pupils have good attitudes to their school and their lessons. They want to learn and they treat the school and its resources with care and respect.   |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Behaviour is good because pupils are managed well and have a good understanding of the rewards and sanctions. There have been no exclusions during the past year.   |
| Personal development and relationships | The warm and encouraging attitude of teachers has fostered very good relationships. Pupils care about each other and, in consequence are able to show understanding of the beliefs of others and to care about their circumstances. |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Attendance | Very good. Attendance is well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. Pupils are on time and lessons start promptly. |
|------------|---|

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils:  | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Good               | Very good      | Not applicable  |

*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.*

The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. In 32 per cent of lessons teaching was very good or excellent. It was good in 52 per cent of lessons. There was no unsatisfactory teaching and the percentage of satisfactory was low at 14 per cent.

**Strengths in Teaching and Learning:** Thorough assessment of pupils' achievements is the bedrock of teachers' planning and as a result tasks are very well matched to pupils' needs. Interesting activities challenge, but allow the satisfaction of success, and as a result pupils enjoy their lessons and work hard. In the Early Years and reception classes teachers have a very good understanding of how young children learn through play and creative activities. The support for pupils who need extra help is very effective, giving them confidence and the rate of their learning is very good. Teachers have a very good understanding of how to encourage children to express their thoughts in writing.

**Aspects of teaching that could be improved:** The management of the few pupils who find giving others attention difficult in Years 1 and 2, the teaching of letter formation in the reception class so that pupils learn to shape and form their letters correctly.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Very good. All the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding. There are effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and all pupils have equal opportunities to learn.                          |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | Very good. There is an early identification of pupils' needs and planning and to meet their individual needs is very thorough.   |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                 | There are no pupils currently attending the school who need support for learning English as an additional language.  |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. Pupils are taught to understand right from wrong and to respects the thoughts and feelings of others. Art and design, music and drama contribute well to pupils' cultural development. Some opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of other cultures are missed. |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| How well the school cares for its pupils | The school has very good systems for assessing pupils' academic behaviour. Staff know the pupils well; there is good care for them throughout the day. Proper attention is paid to all aspects of health and safety. |
|--|--|

There is a very good relationship with parents which effectively contributes to pupils' well-being and learning. Parents are well informed both of school activities and with regard to how well their child is achieving. Good relationships ensure that parents feel that they can approach staff with any problem or concern. Social events between staff, pupils and parents add to the life of the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Very good. The headteacher's leadership provides clarity of purpose to the school's work. High expectations are communicated well to staff and pupils. The deputy headteacher and staff with subject responsibilities are all effective in their work. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Good. Governors have the welfare of the school very much to heart. They are conscientious in their efforts to support the school's work and overall they fulfil their responsibilities.  |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | The school's planning for improvement is well focused on self-evaluation. Regular checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements are carried out in conjunction with careful analysis of data.   |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Good. Financial planning is prudent and supports planned developments effectively. The headteacher deploys staff carefully so as to ensure their most efficient use. The governors pay proper attention to ensuring the provision of best value.       |

The governing body are committed to maintaining a good number of learning support assistants to augment the work of teachers. The school is well served by having well-trained, experienced teaching and non-teaching staff who work very well together. Accommodation is very good. The building is maintained to a high standard and very good quality displays contribute to pupils' learning and self-esteem. Resources are good overall, but the school has few artefacts or books to develop understanding in history, and in English a few of the books are out-dated.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most  | What parents would like to see improved   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The good teaching helps their child make good progress.</li><li>• Their child is happy at school.</li><li>• The school works closely with parents and they feel that they are welcome in school at all times.</li><li>• The school is helping their child to develop as a well-rounded individual, not just academically.</li><li>• They appreciate the way that homework is given and that they can participate in helping their child learn.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A few parents would like to see a greater number of activities outside lessons.</li></ul> |

Nearly all the comments made by parents indicated their complete satisfaction with the school. The inspection confirms parents' positive views of the school; it is a very good school. For its size and the age of the pupils, the inspection found that the school provides a good number and range of activities outside lessons.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. In the national tests for seven-year-olds at the end of 2000, the school's results were well above average for reading and writing and above average for mathematics when compared with all schools nationally. When compared with similar schools they were well above for reading, above for writing and average for mathematics. The pupils in the current year have reached the same high standard for reading and writing and improved on last year's standard in mathematics and are now well above average.
2. Over a four year period the school has shown improvement in all tests. In 1999 the school made a big step forward in the standards achieved in tests and that has been maintained. There has been good practice in teaching reading, writing and mathematics over the years, but the current marked improvement has come about because of the good introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Added to this, the school has carefully analysed pupils' achievements and sought improvement in the quality of teaching.
3. In science, in the assessments carried out by teachers, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level at the end of Year 2 in 2000 was close to the national average. The percentage achieving the higher standard was well above the national average. Currently there is a similar picture for the standard of work in Year 2, which overall is above average.
4. When children start in the Early Years class, their attainment is similar to that of most four-year-olds. They make good progress in both the Early Years class and the reception class so that by the time they are five their attainment is above average in the following areas of learning:- communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. It is average in personal, social and emotional development.
5. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are given good opportunities to talk and listen to each other in large class groups, smaller groups and in pairs. Teachers help them to gain new vocabulary and to use it in well structured sentences and phrases. All pupils achieve a good standard of spoken English by the time they are seven and some are good listeners. There are a few, however, who do not listen well. Often they put forward their ideas or answer questions too quickly before they have had time to formulate a well considered answer. Many pupils are beginning to develop a good understanding of the range of ways in which speech can be varied and the school provides good opportunities for pupils to talk, recite or perform in front of an audience.
6. By the time they are seven all pupils can read stories, information and text they see on the screen very competently. They can use several different strategies to decipher unknown words. They can re-tell stories they have read and can make plausible predictions of the outcome of an event in a storybook they have not finished. All pupils can add expression to their reading and higher attaining pupils have gained fluency. Throughout the school, pupils read regularly in school and at home and use their reading skills in other learning to great advantage. For example, in Year 2 all pupils, including those who learn more slowly were able to read without difficulty, mathematical problems involving real life situations such as shopping or calculating the number of people on a bus. They are taught from the youngest classes onwards

how to identify the author, publisher and illustrator of a book.

7. The teaching of writing is a particular strength of the school so that by the time they are seven pupils are achieving standards well above average. In every class there is effective teaching based on careful assessments of pupils' skills, and a good understanding of how to develop confidence in writing. This results in pupils enjoying writing and making consistent progress in spelling, in using punctuation, in constructing sentences and in organising their ideas and thoughts into stories and accounts. Seven-year-old pupils write confidently and for their own purposes as well as responding well to tasks such as planning a piece of writing or looking at it to edit mistakes or make improvements. In descriptive writing, they have begun to make good use of adjectives and strategies such as making an effect by choosing words which begin with the same letter, as this example shows: "Everything was quiet except for the babbling of the big brown boats tossing from side to side." The school has begun to concentrate on methods of teaching a joined hand from the start of children's education. At the moment, pupils in Year 2 form most letters correctly and most write neatly, but on occasions mistakes creep in such as the inclusion of a capital letter in the middle of a word. The standard of handwriting is satisfactory but does not match the high standard of the rest of their work in English.
8. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have good opportunities to learn about science through practical activities that develop their understanding of how to ask questions, and follow them up with an investigation to test their ideas. By the time they are seven they can use knowledge from previous learning in their investigations. For example, understanding that some materials are magnetic and some are not, they are able to carry out tests to discover if different magnets have the same degree of strength. Building on previous knowledge they learn to use words such as 'repel' and 'attract' with accuracy. A well-planned curriculum has resulted in pupils making good progress throughout the school.
9. Computers are used in all classes to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology as they work in other subjects. This has resulted in seven-year-old pupils achieving standards above that usually expected for their age. They have begun to use e-mail to correspond with each other and with a group of pen pals they have recently acquired in another school. They have good all round knowledge of many of the benefits of working with computers and their use in the outside world.
10. In religious education, art and design, music and geography pupils achieve standards above national expectations. The amount, quality and range of work in these subjects are frequently better than is generally expected. For example, in religious education they can describe in good detail the special festivals pertaining to Christianity and those of the Hindu and Islamic faith as well. In art and design they use a range of media to produce pictures with sensitivity to colour and form well beyond that expected for their age. In design and technology and history the pupils achieve standards similar to expectations for seven-year-olds and these subjects contribute well to pupils' enjoyment in learning. No judgement was made on the attainment of pupils by the age of seven in physical education because insufficient work could be seen during the inspection. Pupils in the younger classes are making good progress and provision is good.
11. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those who are well above the attainment of others, learn very effectively. There is no difference in the progress made by boys or girls. Overall the achievement of pupils is very good, from

the time they start in the school to the time they leave in Year 2.

12. The school has worked hard at improving the quality of teaching and planning so that standards since the previous inspection have either been improved or been maintained. In English, mathematics, information and communication technology and geography attainment has improved. In science, art and design, music and religious education good standards have been maintained, and in design and technology and history satisfactory standards have been maintained. Standards in listening have improved from unsatisfactory to satisfactory. Taking all the subjects into consideration there has been very good improvement since the previous inspection.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. In the Early Years class children are happy and behave well. Staff take great care to plan activities and the environment so as to help those children new to school settle quickly. At the time of the inspection some had only been in school a few weeks. They had settled very well; they were happy to play with others and most confidently tried out the activities offered to them. Children in the reception class are helpful to each other and share learning and play equipment well because very good relationships are established by adults. During whole class teaching times some children find it difficult to listen attentively to the contributions others make. They are still learning to share adults' time and attention.
14. In the infant classes, pupils' attitudes to school are good. Nearly all parents state that their children like school and that they talk very positively about their learning and their teachers. Pupils are interested in school activities; sometimes their enthusiasm is very apparent, for instance in a mathematics lesson when nearly every hand was up to answer in a quick fire mental arithmetic session. They know what is expected of them and generally respond very well. On occasions, in whole class teaching sessions, a few pupils are in the habit of calling out when the teacher is talking and sometimes pupils answer out of turn when others have been asked to speak, calling out so that another is not heard. Most teachers have good strategies to deter this but on occasions these are not successful. The pupils that do this are not intending to be rude but they have not fully developed the understanding of the need to listen rather than make a contribution. The majority of pupils listen to their teachers very respectfully.
15. Pupils' behaviour is good. They move around the school in an orderly fashion with the minimum of supervision. They clearly respect their school and respond to the very attractive environment by taking care of resources and by storing their own belongings tidily. During assemblies pupils enter the hall quietly, most sit sensibly, and clearly they all enjoy this time they spend together as a whole school. This was most noticeable on the day the vicar led assembly when all pupils joined in the singing with enthusiasm and were welcoming to a visitor. At lunchtimes boys and girls sit together. They chat sociably and eat their lunch sensibly. Behaviour on the playground is good. They are inventive with their games and friendly towards each other. There have been no exclusions in the past two years.
16. Pupils are welcoming to visiting adults and show that they understand the need to be courteous, for instance saying "thank you" to the adult who visits school to play the piano for lessons and assemblies. Pupils do not push to get to the front when lining up. Many have begun to develop courteous manners and thoughtfulness to others, for instance allowing another to have a turn in a game or to share equipment.

17. Pupils respond well to those opportunities that are provided for them to assume responsibilities. They take registers to the office and carry out duties such as tidying away responsibly. In lessons such as design and technology, pupils are asked to give their opinions and to make suggestions about the school environment. For instance, they have been involved in deciding on improvements to the outside environment. Teachers inform pupils of the objectives for lessons and involve them in assessing whether these objectives have been achieved. However, in other ways opportunities for them to take responsibility, and show initiative are missed. Pupils do not have many opportunities to select resources for different activities and on occasions support by the teacher or classroom assistant comes too quickly, before they have the opportunity to puzzle out for themselves how to proceed. The school has good plans to involve pupils in Year 2 in a form of school council appropriate for pupils at the infant stage. This will build on the already good provision for learning about citizenship which is offered in class discussion times.
18. Attendance is very good and has improved further on the good attendance noted at the time of the last inspection. In comparison with the national picture attendance is well above average. Pupils enjoy school and are reluctant to be absent even when unwell. There is no unauthorised absence. At the start of the school day pupils arrive on time. On the very few occasions when this is not possible parents are very conscientious in 'phoning the school to inform them of the difficulty.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

19. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection, particularly in the fact that no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In 84 per cent of lessons the teaching was good or better, with the percentage of very good or excellent being 32 per cent. There were two excellent lessons. Sixteen per cent of lessons was satisfactory. The school has developed good practice throughout the school by identifying how pupils best learn in each subject through well thought out policies and curriculum planning. Teachers have used the guidance in the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy very well and these too have contributed to the strengths in teaching throughout the school.
20. In the reception and Early Years class, the overall quality of teaching is good. Children's interest and readiness to learn are very well assessed. Teachers have good understanding of how young children learn through play and talk and there is often a buzz of excitement in these classes. In the Early Years class, a large fluffy bear was the focus of children's talk for several days as they prepared to celebrate his birthday. They made birthday cards, told their parents that it was soon to be the bear's birthday, counted off the days and thought about what to do for his party. In the reception class, children's interest is captured by a friendly fairy by the name of "Sparkle" who writes them tiny letters to which they respond in their own time, working independently in the writing area. The very good relationships fostered in both classes by the teachers and all adult staff ensure that when necessary children can be challenged to try hard at their work without fear of undermining their self-esteem. Teachers have good technical knowledge of how to teach the basic skills in mathematics, language and literacy. A significant strength is that teachers and learning support staff work very well together and this makes a significant contribution to children's achievements.
21. In the Foundation Stage, two aspects for improvement which are minor in comparison to the many strengths; are as follows:-

- When teaching letter formation, the national guidance is followed, but teachers do not provide children with enough opportunities to practice and improve their skills. Teachers do not assess children's achievements against each step identified in the guidance so as to provide more support or move on to the next stage whichever is appropriate.
  - Some areas in the classroom and class routines are not always developed fully to support independent learning. For example, there is a system to let children know how many are allowed at each activity, but it does not make the most of opportunities to develop learning in mathematics; routines at snack time, clearing away time and the times teachers stop children to gain attention do not always improve attainment in personal and social skills, particularly as there are some differences between the two classes.
22. In the infant classes the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. Teachers are very secure in their knowledge both of how to develop the use of letter sounds to support spelling and reading and of how to increase pupils' skill in mental calculation. A range of strategies are used so as to support those who learn better through one sense rather than another. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 2 the teacher taught quick mental calculation of addition and subtraction by taking a step forward for addition and a step backwards for subtraction. This simple strategy supported the learning of those who learn by looking rather than listening and linked with learning through action.
23. Generally, throughout the school teachers plan lessons very effectively. Objectives for tasks are identified at the start and are based on what pupils have learned previously. The content and organisation of lessons for literacy and numeracy are effectively based on the National Strategies. In both subjects, teachers use methods recommended in the strategies, and plan work that provides a good balance of learning within both subjects. For example, teaching time is spent equally on promoting learning in reading and writing in English, and in mathematics there is appropriate time spent on improving pupils' skills in mental calculations and in acquiring new mathematical concepts. Teachers are particularly knowledgeable in developing pupils' understanding of how to write a sentence and then to put their sentences into a logical sequence. Spelling is also taught well, and as a result pupils are keen writers and make good progress from one year to the next. Teachers' planning also identifies where learning overlaps from one subject to another and this helps develop skills further. A good example of this was in a Year 1 geography lesson when the task to move a programmable robot by using directional instructions developed pupils' understanding of the work they were doing on drawing a plan of the classroom. Well planned lessons, which ensure that all pupils succeed at the tasks they are given and that in addition they are challenged to try their best, result in good learning in which pupils feel satisfaction in their own achievements.
24. Lessons are nearly always interesting to pupils and frequently surprise or delight. In an excellent history lesson, the teacher had buried a 'time capsule' from the sixties in the school garden. Convinced that they were digging up historical evidence, pupils watched with excitement and anticipation as the teacher's spade struck a hard object underneath the garden soil. This carefully constructed subterfuge captured their interest completely. It laid very good foundations for them to understand one of the ways that historical evidence is acquired. Another good example of an unexpected strategy providing good learning was in a mathematics lesson which built on the learning of the previous day. In the first lesson pupils had struggled hard to decide which operation to choose, addition, subtraction, multiplication or division to solve

written problems. All made good progress in this lesson, including those who learn more slowly. The following day the pupils really enjoyed the task of making up their own problems firstly for others in the class to solve and then for them to take home for their parents to solve – an intriguing reversal on the usual homework.

25. At the start of lessons, teachers make clear what they expect pupils to learn and this helps them develop an awareness of their own achievements. Sometimes this takes the form of a short discussion, at other times objectives are displayed and mentioned as the introductory part of the lesson proceeds. In the best lessons, these objectives are referred to again as appropriate during the lesson. Occasionally they are not referred to sufficiently, but in nearly every lesson there is a review at the end when all gather round the teacher for the close to assess whether their objectives have been achieved. The school has developed a good means of recording pupils' progress, which clearly indicates to parents how well pupils have achieved and what they need to do to improve further. The school has a policy of sharing with pupils their records of assessment to encourage and motivate them. Good assessments on a daily basis and at the end of pieces of work are used by teachers to help them decide on what to plan next and the level of work for different groups of pupils. Marking is used well in this process and whilst encouraging pupils it also helps them to see how they can improve.
26. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and often very good. Their needs are identified at an early stage. Careful plans indicate how they can best be supported to make specific gains in their learning. Planning for pupils who learn more slowly and those with special educational needs is integrated very well into the school's overall planning so that the most efficient use can be made of the time of learning support assistants or extra teaching staff such as the time given by the headteacher. Each week support is planned for a group of higher attaining pupils so that those who learn more slowly can be helped in a smaller class group with those of average attainment. Support assistants employed by the school and those who are employed by the Local Education Authority know the pupils well and are skilful in providing not only support and encouragement but allowing pupils to try hard for themselves as far as possible.
27. Homework is organised very well. In the reception class children take their books and words to learn home every night. Parents are very supportive and nearly all books are returned to school the following day. Many parents make perceptive comments showing that they have a good understanding of how to help their child learn to read. In Year 1 and 2 parents are aware of the times when homework is due and they are able to make a useful contribution to the learning that takes place in class.
28. In Years 1 and 2, there were just a few lessons which had elements for improvement. On occasions these were not typical of the usual teaching; for example, in one lesson pupils sat for far too long listening to the teachers' explanations and instructions and as a result became inattentive and restless. This was clearly not the usual organisation or method of working in that class. In a few lessons, the quality of teaching was slightly undermined because a number of pupils called out of turn, or drew attention to themselves by speaking when the teacher or another pupil was speaking. In these lessons the quality of teaching was then judged to be only satisfactory, or was graded good rather than very good, despite the good standard of work achieved by the majority of pupils. The following is identified as an area for improvement:-
  - teachers' expectations that all pupils will listen attentively by clearly exercising

authority; sometimes the teacher asked a pupil who was calling out to be quiet or gave a “shsh” but then carried on with the activity or their explanations when clearly the pupil’s attention had not improved or they continued to talk.

## **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

29. The school provides a very good range of opportunities for learning and ensures a consistent development of pupils’ skills and knowledge. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught together with religious education, personal, social and health education. Planning is very good. There are recent, relevant policies for all subjects that are well supported by comprehensive medium and short-term plans. A good range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum and the school makes good provision for the personal, social and health education of all pupils. It has very good links with local schools and with the wider community. All pupils have equal access to the full curriculum and there is good provision for those pupils with special educational needs.
30. In the Early Years and reception classes, teachers are planning well to reflect the requirements of the newly introduced national guidance for children of this age, the Foundation Stage. All areas of learning are included in teachers’ weekly planning guides and appropriate attention is given to the literacy and numeracy strategies for this age group, especially towards the end of the reception year so as to provide a link to their work in Year 1.
31. Throughout the school, the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been successfully implemented. These strategies provide a framework for long-term planning and the associated schemes of work identify the progression of skills, together with the development of knowledge and understanding as pupils’ progress through the school. The previous inspection report recommended that the role of the subject managers should be developed. Time is now allocated for the managers to monitor teaching and learning within their subject. There are strong curriculum links to provide opportunities for the development of skills through a topic approach.
32. The establishment of policies and schemes of work has resulted in an improvement in planning particularly long and medium-term. Marking and assessment of pupils’ work is consistent and good use is made of the Records of Achievement. Most plans include provision for all ability levels. Those pupils with either special educational needs or for those of higher ability are identified and provision is made to match the curriculum more closely to their particular needs.
33. The school includes all its pupils in the activities it offers. Girls and boys have equal access to the full curriculum, including extra-curricular activities. The Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs is followed and the provision for these pupils is very good. Support for pupils with special educational needs is usually within the classroom situation so that they are able to follow the same curriculum as the rest of their class. Some pupils are withdrawn for small group specialist teaching for the development of literacy skills according to their need. On occasions this small group tuition may be for the development of skills of more able pupils. The present provision for special educational needs pupils is effective in enabling them to make good progress towards achieving their targets. All special educational needs pupils have the same opportunities to take part in every aspect of school life. Individual education plans refer to specific targets for each pupil and these are regularly reviewed and revised accordingly.

34. There are several clubs for pupils to join, including mathematics, recorder group, football training and country dancing. There are several concerts held throughout the year, for example at Christmas and Easter and the pupils perform their concert for the local junior school pupils. Pupils sing each Christmas to the residents of the local old people's home. Artwork by the pupils is displayed in the local church, teachers' centre and county offices. Pupils are also encouraged to submit entries to the handwriting competitions organised by Tamworth Rotary club and a commercial pen manufacturer. Pupils are taken on visits at least annually to local places of interest, for example, Tamworth Castle, Cannock Chase to study animal habitat and to 'Conkers' in the National Forest and the National Trust property at Shugborough. There is a strong link with the local church and the vicar is a regular visitor to school. Representatives of the police and other services come into school to raise awareness of dangers and there is a safety in the home exhibition held at the local secondary school which pupils visit.
35. There are strong links with the local community and local schools and educational establishments. There are regular liaison meetings with Flax Hill Junior School and Larkhall Infant School. The pupils are beginning to establish links through electronic mail with Dales Infant school in Tamworth. The school also benefits from nursery nurses and child-care assistants in training at the local further education college and pupils from the local Secondary School also help in school. Parents and volunteers come into school and make a valuable contribution to the enrichment of the curriculum, particularly extending the pupils' knowledge of other cultures and customs. For example, a parent visits to talk about the Indian festival of Diwali. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Sex education and drugs awareness are woven into teaching in other subjects such as science and physical education.
36. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is good overall. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when provision was sound. The school's well defined policies help to ensure that all aspects of school life make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. The good relationships between adults and pupils are fundamental to pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development.
37. In many lessons, but in religious education and assemblies in particular, pupils are given the opportunity to develop insight into the values and beliefs of others and to think about their own feelings so as to relate better to the feelings of others. Pupils in Year 2, for example, identified what it was that made them experience different feelings such as 'happiness', 'anger' and 'fear'. One pupil writes "I am afraid of the dark when I am alone". Teachers help pupils talk about their thoughts and feelings and everyone's contribution is valued. Through enabling pupils to think about themselves teachers skilfully help them to consider others, as happened in an assembly on 'special things', when pupils were able to understand how something as simple as a shell could gain importance as a special object between two friends; thus laying the foundation for pupils to understand the special symbols of faith in different religions. Moments of prayer and reflection in assembly are recognised fully and pupils participate in a responsive manner. Teachers make good use of music, works of art, the natural environment and technology to develop children's natural sense of wonder.
38. The school's 'golden rules' and the expectation of teachers that pupils will treat each other with care and consideration ensure that pupils quickly learn what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Although rewards and stickers are given out frequently and much appreciated by pupils, the majority of pupils behave well because they are

beginning to make their own decisions about the correct way to behave. Sanctions are rarely used. Moral awareness is developed through stories that promote values such as honesty and respect for the truth. A good example of this was in Year 2 when pupils had to write a letter as if they were Goldilocks apologising for the damage she had caused to the Bears' home. Assembly times are promoted well as a sociable occasion, particularly through the sharing of songs and music which pupils evidently enjoy. Assemblies proceed at a good pace and pupils enter the hall with the expectation that they will enjoy this time that they spend together. The school's invitation to the local vicar to lead assemblies regularly, provides a good opportunity for pupils to extend their welcome and friendship to a member of the local community. In lessons, pupils are expected to work in groups or pairs on numerous occasions, and to share equipment and resources. During discussion times teachers make good provision for all to participate and for others to learn to respect each other's opinions. Pupils have responsibilities for different tasks to help with the running of the classroom. The school has good plans to develop an initiative along the lines of a school council which would be appropriate to the infant age range.

39. Teachers encourage an appreciation of art, literature and music. Pupils are more knowledgeable than most of their age with regard to the role that artists, musicians and crafts people play in society. Dance and drama is well represented through the school productions that take place each term. There are many opportunities for pupils to improvise or take on roles within different subjects. Pupils are taught well about the cultural diversity of society through religious education. However, there are too few opportunities taken in other subjects to develop pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of our society. For instance, there are no examples of different scripts and languages in books and notices.
40. The school is aware of the need to prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse society. The school's ethos of including all in its provision lays a firm basis for ensuring that pupils have the right attitudes to living with people of different races and cultures from their own. However, the forthcoming legislation which will underpin this provision is not yet included in the school's policies.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. All staff work towards ensuring that children in the Early Years and reception classes and those in the infant classes feel happy and secure at school. Teachers, learning support staff and lunchtime staff know pupils very well and understand their needs. For example, a younger pupil whose usual eating pattern was to be very slow was allowed more time to eat his lunch whilst an adult kept him company. Appropriate records are kept and there is a careful oversight of pupils' personal development. The good relationships between adults and pupils ensure that, should pupils be upset or have a problem, they are happy to seek support or guidance from any member of staff.
42. Registers are completed correctly. The school encourages good attendance by motivating pupils to want to come to school. Procedures to check attendance are minimal because there is virtually no absence other than for good reason. The school requests parents' support in encouraging good attendance and seeks to persuade them not to take holidays during term time. Parents respond well to the request and support the school by ensuring that their child attends regularly and arrives on time.
43. The school has good procedures to manage and promote good behaviour and staff are generally consistent in their application of the school behaviour policy. The headteacher and staff are alert to all occasions when pupils can be encouraged by a reward 'sticker', which pupils value. The school's 'golden rules' are displayed around the school and referred to by staff. In each classroom there is a visual reminder for pupils about their behaviour that acts as a record on a day-to-day basis. This takes the form of a leafy tree with pupils' names placed amongst the branches if their behaviour is satisfactory; if their behaviour is less than satisfactory they move down the tree to the trunk and worse behaviour results in the name landing on the ground. Parents are involved in encouraging good behaviour. They reported how keen their children were to 'stay in the branches', and their appreciation of how well their children respond to this. The school's effective procedures have resulted in good behaviour. However, on a few occasions during lessons, one or two pupils call out of turn repeatedly and some inattention results. Teachers are not always firm enough in expecting better attention or applying the school's recommended sanctions.
44. There is a well-documented policy towards combating any behaviour which could lead to bullying and for dealing with incidents of bullying. Pupils are encouraged to address any concerns to an adult. Parents and pupils are confident that staff would deal with an incident of bullying effectively; no such incident could be remembered by parents or pupils. An appropriate child protection policy is in place. The headteacher is the designated co-ordinator and all staff are aware of procedures which reflect the guidelines recommended by the local Area Child Protection Committee.
45. Procedures for monitoring and promoting health and safety are good. A member of the governing body ensures that there is on-going assessment with regard to the school building and various annual health and safety checks are observed, for example all electrical equipment was checked a year ago. Before school visits are undertaken there is a risk assessment. Careful thought has been given to specific problems such as nut allergies or asthma and policies drawn up to cover care and attention should the school have to care for a child with the condition. First aid procedures are thorough with an appropriate number of staff trained in first aid, and first aid equipment readily accessible throughout the day. Subject policies refer to health and safety but do not give detailed guidance. In subjects such as physical education and design and technology this would be helpful.

46. The school uses assessment very well as an effective tool to further pupils' progress. The school has implemented the nationally required tests for children beginning their education in the reception year and these now form the start of a careful tracking of pupils' progress year-on-year. Evidence of how well pupils have achieved each statement relating to National Curriculum subjects is gathered carefully. For instance, there are simple tests of pupils' skills in reading, using letter sounds, writing and mental calculations; judgements of pupils' achievements at the end each lesson and the careful marking of work. Outcomes are recorded in the pupils' own Record of Achievement, which takes the form of National Curriculum statements with an indication of the standard achieved. This good record is shared with parents who can easily judge from them how well their child is progressing.
47. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is very thorough and there is good early identification and support. Targets are specific and enable work to be carefully matched to their needs. Teachers, support staff and voluntary helpers make good use of pupils' individual programmes of work. Pupils benefit from working alongside other pupils whenever possible, but occasionally they are withdrawn to other areas to enable them to pursue more specialist tuition. The school is well served by visiting specialists, including the psychology service and the school medical service who supply advice and support.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

48. The school has considerably improved relationships with parents since the last inspection. The response to the questionnaire, at 33.3 per cent, was good and all parents who responded are satisfied with the quality of education provided and the standards achieved by their children. They feel the quality of teaching is very good, that most pupils behave very well and that their children develop very positive attitudes to school that enable them to make good progress. Inspectors agree with these views.
49. All parents who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they are well informed how their child is getting on in the school. This is an improvement since previous inspection when parents expressed concern about lack of information about their children's progress. Similarly, a large number of parents feel that the school works closely with the parents. All parents responding to the questionnaire agree that the school is well led and managed. The school works hard at including parents as active partners in their children's learning.
50. The school is committed to working closely with parents. There are parents' evenings, curriculum evenings, introduction afternoons for new parents, and informal meetings between parents and teachers. There is a pleasing reception foyer, which welcomes visitors and parents and contains useful information about the school life. The pre-admission sessions focus on promoting the partnership between home and the school so that the new children settle in happily. There are regular newsletters regarding the diary dates, and other school events.
51. Ninety four per cent of the parents who responded to the questionnaire feel that the school provides the right amount of homework. The inspectors found that the homework given is appropriate to the pupils' ages and ability. A majority of parents support their children with homework. Younger children take their scrapbooks home, while the older pupils take a 'home-reading' diary and spelling books home. All parents are happy about the information received from the school and they feel comfortable in approaching the school with concerns about their children's progress.

52. Good links between parents and school contribute to pupils' positive attitudes to school. This is instrumental in ensuring good attendance and punctuality. Easy access to the class teachers and the headteacher for parents ensures prompt attention to suggestions and concerns. The annual reports to parents are very good and contain information on levels achieved in each subject, pupils' attitudes and progress. The school prospectus has been revised since the last inspection and provides easy to read information. The school is aware of certain statutory omissions from the annual report to parents, in order to rectify this at the next publication.
53. Most parents have signed the home-school agreement. Parents give their time generously for helping their children with homework and the community involvement for pupils' education at home and in the school is good.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

54. The headteacher's high expectations of staff and pupils is at the root of the success that the school is now achieving. Together with the deputy headteacher and those staff with management responsibilities, the headteacher has provided clear direction for the school's work. All staff, including non-teaching staff, are valued for the contribution they make to the school and in consequence there is a committed and efficient staff team who work well together for the benefit of the pupils.
55. The school's aims are understood by all staff. Policies clearly identify the need to consider all pupils whatever their abilities, background, ethnicity or gender and this underpins all areas of the school's work. The very good relationships throughout the school ensures that all pupils feel valued and are happy to come to school. Policies are considered by staff as useful working documents and are regularly monitored and evaluated. At the time of the previous inspection the school had not fully identified its aims or published them. The effectiveness of the school's published aims reflects the significant improvement that has been made since then. Similarly, there was criticism of the school's planning for development. There are now high quality procedures for developing school improvements. The School Development Plan is a particularly well thought out document. All staff are involved in identifying priorities and targets, and in evaluating how well these are being met as work proceeds. This has resulted in the school implementing new national initiatives such as the literacy and numeracy strategies very well.
56. The governing body are well organised to support the school in its work. Governors generally attend meetings regularly and contribute their time and expertise in the best interests of the school. They are knowledgeable about most legislation relating to schools, government requirements and recommendations. They are kept-up-to-date by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other staff with management responsibilities. For example, the headteacher gave a presentation to explain the methods of analysing the data available to schools so that governors can compare the performance of their school with that of other schools nationally and those of a similar intake. Governors make good efforts to ensure that all statutory requirements are met by the school, but they do not have a system in place to check on this in a systematic manner. The Annual Report to Parents omitted some information that the school is required to give parents.
57. Governors know the school well. Most governors visit the school frequently and have very good informal systems for learning about the work of the school. Reports from the headteacher and staff provide good information on curriculum development and the standards pupils achieve. This helps governors form a view of the school's

strengths and weaknesses so that they can make a useful contribution to the school's planning for development. Governors in the main take on this responsibility well, and this enables them to make good decisions in setting the targets for the headteacher. All staff have performance targets to meet which are very relevant for their own and the school's development. However, in some areas of school life, the good provision by the school has meant that governors have not felt the need to be involved and in consequence they do not always obtain a full appraisal of the school's work from first hand knowledge.

58. The quality of teaching and curriculum planning, together with the standards that pupils achieve is monitored and evaluated very well. The headteacher and the co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy watch teaching in each classroom in a very productive way. For example, with the literacy and numeracy lessons co-ordinators focus on the separate aspects of the lesson when monitoring, with a view to the whole staff identifying and developing good practice. Teachers are supportive of each other and committed to improvement and so can make suggestions to colleagues without fear of offence and this means that good practice is shared effectively. The school analyses data from the national tests and its own assessments of pupils very well to identify any weaknesses in provision. Because of this good identification and subsequent actions, the school has significantly improved the pupils' achievements in numeracy and in writing. The English co-ordinator has developed very good procedures throughout the school to improve the teaching of writing and in consequence has addressed an area of weakness identified nationally, and this is much to the credit of the school. Currently the school is looking to develop pupils' handwriting by introducing a joined hand when children start school. Whilst an action plan is in place it is not fully effective; it has not sufficiently taken into account the national planning for children in the Foundation Stage. This was introduced in the autumn term, together with the new National Curriculum for pupils in the infant classes. The school has successfully introduced this new planning for both age groups. Understandably, because of the short time involved, it has not identified the links between the two planning documents with regard to handwriting.
59. The governors plan well to use the school's finances to the best advantage with regard to staffing. They have identified the importance of maintaining a generous number of support staff in the budget proposals so that pupils can be taught in groups smaller than a full class. The headteacher works with classes or groups of pupils for a significant amount of time each week, and this contributes significantly to the level of staffing. As a consequence, the number of both teaching and support staff is greater than in most infant schools. Throughout the school training is well directed both for teaching and non-teaching staff. Good delegation has ensured that subjects are led by co-ordinators who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subject, or aspect of management, and as a result lead their subject well. The headteacher co-ordinates the provision for pupils with special educational needs. A proper amount of time is set aside for this work and there is very good provision. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage has not taught in this age range for a great length of time, but has developed a good knowledge of the needs of young children and great enthusiasm for the teaching methods recommended nationally for this age. Despite some inexperience, she provides good leadership for a committed staff in the Early Years and reception classes.
60. The school has not had the need to consider the induction of new staff recently, as it is over three years since a member of staff joined the school. Nevertheless, there are good procedures in place to support new staff or to provide for the training of new teachers. The appraisal of teachers is thorough and procedures for performance

management are good. There has been careful consideration of teachers' individual targets. They make a good contribution to the development of teachers' individual practice and the improvement of the school's provision as a whole.

61. Office procedures are efficient and carried out well so as to provide good support for teaching staff. Day-to-day management and oversight of financial transactions provide well for the overall control of the school's financial planning. The finance committee meets half-termly to monitor spending and check whether their plans are on track. Financial planning is well linked to school development planning. Care is taken to ensure that the monies from grants are spent as specified. The most recent auditor's report for the school contained some minor recommendations, all of which have been addressed. The school has surplus money at the end of the each year above the amount usually expected but the governors are prudently exercising caution in spending as the school roll has declined slightly over recent years. The finance committee has a good understanding of how to secure best value for their spending. This understanding is not only applied to quotations from suppliers but also to teaching and standards. They consider parents' views on the value of the school's provision both informally and through formal methods such as sending out questionnaires, which are then analysed.
62. The school's accommodation is very well maintained. It is enhanced by extremely attractive displays of high quality work that contribute to pupils' learning, self-esteem and desire to work hard. There is more than ample classroom space and the school makes good use of this in the main. The organisation of the attractive library is an improvement on the situation at the time of the previous inspection when the library was not well organised. Currently the school is planning to develop a room for design and technology and art and design and for the storing of resources for other subjects such as history and religious education. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good in some respects but the reception class is small for the number of children in the summer term. Although the Early Years class and reception class join together for some activities, the teaching space could be further developed by a greater sharing of some areas. For example, both classes have a wet play area and a mathematics area. In the reception class this causes some pressure on the amount of space available. Resources, space and teachers' time could be maximised if these areas were shared.
63. Resources are generally good for most subject areas. The school's small garden area is enclosed within the school building and teachers use this very well in several areas of the curriculum for both the Foundation Stage and infant classes. The school has plans for the purchase of wheeled vehicles for use in the Foundation Stage but no outside storage as yet for these. There are also plans to enhance the playground to develop and stimulate creative play. The school has few historical artefacts and books for developing pupils' learning about everyday life in the past. The school has some attractive and up-to-date reading materials for use in the literacy lesson but some of the original reading schemes date back over thirty years and in consequence do not always reflect modern day life. There are also too few examples of different scripts and languages in books or posters to help pupils understand the diversity of people and languages in our society.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

65. In order to maintain standards of attainment and to continue making improvements

the headteacher, governors and staff should:-

- 1) seek ways to improve the attention of those pupils who find listening to others difficult by:
  - a) ensuring that all teachers expect pupils to be good listeners;
  - b) improving strategies from the Foundation Stage upwards to develop pupils' attainment in listening. \*  
(paragraph references: 5,14, 28, 70, 95, 96, 103)

In addition to the key issue above, the following minor weaknesses should be considered by the governors for inclusion in the action plan:

- the teaching of letter formation in the Foundation Stage;  
(paragraph references: 21, 58, 75)
- provision for the development of awareness of other cultures and races;  
(paragraph references: 39, 63, 116, 137, 141)
- the range of artefacts and books for learning in history.  
(paragraph references: 63, 132)

\*This is already identified in the school's own planning for development.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 32 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 15 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 6         | 25        | 53   | 16           | 0              | 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)      | -       | 120     |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | -       | 9       |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

|   | Nursery | YR – Y2 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | -       | 1       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | -       | 11      |

#### English as an additional language

|   | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 2            |

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

|  | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 4            |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 5            |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 3.3 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.0 |
| 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

|  |      |      |       |       |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|  | 2000 | 19   | 21    | 40    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 19      | 18      | 18          |
|   | Girls    | 19      | 19      | 19          |
|   | Total    | 38      | 37      | 37          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 95 (94) | 93 (92) | 93 (94)     |
|   | National | 83 (82) | 84 (83) | 90 (87)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 19      | 18          | 18      |
|   | Girls    | 19      | 19          | 19      |
|   | Total    | 38      | 37          | 37      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 95 (92) | 93 (94)     | 93 (94) |
|   | National | 84 (82) | 88 (86)     | 88 (87) |

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      |              |
| Black – African heritage        |              |
| Black – other                   |              |
| Indian                          |              |
| Pakistani                       | 2            |
| Bangladeshi                     |              |
| Chinese                         |              |
| White                           | 64           |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 2            |

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

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

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 6  |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 21 |
| Average class size                       | 21 |

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 7   |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 122 |

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | - |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | - |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Total number of education support staff | - |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | - |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | - |
|--------------------------------|---|

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| Financial year | 1999/00 |
|----------------|---------|

|  | £       |
|--|---------|
| Total income                               | 233,034 |
| Total expenditure                          | 220,734 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 1,954   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 28,530  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 40,830  |

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 105 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 39  |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 85             | 13            | 3                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 79             | 18            | 3                | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 72             | 26            | 0                | 0                 | 3          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 62             | 33            | 0                | 0                 | 5          |
| The teaching is good.  | 87             | 13            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 87             | 13            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 87             | 13            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 85             | 15            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 77             | 21            | 3                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 82             | 18            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 74             | 26            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 41             | 36            | 5                | 3                 | 15         |

## **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**

66. Children are admitted to the school the term after their fourth birthday. In the spring or summer term children attend part-time in the Early Years class. In the autumn children join the reception class and attend part-time for half a term. On entry to the school the children's attainment is average. The reception and Early Years classes are situated side by side and when necessary children move between the two areas.
67. The school has introduced the new national guidance for children up to the end of the reception year and planning uses the national guidance well in most respects. Teaching is good overall and has many elements which are very good. Teachers and learning support assistants work together very well as an effective team. Very good relationships are established throughout the two classes. There is particularly good support and provision for children with special educational needs. There is not always enough challenge to pupils' learning planned through their independent play but there is very effective planning to encourage independent writing. Teachers' planning appropriately starts with their knowledge of children's attainment provided by the initial assessments made when children start school. Good provision is made to plan from the National Curriculum for those children of higher attainment who are ready for work from this stage. Children make good progress in both the Early Years and reception classes so that by the time they are five they have achieved the goals for their age and many have exceeded them.
68. Most children have attended local playgroups or nurseries. There are sensible arrangements for children to visit before admission and there is very good communication between parents and school. The home/school reading diaries are regularly maintained by both school and parents. Parents are kept very well informed about their child's progress and are included in class activities on numerous occasions.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

69. By the age of five at the end of the reception year, the majority of children's attainment is at least average and there are a few whose attainment is higher. Their progress has been good because teaching in both classes is good. In the Early Years the majority of children are confident to use areas of the room on their own and to decide what they would like to do. Nearly all are keen to please adults and are friendly towards other children. However, a good number of children find it difficult to give attention to others or to take turns. Teachers are aware of children's needs and assess their level of maturity very well. Planning provides good opportunities to develop children's sense of self as a member of a group, for instance when encouraging children to take turns to say what they like about another child as they sit round in a circle. The classroom environment offers some good opportunities for children to operate independently and so learn to negotiate with others, particularly the classroom 'café' area which is well stocked with realistic burgers, chips and other foods. However, the organisation of some areas miss opportunities to help children learn independently about negotiating and listening to each other.
70. In the reception class teaching in this aspect is good, particularly when it is the focus of the lesson, for instance in class discussion time when children sit round the teacher in a circle. In this lesson children are encouraged to think about another's

needs. For example, the unhappiness of a giant called 'Tiny' who has no friends. After receiving a giant-sized note from Tiny they try to suggest ways to help. Children respect their classroom and take good care of class resources, as the class teacher has good expectations that they will do so and children respond very well. They can manage their own personal hygiene well and dress and undress independently. However, as with the Early Years class some opportunities are missed through the organisation of the classroom and through the daily routines to develop pupils' skills at negotiating and listening to others. For example, the teacher's strategy for gaining attention when all are busy reinforces children's perception that a loud voice can be used on occasions. A method which would develop attention skills such as the raising of a hand would benefit those who find paying attention difficult. Earlier in the year the class made a large dragon for Chinese New Year, which was an effective way of developing children's thinking about different cultures and backgrounds from their own. The class teacher is particularly good at fostering good relationships and developing understanding of each others' similarities and differences, which helps children to achieve many of the learning goals.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

71. By the end of the reception year, children's attainment in speaking, reading and writing is above average. Their attainment in listening and in letter formation, is average. Children make good progress in learning to read and write because the teaching overall is good and on occasions very good. The teaching of letter formation has not focused sufficiently on the small steps which enable children to form letters which are the correct shape and flow in the right direction.
72. By the age of five, children are confident talkers and respond well to teachers' questions. Children listen to stories and to teachers' explanation well. The importance of children communicating their thoughts, feelings and ideas is planned for carefully by teachers in all activities. Some children do not find it easy to listen to their playmates but adults work hard to improve this skill. There is particularly good planning for children to use drama and role play, with an extensive range of dressing up clothes for them from which to choose and to stimulate their ideas. This has particularly benefited those children who lack confidence and are reluctant speakers.
73. All children enjoy books. They clearly have favourites, and enjoy both classroom areas that are set aside for reading activities. Teachers have good knowledge of how to teach letter sounds and to help children reproduce the correct sound. In a good lesson on recognising the letter "h" and making the sound of this letter the learning assistant taught the children to feel their breath on their hand as they reproduced the sound, an effective strategy to reinforce learning. Older children in the Early Years learned to recognise and use rhymes. They made good progress in building up their knowledge of rhyme as the teacher led them to try harder rhymes in a series of fun activities, so that by the end of the session a child could suggest "tree" to rhyme with "Hickory Dickory Dee" when the teacher changed the well known nonsense words of the nursery rhyme.
74. Children in the reception class know a great deal about books. They can look for the author, illustrator and even the publisher on the front or back cover of their favourite books. On one occasion the teacher was not sure who had published a particular book but was corrected by the children as they pointed to the well known symbol which was the publisher's logo. All children, including those of lower attainment, have made a good start at learning to recognise a range of words by sight. Those of highest attainment can read at a level generally expected by the end of Year 1. Those with special educational needs are taught well and make good progress in learning to

read. Good whole class teaching sessions capture children's interest and focus their attention on how sentences are constructed.

75. In both classes children are encouraged to write in the independent writing areas. They use these areas very well because the teachers have encouraged them to think of themselves as writers. A further encouragement is that teachers give them good reasons to write through linking their purpose for writing with activities in the class or someone in whom they are interested. For instance, in the Early Years class children were busy writing birthday cards to the bear whose birthday they were planning, whilst in the reception class they wanted to write to their fairy 'friend', Sparkle who frequently left them tiny letters. Teachers are skilful at helping children write using the letter sounds they know and many are beginning to look for words in simple word banks. Most children's attainment in spelling and writing independently is above that expected for this age. However with letter formation quite a significant number have difficulty in controlling the shape of letters, and do not use anti-clockwise movements well. Many form some letters correctly but have difficulty with others. Teachers show children the correct way to form letters, but have not given them enough activities to practise the basic shapes of letters separately from writing for meaning. Children's progress in letter formation has not been assessed against the 'stepping stones' in the national guidance. Teachers use joined writing when modelling how to write but many notices around the classrooms are in print and there are no easily seen examples of the children's own names in a joined hand, for example displayed name cards for them to take and copy every time they write their name.

#### **Mathematical development**

76. By the age of five, the children's attainment in this area is above average. Teaching is never less than good and is often very good. In both classrooms children have good opportunities to develop their skills in counting and using numbers; looking at shapes to develop an awareness of the difference between shapes and to explore properties such as which three dimensional shapes roll and which have flat sides. Through stories such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk' children's understanding of size and measurements are promoted. In the reception class, for instance children had helped to make a giant beanstalk which went from the floor of the class to the ceiling. They compared size when talking about the very small writing on the letters from their fairy to the huge letters on the note from the giant. In the Early Years class a good lesson on pattern developed children's awareness of mathematical concepts within the natural and man-made environment when a group of children looked for a repeating pattern in the brick wall of the school.
77. In both classes teachers use rhymes to good effect so that by the time children are at the end of the reception year many know counting rhymes by heart. Teachers use these well to lay the foundations for addition and subtraction. Teachers assess children's understanding of mathematical concepts very well and work is provided to match children's level of attainment. In a good lesson on addition all children joined in and paid attention because the activities were very short and there was no time for interest to wane. For instance, all children counted to 20, opportunities were given for higher attaining children to count in tens and then the challenge was quickly changed so that all could participate again. Good resources and support from teachers and assistants helps children to develop their use of mathematical language. By the end of the reception year nearly all children have exceeded the goals for their age in counting and in learning to add and subtract.

#### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

78. By the age of five children's attainment is above average. In both classes teaching is

good and uses the links with other areas of learning well to develop children's knowledge of the world around them. In the Early Years class a display of unusual objects, which attract attention because of the properties of their surface or their unusual shape develops children's curiosity and desire to ask questions. During a lesson in mathematics children learned to sort each other by hair colour or size, learning to look for criteria for sorting. In a physical development lesson, children learned that air was trapped under the parachute they were holding. The focus of the week in the Early Years class had been the preparation for the party for the bear's birthday. This led to a session on making sandwiches. The activity provided good opportunities for learning about planning for food preparation and using a knife correctly to spread butter or filling on the bread. Care was taken to ensure that hygiene was observed, but it was not emphasised enough, and consequently a number of children did not learn about the importance of this as much as they could have done.

79. In the reception class the children learned how to care for a garden area, in the school's small enclosed chequer-board garden space. Here children had been able to dig, weed, and clear away rubbish in the spring in preparation for planting flowers to make a garden for their fairy friend. These good activities built on their knowledge of the natural world, weather conditions and the change of seasons well. They used a range of equipment such as brooms, rakes and shovels competently. Children know how to switch on computers and to use command keys to perform simple functions. They can explain that they are using a mouse and that they need to 'click' to get the computer to respond. They have good knowledge of books that provide information about the world, and they can explain that some countries have different weather conditions and are far distant from their own.

#### **Physical Development**

80. By the end of the reception class children's attainment is above average. Teaching is very good. As yet there is no large play apparatus for children to use in the outdoor area designated for their use and children do not have the advantage of using wheeled vehicles. However, both types of equipment have been ordered by the school, although not yet delivered. Despite this, provision is good because teachers provide very good alternative opportunities. For example, in the Early Years class children enjoyed immensely a session in the hall when a parachute gave them the opportunity to learn how to hold on tightly. The activities all needed group effort and as a consequence children learned to use their strength and actions as a team. The unusual and stimulating activity of getting a parachute to rise from the ground developed their skills in a number of areas of learning, but particularly in physical development as it helped them see the effects of their own physical efforts.
81. In the reception class, children can control fast movements such as running very well and use the space available to them. At the start of a very good dance lesson in the hall all found a space away from others quickly and without intervention from an adult. They are aware of the different names for the parts of the body and can say that their hearts are beating faster after they have been exercising. They know that exercise is good for them. During the lesson children used a wide range of movements to express their feelings as they danced and, despite their excitement and enthusiasm, moved with safety amongst each other.

#### **Creative development**

82. By the end of reception year children's attainment is above average. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers are particularly successful in providing opportunities for children to use their imagination, and to explore using different senses and media.

Resources for role-play and improvising their own enactment of the stories that they know are very good.

83. In the Early Years class, a well-stocked 'fast food outlet' provides good opportunities for children to interact with each other, developing their imaginations and use of speech as they serve each other with chips, burgers and a choice of flavoured drinks. In both classes music, songs and rhymes are used to develop enjoyment in these activities and learning in English and mathematics. Teachers sing unaccompanied and this in turn develops children's awareness of melody and rhythm as they learn to listen to the sounds they make and to improve on them. In a very good dance lesson children matched the movements of their whole body, and in particular their arms, to the mood of different pieces of music. The teacher was particularly skilful in assembling a tape so that each section of music was ready for the children's interpretation. Her high expectation of their participation and willingness to improve was well judged.
84. From the start of their time in the Early Years class children are taught to investigate the mixing of colours when painting and the choices open to them through the various consistencies of paint. Children in this class have reproduced soft flowing strokes of blue and green paint to represent water. A development of this was seen in the reception class children's pictures when they looked at the water-lily series of paintings by Monet. They produced the effect of light on water in their pictures to a standard much above expectations for their age. When teachers have left the choice of colour and application of paint to them, children express their ideas confidently and often use techniques or ideas from previous lessons.
85. Teachers provide a wide range of activities in different media and children have good opportunities to investigate texture, colour and scales. For example, for the whole school display which was an extremely attractive representation of the witch's cottage in Hansel and Gretel, the reception class children wove coloured strips of crêpe paper through a wooden lattice. This provided an extension to their experience of weaving on a smaller scale using paper or wool.

## ENGLISH

86. The school's results in national tests in 2000 were well above average in reading and writing. They were well above average when compared with the performance of similar schools. Over a three year period the school improved its results in both reading and writing faster than the improvement nationally. The school helps those pupils with higher attainment to do well, as a significant number achieve above the expected level. Girls performed better than boys in reading and writing in 1999. The school considered the reasons for this and addressed the problem by identifying activities and stories that would particularly interest boys. The strategies they have used have proved successful in improving the performance of boys as seen in the 2000 results. The successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has contributed to the raising of standards. Pupils make very good progress over time.

### **Speaking and listening**

87. By the age of seven standards are above national expectations for most pupils in speaking and well above expectations for the higher attaining pupils. Standards in listening are not so high. The school has identified listening as an area for further development and has implemented strategies outlined in a 'Listening Policy'. During the introductory part of some lessons some pupils do not attend well to what the teacher is saying. Many are so enthusiastic and eager that they find it difficult to control their desire to contribute to the discussion, particularly if the teacher's explanation is prolonged. Pupils are able to listen to a story and say how they think how a story book character such as 'Arthur' would feel at not being sold, but left behind in the pet shop. Pupils can re-tell a story in the correct sequence and identify the main characters, the title and the author.
88. Most pupils speak confidently when responding to questions. They are encouraged to widen their vocabulary by seeking alternative words particularly in description, for example pupils offered the word 'nibbling' as an alternative to 'eating'.

### **Reading**

89. Throughout the school, pupils are taught well in whole class reading sessions, group and individual work so that by the time they seven they achieve standards well above average. Most pupils can read accurately and the higher attaining readers introduce expression and read with increasing fluency and understanding. Pupils in Year 1 have a good range of words that they recognise by sight and have a good understanding of the ways to use letter sounds to help start a word. By the time they are in Year 2, if they are unsure of a word, they are confident at breaking the word down into parts or at trying to understand the meaning of an unknown word from the context. Pupils read regularly at home which contributes to the good progress they make. There are good records kept in their home/school reading record books and parents and teachers communicate well with each other. A few of the school's own reading material is out-dated and does not provide good examples of present day life. Pupils have access to books in their school and class libraries, which are supplemented as required by loans from the County Library Service. The school library uses colour coding, arranged under the Dewey system to classify books. As a result, pupils have gained a good understanding of how books are catalogued in adult libraries.

## Writing

90. Throughout the school teachers have a very good understanding of how to encourage pupils to think of themselves as writers. Pupils are given good opportunities to write using the sounds they know to invent their own spellings. They also learn to spell a good number of familiar words accurately. As a result, they express their ideas confidently and by the age of seven achieve a standard well above average.
91. Pupils are given opportunities to write for a variety of purposes, including making lists, poems and letter writing. Teachers provide opportunities for factual writing but developing imaginative and creative writing is the school's strength. Older pupils understand the importance of the choice of words and can successfully include adjectives and alliteration in their writing. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed writing a description of 'the creepy castle'. They have begun to recognise the need to set the scene when beginning to write a story. Higher attaining pupils studied a range of words and phrases to bring to life two contrasting scenes, an exciting fairground and a frightening storm at sea. They were able to identify good vocabulary choices to capture the imagination of the reader and knew how to use short sentences to heighten the effect. For example, one pupil started his story about a storm at sea with: 'It was quiet. It started to rain. Black clouds started to cover like a black cat on a black blanket'.
92. Pupils are encouraged to spell correctly and are expected to learn spellings of words each week. These words may be specifically related to the current topic. By the time pupils are seven they are familiar with word banks and dictionaries. They use capital letters and full stops to correctly demarcate sentences. Pupils who learn more slowly, write in sentences but with support from their teacher or support staff. Pupils' attainment in handwriting and the presentation of their work is satisfactory but not as high as their standard in other aspects of writing. Most pupils form letters correctly but there are occasions when they use capital letters inappropriately, for example in the middle of words, and letter shape is sometimes weak. Pupils join one or two letters correctly during handwriting lessons but not many pupils are familiar enough with joining to use it at other times.
93. Pupils with special educational needs learn well and make good progress both within the classroom and on the occasions when they are withdrawn for more specialist support. The adults who provide additional support liaise closely with the class teacher to ensure the pupils are following similar work to the rest of the class but matched to their prior attainment.
94. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Lessons are well planned and take into account the needs of all pupils. They provide appropriate challenge for all pupils, including those who learn more quickly. Teachers have a good understanding and knowledge of the subject and this enables them to challenge and interest pupils by good questioning. The good relationship between pupils and teachers enables pupils to feel secure and respond well to teachers in the whole class discussion times. Pupils are enthusiastic learners, keen to contribute, make suggestions, and apply previously learnt knowledge to their work.
95. All lessons follow the suggested format of the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers maintain the structure of the literacy hour but have developed it to suit the needs of the pupils and their learning. Most teachers use a range of different activities to stimulate interest and maintain concentration. Occasionally lessons are not timed well and in consequence pupils spend too long listening to the class teacher and not enough time practising and developing their skills. Teachers do not always vary the

kind of questions that they ask so that pupils need to listen carefully. Teachers use assessment well to help pupils improve their work. Assessment during lessons is mainly informal, through observation and discussion. Work is marked frequently. Individual targets are written in workbooks and these help pupils to understand how well they are achieving. Teachers' written comments give praise, suggest ways for improvement and encourage. Teachers use computers well to develop pupils' interest in reading and writing both in English lessons and during other lessons. Teachers and support staff work well together and support staff make a good contribution to the learning of the groups of pupils with whom they work.

96. When managing pupils' behaviour teachers successfully use praise and their good relationship with the pupils to indicate their high expectations of good behaviour. However, on occasions there is a low level of disturbance created by a few that is sufficient to disturb concentration.
97. Resources for teaching reading are satisfactory and most are in good condition. They are stored so that they are easily accessible for all. There are some very attractive new books which pupils enjoy immensely, but the main reading programmes are not recent publications and there are limited opportunities for pupils, particularly in the early stages of reading, to experience a wide range of reading material. The library has improved since the last inspection.
98. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has effectively managed the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy throughout the school. The monitoring of teaching and learning has contributed well to raising standards. There is a clear comprehensive policy in place and planning is of a very high standard. There are very good assessment procedures and these are used well to inform planning for future learning. Homework plays a good part in involving parents in their child's learning and contributing to pupils' progress. It is set at regular times and used so that pupils practise their reading, learn new sight vocabulary and spellings. Sometimes, it effectively provides interest to the current topic. For instance, pupils were asked to find out which television programmes parents/grandparents liked to watch as children.

## **MATHEMATICS**

99. The school's results in the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 were above average when compared to all schools nationally. They were average when compared with schools in similar circumstances. The standard of attainment of pupils in Year 2 is now well above average. The results of recent tests and assessments indicate that standards are high and have improved considerably on last year. This maintains the upward trend of the last four years and reflects the very good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. There has been very significant improvement since the previous inspection when results were similar to the national average.
100. Pupils start in Year 1 with a good understanding of numbers from 0 to 20 and many have begun to understand the processes of addition and subtraction. In all classes children learn at a good rate so that their achievement year-on-year is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Their needs are identified early. Support is well targeted to meet those needs and their progress towards their targets is very good when compared with their previous attainment.
101. By the end of Year 2, pupils of all levels of attainment have become confident to work

out calculations mentally to respond to the quick-fire oral challenge set by teachers during class sessions. Seven-year-olds of all levels of attainment can recognise odd and even numbers up to 100. Those of higher attainment can quickly spot odd and even numbers involving three digit numbers. All pupils know the multiplication facts for 2 and 10 and a good number know those for 5 and 3. This is an expectation for the end of Year 3. The many good strategies used by teachers, and particularly the emphasis on using challenging but fun tasks, has resulted in pupils' good understanding of mathematical concepts and their skill in using mental calculations. Because pupils have a good grasp of the concepts behind the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, they are able to solve simple word problems set in 'real life' contexts. In a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils worked with enthusiasm at this task because they had the confidence to have a go, even though some were challenged to their limits. The very good learning that took place was consolidated the following day when pupils were given the opportunity to write their own problems. A significant number of pupils in the class used four operations successfully to solve problems and to write their own.

102. In Year 1 pupils make rapid gains in their learning about the number system and clearly their good learning in this age group lays a firm foundation for their achievements in Year 2. For example, in Year 1 using a "Teddy Bear" number line all pupils count in 2s to 20 and then identify the odd numbers to 19. They understand and use doubling as a strategy for mental calculations and many are recognising and using number bonds to 10 to help them in their calculations. Teachers have provided good opportunities for children to understand that addition can be done in any order. In a good lesson in Year 1 children were able to use a number of strategies such as starting with the large number first to add three numbers to 20.
103. Teaching is never less than good and often very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge which has been reinforced by the co-ordinator who has a wealth of knowledge on the best methods and strategies to use. Teachers share the objectives of lessons with pupils and involve pupils during the lesson and at the end in assessing whether those objectives have been achieved. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together to promote understanding when pupils are experiencing difficulties. During whole class sessions, learning support assistants are used effectively to note how well pupils participate and whether their interest is fully engaged. This provides very useful information to help assess pupils' understanding and to plan for support if gaps in knowledge are evident. Good assessment and planning underpin the good teaching throughout the school. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work habits, and the majority of pupils do not allow the lapses of a few to interrupt their learning. Occasionally, however, during whole class teaching sessions, teachers do not manage well a few who are impatient for attention. On these occasions, teachers pause for a moment to ask a pupil to wait their turn and then carry on teaching before the pupil has controlled his or her impatience, with the result that they repeat the offence. The pupils concerned did not intend to be disruptive, on the contrary they were eager to respond to questions, and all lessons continued to be productive.
104. All classes have attractive displays that value the work children have done in other sessions and are particularly useful for reminding pupils of their learning about shape, space, measurement and symmetry and fractions. Resources are readily available and pupils are taught which resource they need to aid their calculations, and how to use it. Homework is used regularly to support learning in class and parents appreciate their involvement in their child's learning in this way.

105. The school has been particularly successful in developing links across subjects to further pupils' understanding of mathematics. For example in Year 2, pupils' work in geography on drawing maps extended their mathematical knowledge of position and direction because they drew a grid of a square on the map and labelled the rows and columns. There is good use of information and communication technology to develop knowledge and understanding of direction, space and shape and early number facts. However, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to sort data and to produce graphs.
106. The subject is very well led. The co-ordinator has a very clear overview of the school's provision through the well organised process of monitoring teaching, learning and pupils' achievements. A particularly well thought out procedure is that the co-ordinator talks to small groups of pupils from each year group, so as to assess their understanding at first-hand. Careful thought is given to support for those with special educational needs and for those of higher attainment. Although the school has not especially identified those who are gifted or talented, there is provision for the few in this category through the good identification and assessments in the school. The subject contributes very well to pupils' social development through the good group work within class and the very much enjoyed Mathematics Club. This is a voluntary activity at lunch-time but all pupils in Years 1 and 2 attend on a termly rotation basis.

## **SCIENCE**

107. In the Year 2000, teacher assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2, results were close to the national average. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level, level 3 was well above the average. Standards have improved because of a good focus on pupils learning through investigation, and currently pupils are achieving above national expectations. This level of attainment is similar to that seen at the previous inspection.
108. The rate of pupils' learning in lessons and their progress from year to year are good. Pupils in Year 1 can identify the difference between a push or a pull when using for instance, a pencil, ball, or rubber when they studied different forces. When they investigated how far a model car would go on different floor surfaces in the classroom, pupils made good progress in understanding how to compare the results of their findings. The investigation helped them develop the skills of predicating, observing and recording their findings. Pupils in a Year 2 lesson worked in groups and investigated the properties of magnets in a variety of investigations. One group were testing to find the strongest magnet, whilst another group were finding out about which metals were attracted to magnets and which were not. They collaborated well in their groups, sharing resources and ideas. By the end of Year 2, pupils are experienced at understanding what is required for a healthy lifestyle, can classify materials into either dull or shiny, and know that a bulb requires a complete circuit to light up.
109. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives, which are shared with pupils in lessons. Pupils are actively involved in their own learning in lessons, particularly in group investigations and when following a line of enquiry. This was seen in a Year 1 and 2 lesson when pupils were investigating whether an action was a 'push' or 'pull' in their work on forces. Teachers use questioning and intervention, to help pupils think like young scientists and find answers and

conclusions about everyday things in a scientific way. All lessons proceed at a good pace, and are planned and timed to include an appropriate introduction, together with a concluding session to discuss the findings from investigations. Resources are organised and used well. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, a variety of magnets, different materials and model cars were available so that investigation and discussion could take place as soon as possible. Pupils use equipment safely and with respect. They have due regard to the impact of their actions on others in lessons, and have a good rapport with their teachers. Occasionally when teachers are making explanations, there is some calling out by over-excited pupils, but this is dealt with quickly and sensitively by class teachers and the pupils are soon involved in listening with the rest of the class.

110. The curriculum for science in the school is of good quality. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' moral and social development by helping pupils learn to work together and to listen to each other. The development of scientific vocabulary such as 'repel, 'attract' and 'poles', and speaking and listening in lessons makes a significant contribution to the development of literacy in the school. Pupils use mathematics to support their learning in science. For example, pupils in Year 2, measured in centimetres to see how far their model cars had gone.
111. The co-ordinator, who is part-time, leads and manages the subject well. She monitors planning and has discussions with staff to ensure that work is planned to build on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding. The co-ordinator analyses teacher assessments each year to identify any weakness and has laid due emphasis on lessons having scientific enquiry and investigation included in them. There are well-established assessment procedures in place, and there is a portfolio of pupils' work to assist teachers when assessing pupils' work. There are adequate resources for the subject and these are stored centrally on trolleys in the resources room for easy access by teaching staff. Use is also made of visits to the local environment to enhance pupils' learning in science; for example, visits to the local nature reserve and the 'Sea Life Centre' in Birmingham.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

112. The standard of work in art and design is above national expectations. The school has maintained the good standards seen at the time of the previous inspection. By the age of seven pupils are proficient in the use of a range of media. They know and understand that by mixing different colours of paint they can create a new colour and appreciate the sensitivity needed to create a wash effect using water colour techniques. They are also competent in combining media, for example water colour

wash and pastels to achieve more interesting effects. Over time pupils develop the skills necessary to draw in detail from observation and can draw using pencils, pastels and charcoal. There are good observational drawings in pencil of fingers and toes in their sketch books.

113. Older pupils are able to create natural sculptures in the style of Andy Goldsworthy using small branches and bark. They use hammer and nails to join the different woods together. Pupils are working together to create a class wall hanging using a range of fabrics and textiles woven into plastic coated mesh. This work is closely linked to the present topic 'The Environment'. Pupils study a wide range of different artistic styles through the works of famous artists, such as Brueghel, Van Gogh, Monet and others.
114. Pupils are encouraged to work together in small groups and benefit from talking about their work and ideas with each other. They display an obvious enthusiasm and interest in art activities. All pupils have full access to the subject and support is given to those who may experience difficulties or when the activity requires closer supervision, for example when tools and equipment are being used.
115. The quality of learning and teaching is very good. Lessons are well planned and taught effectively. Lessons are well organised and there is an interesting range of stimulating activities including two and three-dimensional work. Teachers' expectations are high and this also contributes to the quality of the art work. Teachers' knowledge, understanding and interest in the subject are reflected in the quality of the work produced. The development of skills is carefully monitored and recorded.
116. The subject is well led. Art and design contributes greatly to the life of the school and the self-esteem of pupils through the very good quality of the work displayed in both communal areas of the school and individual classrooms. It also contributes well to pupils' cultural development through their good understanding of the role of famous artists in society. However, there is insufficient planning for the subject to contribute to pupils' awareness of cultural diversity. There is a detailed, comprehensive policy which has recently been reviewed. Resources are of good quality and support the requirements of the National Curriculum. The resources are being moved gradually to the newly established 'Creative Room' so that they will be more easily accessible and there will be a centralised area for all aspects of practical work. The previous report identified art as a strength of the school and this continues to be so.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

117. The standard of work of seven-year-olds meets national expectations, as was seen at the time of the previous inspection. Some aspects of pupils' work reflects elements of a higher level. Pupils achieve a good standard in generating ideas and recognising that designs must meet certain needs but they have not had sufficient opportunities to plan the order of their work, choose appropriate tools, equipment, materials and techniques to achieve beyond the level expected of this age. Pupils, including those with special education needs, make satisfactory progress through each year group. There is an interesting and varied programme of work which is linked well to pupils' work in other subjects. For instance, when studying the outside environment of the school in geography, the pupils in Year 2 have identified that the playground was 'bare' and in need of numerous improvements.
118. In Year 1 pupils use fine paint brushes well on fabric to replicate designs they had

produced in an earlier lesson using pastel crayons on paper. The design was intended for the front of a tee-shirt for a teddy bear. Pupils paid careful attention to the way they applied the paint and they enjoyed the task. The activity was very well matched to their interest and level of attainment but missed opportunities for them to develop other skills. For example, an adult stapled the two sides of the tee shirt together when pupils could have explored ways of joining the material themselves. During this lesson other pupils constructed models of their own choice, using large or small commercial construction kits. This activity provided an opportunity to consolidate pupils' knowledge of model making but was not challenging enough. They did not prepare a design themselves or follow the commercially produced designs that were available to them. Two other pupils, using plasticine to create models of a bird and a donkey worked well together and shared their ideas and equipment well.

119. Seven-year-old pupils have a good understanding that their designs have to meet certain needs. In a good lesson in Year 2, they constructed models of a waste-bin, aptly named the 'Garbage Gobblers' for the playground, using recycled materials, mainly cardboard boxes. For this activity they used scissors, glue and paint to a standard expected for their age, and were able to describe their designs and explain why they had made certain choices. The pupils followed their own designs well to produce these models. They worked hard and with interest because they had identified, in an earlier lesson, the need for waste-bins in the outside environment. The quality of the products finished by the pupils were of a standard expected by the end of Year 2.
120. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons are well planned and pupils work in small groups, often with adult support. The classrooms are well organised and the resources the pupils use are prepared in readiness for them. Pupils have some opportunities to select their own materials but sometimes help comes too quickly. At the end of lessons, pupils are given opportunities to evaluate their work, but on occasions this results in just a description of what they have done. An end of class session is not always the best time to get pupils to evaluate their work as naturally at this young age pupils want others to praise their efforts. Teachers and adults supporting in groups do not always focus on asking the questions that will help pupils learn the difficult job of evaluating ones' own efforts.
121. The subject is well managed. The development of pupils' acquisition of basic skills is carefully monitored and recorded. There is a comprehensive and clear policy which includes provision for pupils with special educational needs and ensuring equal access for all pupils. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported by class assistants when required. There is proper regard for the health and safety of pupils to ensure that they use tools and equipment in a safe environment. The subject contributes well to the life of the school through good displays and initiatives such as a visit by pupils in Year 2 to take part in a technology challenge during the summer term at the local junior school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

122. The standard of work for seven-year-olds at the end of Year 2 is above national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons and over time in the key subject knowledge and skills. This is an improvement on the standards identified in the previous report.
123. The work that pupils undertake in lessons is concerned with increasing their

awareness of the physical and human features around the school and Tamworth. They know that there are motorways and rail networks around the Tamworth area, which link it with other parts of the United Kingdom, and longer journeys can be taken on aeroplanes. Teachers develop pupils' understanding of maps, atlases and globes very well. As a result, pupils know and understand that their classrooms and an imaginary environment can be represented by a plan or map. Work displayed in a Year 1 and 2 classroom, where Year 2 pupils have used a simple key to identify the physical features of a town, forest and river on their maps is above the standard usually seen for this age. Year 1 pupils have made simple plans of their classroom demonstrating a good understanding of a plan being a 'bird's-eye-view'.

124. Pupils in a Year 2 have a good understanding of developing or changing the environment. They have made suggestions of how to improve their playground by listing what they would like to see there and what they would not. They are very involved in the project and consequently work with enthusiasm on the tasks related to their learning, such as making their own waste bin suitable for an outside environment. Pupils in all classes have learnt a great deal about the countries of the world by following the progress of a yachtsman in the BT 'Round the World' yacht race. The pupils in Year 1 have contributed to a display set out so as to emphasise the nature of the distances covered. This has improved the knowledge of all pupils with regard to the countries and continents around the world.
125. The teaching of geography makes a positive contribution pupils' moral, social and cultural development through the trips and work undertaken in lessons as the pupils move through the school.
126. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use well focused questioning and explanations to develop pupils' learning. In a reception and Year 1 lesson, the teacher involved pupils well by carefully explaining the objectives of the lesson and what she expected the pupils to learn. Pupils worked well on their task, which was to draw a plan of part of the classroom, and at the end of the lesson were able to report to others what they had learned. The relationships and management of pupils are generally good. However, despite this, on some occasions there is inattention or calling out by pupils. When this happens, the lesson is slowed as the teacher has to take time to gain attention from all. Support assistants make a good contribution to lessons. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, the teacher had planned numerous different activities some of which occasionally needed adult support. The teacher and class assistant worked very well together to give timely guidance to pupils, for instance to those making models of waste bins, or using a computer to design their model. Teachers display pupils' work well and this helps to promote interest in geography throughout the school.
127. The subject is well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. The policy and scheme reflect current practice and initiatives in the curriculum. The co-ordinator monitors planning each term and there are formal systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress over the academic year. Resources are adequate and are accessible to teachers and pupils.

## **HISTORY**

128. The standard of work, knowledge and understanding of seven-year-olds at the end of Year 2 meets national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. The standard of attainment is similar to that of the previous inspection.

129. Pupils in Year 1 begin to develop a sense of the passing of time through a day-by-day diary set out in the visual form of a time line. In this activity pupils learnt to use common words and phrases relating to time such as 'at first ' and 'after'. From studying how some everyday objects such as telephones have changed in recent times they have begun to build up their knowledge of changes that have taken place in the lives of ordinary people. In an excellent lesson, the teacher devised a very good subterfuge to develop pupils' thinking. A 'time capsule' had been buried in the school garden. Great interest and excitement accompanied the digging up of a tin box in which items relating to thirty years ago had been buried so that pupils could play the part of archaeologists. The pupils handled the things they found in the box with care, showing good understanding that these items were now possibly fragile through age. When looking at a book found in the capsule pupils were able to compare its format with the books with which they were familiar. One pupil suggested that if they looked carefully they might find a date marked on the book. By the end of the lesson all pupils had made suggestions about the children in a photograph found in the box whom, the pupils surmised, had decided to bury the box to tell future generations what their life was like. This contributed significantly to their understanding of the way the past is represented and how we learn about history from a range of different sources.
130. In Year 2, pupils had studied the life of our present Queen, and in particular learned about her coronation. They learned facts such as the whereabouts of the Queen when her father died, the symbols belonging to the coronation such as the orb and sceptre and some aspects of the ceremony. Their teachers had provided them with good opportunities to express their views and opinions, and so to begin to understand that much of what we know of history is other peoples' views and opinions. One pupil wrote that she did not think it was fair that princes get to be kings and princesses do not. A lower attaining pupil summed up his own view of the royal family when commenting that 'the royal family do a good job of fings'. Their knowledge of other significant personalities such as Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale is satisfactory, but they are only just beginning to be able to relate reasons for the actions of people in the past. For example, they knew that hospitals were dirty at the time of Florence Nightingale but could not give any reasons as to why this might have been so. They have begun to place events in their own lives in order and some major world events such as the invention of electricity into a longer time scale, but they do not have an understanding of periods of time and how these have specific terms and dates.

131. Insufficient lessons were observed to make a judgement on teaching. In the one history lesson seen, the teaching was excellent because the pupils were fully involved in a historical enquiry and their imaginations were roused. Pupils have good opportunities to write about their learning in history. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote some good factual accounts of their understanding of the coronation. However, teachers have not sufficiently focused on helping young pupils begin to develop an understanding of the passing of time by placing events and objects in order of their antiquity.
132. The subject has satisfactory leadership and the co-ordinator is a very good role model for teaching the subject. Planning is good and reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum but there is no identification of how skills can be developed from one year to the next. Artefacts are loaned from a variety of sources to help bring history to life. However, the school has not built up its own stock of artefacts and there are too few books and pictures to help develop pupils' historical understanding. The subject has not been the focus of school development for some time and is due for review in the coming year.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

133. The school has developed some exciting ways to develop pupils' understanding of information and communication technology and as a result the attainment of seven-year-olds is above national expectations for their age. This attainment is an improvement on standards at the time of the previous inspection when attainment was in line with national expectations. Computers are used in most subjects for numerous applications and this has resulted in all pupils, including those with special education needs, making good progress throughout the school.
134. In Year 1, pupils are familiar with the function keys on a programmable robot. They understand that the system has a memory which must be cleared before further instructions are entered. In a good session working in small groups with a learning assistant, pupils had little difficulty in entering several instructions to move the robot forward and to rotate it by 90 degrees for a quarter turn to left or right. The support assistant had to remind those with lower attainment about the commands for turning but those with higher attainment had remembered them from a previous lesson. Pupils work well together in pairs and discuss their ideas well. For instance, two pupils investigating the options open to them in a computer program designed to test their ability to solve problems, had to work hard, in discussion with each other, to find out how to get an on-screen robot to pick apples from a tree without knocking others down; the decision involved thinking about which instruction to enter first.
135. In Year 2, pupils have produced a range of work using information and communication technology to a good standard. They save their work on to a disk and retrieve it at a later date. Their understanding of how they can use information and communication technology in their work and how it is used outside of school is very good. For example, during an art and design lesson pupils knew that they could find out more about the artist whose work they were interested in by searching on the Internet for more information than they had in books or on CD-ROM. They have begun to use e-mail to correspond with pen pals in another school. Their interest in this is high and they enjoy their learning because they are sharing and exchanging information with children who are the same age as themselves. They send e-mails to ask questions like "What is your teacher's name? What is your uniform like?" In one lesson pupils sent an e-mail from their class to another class in the school and discovered that their

message arrived on the computer screen before they could deliver the same message by walking down the corridor. This investigation gave pupils a very good understanding of the speed of communication through technology.

136. Throughout the school teaching is good. Good planning ensures that work is integrated very well into the topics and other subjects that pupils are studying. The school's involvement with a yachtsman participating in the BT Round-the-World yacht race has provided a wonderful boost to both pupils' and teachers' interest in information and communication technology. To receive a message from a small boat in the middle of the Pacific Ocean stretches the understanding and imagination of pupils. The use of computers is well organised to ensure that all have an equal opportunity in their use and teachers are aware that gaining competency in computers provides well for pupils with special educational needs and raises their self-esteem. Support assistants are knowledgeable and are used well to support the learning of small groups. Teachers have not yet undertaken the nationally expected training for information and communication technology but their knowledge and skills are good, although better in some areas than others. For instance, work on classifying information and organising it into a table has not been developed as much as work in other strands of the subject.
137. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and promotes the subject well, providing good guidance to colleagues. Planning for pupils to learn all aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study is good and integrated well into their learning in other subjects so that they gain experience and skills in a progressive manner. The policy covers all considerations of equal opportunities and provision for the subject, except that specific guidance on health and safety, and ways in which the subject can contribute to pupils' awareness of the diversity of society are not identified. The school's resources are good and there is sensible planning to improve the school's stock of hardware.

## MUSIC

138. Pupils at the end of Year 2 achieve a standard in music above that generally expected of seven-year-olds. Throughout the school pupils are taught well. Because they enjoy making music and singing together, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The standard seen at the time of the last inspection has been maintained.
139. Pupils in Year 2 sing together well. They concentrate, listen for the accompaniment and are aware of the shape of the melody. They control their voices well so that they can sing in tune even when the song requires loud and enthusiastic singing. In a rendering of "Stand up clap hands", they sang loudly, but maintained clear diction, rhythm and pitch, consequently maintaining the interest for the listener throughout the song. They sang a quiet piece equally well, sustaining longer notes and expressing the mood of the music through the increase and decrease of the volume of their voices. Pupils record the sounds they make with percussion instruments through invented signs and symbols. A good number of seven-year-olds belong to the school recorder group and develop their understanding of recording sound by learning to read traditional notation. They have made good progress in mastering a tuned instrument and play together well, although often blowing rather too strongly. Pupils confidently use untuned instruments to perform with others and can maintain a steady pulse or provide a good rhythmic accompaniment.
140. Teaching is very good. Lessons combine a rich mix of improving musical skills,

listening and recalling sounds, performing together and exploring how sounds can be organised and recorded. In an excellent lesson in Year 1 pupils played percussion instruments in groups to explore sounds to represent the weather. The teacher drew their efforts together but skilfully allowed them opportunities to express their ideas. Pupils listened critically to the sounds they made and suggested ways to improve on them. In this lesson the teacher provided a wide range of musical experiences so that the pupils developed their skills whilst enjoying the pleasure of creating a variety of sounds and music. A volunteer helper provided expert piano accompaniment, but the pupils were also given the opportunity to sing unaccompanied which developed their concentration at maintaining pitch without instrumental support.

141. The subject is very well led. Good curriculum planning ensures that pupils develop their knowledge and skills at a good rate. Their achievements are assessed against the National Curriculum levels and recorded. Music plays an important part in the life of the school and contributes significantly to pupils' personal development. Resources are good. The school uses the subject to develop pupils' awareness of their own culture very effectively, but there are insufficient opportunities for them to learn about other cultures through music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

142. During the week of the inspection only one lesson was observed and a judgement on pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching could not be made. However, discussions with the co-ordinator, a scrutiny of planning, and the provision for extra-curricular activities, indicates that the provision for physical education remains the same as that identified in the previous inspection when pupils' attainment was above expectations.
143. In the one lesson observed, the quality of teaching was judged to be good, and was well planned with physically challenging activities. The pupils were enthusiastic and keen to participate in the games activities offered to them. They listened carefully to the teacher's instructions and guidance of how to improve their performance, and worked well together in their small groups. All the pupils knew that exercise affects their bodies and the importance of a warm-up before undertaking a games activity. The lesson made a positive contribution to pupils' social development.
144. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and manages the subject well. There is a policy and scheme of work, which reflect recent initiatives in the curriculum. The co-ordinator checks teachers' planning each term and there are formal systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress during the academic year. Resources for the subject are adequate and there are good indoor and outdoor facilities, which are used well to provide an interesting curriculum for the pupils. The school's football club, for both boys and girls, held after school makes a positive contribution to the overall provision for the subject.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

145. Pupils' attainment by the age of seven is exceeding that expected in the locally agreed syllabus and all pupils make good progress as they move through the school. They know that there are different religious faiths such as the Hindu and Islam faiths, as well as the Christian faith. They can name the special festivals associated with these faiths, for instance the importance of Divalia to the Hindu faith, and Christmas and Easter to the Christian faith. This attainment maintains the standards identified in the previous inspection.
146. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by widening their appreciation of beliefs in the world around them, and in understanding the lifestyles of followers of different faiths they encounter in their world in a sensitive and reflective manner. For instance, there was a sense of 'awe and wonder' in a Year 1 and 2 lesson when the class teacher told the story of 'The Creation' from Taoist religion, and compared and contrasted it with the versions in the Bible and Koran. This was heightened when she brought the Koran from a high place, which is the custom in the Islamic faith.
147. As pupils move through the school they learn about the aspects of different faiths, including the stories and celebrations and events involved in them. For example, pupils in Year 1 have studied what the significance and symbolism of what Christingle means in the Christian faith. They also know the type of clothing the local vicar wears when he is taking a service and its significance to the followers of the Christian faith. Pupils in Year 2 have written about their feelings and emotions of being happy, sad or angry. For instance, pupils have written about being happy when they go on holiday or to the park, or when they are angry or sad when someone pushes them. This experience of writing about their own personal feelings is built on in lessons when they consider how different faiths and religions approach such personal issues and situations. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 lesson, pupils considered how the world was created from the viewpoints of the Christian and Islamic faiths, as well as comparing and contrasting it with Chinese cultural beliefs. This was further developed by asking the pupils how they thought the world was made and was it any different from the version in the Bible or Koran.
148. The overall quality of teaching seen in lessons is good. Lessons are carefully planned, and learning objectives are shared with the pupils. Teachers establish an atmosphere in which the pupils feel secure and where they are able to explore their feelings and responses. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their experiences or even on a particular religious object as a focus for their thinking. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and receive good support from the co-ordinator who is always willing to help with planning lessons.
149. There is good leadership of the subject. There is a policy and scheme of work, which reflects the locally agreed syllabus. There are sufficient resources including artefacts of different faiths to teach the subject. In the hall for example, there was an attractive display of artefacts and symbols of the Hindu faith, including a 'sari' that women wear on special occasions, which helps maintain the pupils' interest in the subject. The co-ordinator monitors planning and discusses with teachers on a half-termly basis what is happening in their classes so as to ensure that teaching builds on pupils' knowledge appropriately. There are well-established procedures in school for assessing pupils' attainment and progress over time to help with future planning.