

INSPECTION REPORT

CHESLYN HAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Walsall

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124189

Headteacher: Mr M Tibbetts

Reporting inspector: Mary Ward
21118

Dates of inspection: 20th – 24th May 2002

Inspection number: 195174

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 and Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Saredon Road Cheslyn Hay Walsall
Postcode:	WS6 7JQ
Telephone number:	(01922) 857080
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Appropriate authority:	Staffordshire
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Toplis
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21118	Mary Ward	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology History	Leadership and management
19558	Michael Hammond	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20708	Ken Sainty	Team inspector	English Geography Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements
22994	Val Kitchen	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equal opportunities	
20288	Sarah Morton	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28200	Paul Stevens	Team inspector	Science Music Religious education	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cheslyn Hay Primary School is a community primary school situated in south Staffordshire near Walsall. The school is larger than average, with 379 pupils (187 boys and 192 girls), plus 24 part-time pupils in the nursery and provides education for the 4 to 11 age range. The number on roll has declined since the last inspection, owing to a drop in the local birth rate. The school draws most of its pupils from Cheslyn Hay and the surrounding area and, in particular, from South Pinfold, Littlewood, Featherstone and Essington. The attainment of pupils coming into the school is average. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language, at less than 1 per cent, is low and all pupils are European and speak English fluently. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, at 12.9 per cent and with statements, at 0.5 per cent, is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, at 7.7 per cent, is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a sound school in which standards are at least satisfactory in all subjects, except in Religious Education in Years 3 to 6. Pupils make good progress in the nursery and in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in the reception year and in Years 3 to 6. The quality of teaching is sound, overall, and good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. The school promotes appropriately equal access and equal opportunities. The school is soundly led and managed and satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection, although the rate of progress has been uneven. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment are above average in English and science at the end of Year 2 and in information and communication technology at the end of Year 6.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs across the school and for the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language in the nursery is good and these pupils achieve well.
- Provision and teaching in the Foundation Stage are good.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good.
- Pupils' have positive attitudes towards their work.
- Procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are good.
- Governors support the school well.
- Administrative staff contribute well to the smooth running of the school.

What could be improved

- The progress made by more able pupils is unsatisfactory.
- Standards in religious education at the end of Year 6 are unsatisfactory.
- Statutory requirements related to collective worship and the information provided for parents are not met.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is unsatisfactory.
- Assessment procedures are not sufficiently rigorous to measure pupils' progress and impact on standards in most foundation subjects.

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

The school strengths outweigh the areas in need of improvement.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in 1997, the school has made satisfactory progress, although the pace of improvement has been uneven. The issues raised in the previous report have mostly been addressed satisfactorily. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully implemented and the quality of teaching has improved significantly. The school has put in place more effective monitoring and evaluation procedures, but these need to be extended to include all subjects on a more regular basis. Good progress has been made in improving provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage. Provision for religious education has improved, but this has not yet had sufficient impact on standards and these remain unsatisfactory at the end of Year 6. The school has made strenuous efforts to improve rates of attendance and some improvement to attendance rates has been achieved. The identified health and safety issues have been addressed. The school is suitably placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	D	D	D
mathematics	B	D	C	D
science	B	E	C	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Children, including those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in the nursery, satisfactory progress in the Reception Year and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, many meet the early learning goals. Standards are average for five year olds. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the school. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in English and science and average in mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology, history, geography, art and design, music, physical education and religious education. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science and steady progress in other subjects. In 2001, the national tests for seven year olds show that pupils attained standards that were well above average in reading and writing and above in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, standards were above average in reading, well above in writing and below average in mathematics. Over the last three years, standards have risen in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion reaching the expected level in science was very high in 2001. Standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, geography, history, music, art and physical education are average and most pupils make satisfactory progress, but in information and communication technology standards are above average and progress is good. In religious education, standards are below those expected in the locally agreed syllabus and progress is unsatisfactory. In 2001, results in English were below average and in mathematics and science they were close to the national average. When compared with similar schools, performance in each subject was below average. The results in English matched the target set with the local education authority, but the target for mathematics was missed by 15 per cent. The trend of improvement over the last three years has been broadly in line with the national picture.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes towards school are good and have a positive impact on the progress they make.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around school, but a few older pupils display immature behaviour and a lack of self-discipline.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is sound. Pupils develop good relationships and most show respect for their fellow pupils and staff.
Attendance	Attendance has improved and is now broadly in line with the national average, but leave of absence for family holidays remains a concern.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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.

All lessons are at least satisfactory. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and sometimes very good in the nursery. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are good. In Years 3 to 6 teaching and learning are satisfactory and sometimes better. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach, they plan thoroughly and prepare well for lessons, but they do not always expect enough of the more able pupils and these pupils do not consistently achieve what they are capable of. The teaching of English and mathematics is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 and pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills effectively. The teaching of science and physical education is good in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6 the teaching of information and communication technology is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. It is mostly broad and balanced, but religious education is under-represented. Short lessons sometimes have the effect of fragmenting work, for example, in history, geography and religious education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are effective identification and monitoring systems and effective support from teachers and support assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good for the few pupils in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Personal development is satisfactory, overall, but spiritual and cultural development are unsatisfactory. Pupils know right from wrong and respect the rights of others. Paired activities and work in small groups help to develop social skills. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to reflect on the values and beliefs of others and to learn about their cultural heritage and develop a multicultural understanding.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. All staff have a caring attitude towards pupils and relationships are good. Attendance patterns are monitored well. However, arrangements for assessing and recording attainment and progress are unsatisfactory, particularly in the foundation subjects, reducing the rate at which pupils learn.

The school makes satisfactory links with parents and there are suitable opportunities for them to become involved in the work of the school. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Curriculum plans are soundly based on nationally recommended schemes. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good and addresses all areas of learning well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The recently restructured senior management team is beginning to prove an asset and is providing clear direction for the school. Other co-ordinators, including those for special educational needs and the Foundation Stage provide good leadership. Other key staff provide appropriate support.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body, led by a dynamic chair, is fully involved in shaping the direction of the school and governors are beginning to hold the headteacher and staff to account more rigorously. However, not all statutory duties are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's performance and initiatives are developing appropriately, but greater clarity is needed in defining the intended outcomes of improvement strategies.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Educational priorities are supported appropriately through careful financial planning, but governors receive too little information to evaluate spending decisions closely. Specific grants are used effectively. The principles of best value are followed, but information is not used effectively to make comparisons.

Staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory. However, the library needs refurbishment and re stocking.

Since the last inspection, the deputy headteacher has left and two assistant headteachers have been appointed. Communication and consistency of practice have improved under these arrangements. The headteacher has retained his enthusiasm and secured satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, but he has over stretched himself through his work at a national level. His withdrawal from these is providing him with more time to address the school improvement agenda more rigorously. Suitably qualified teachers and support staff who are committed to the school and who are beginning to work with a greater sense of purpose staff the school. The school has satisfactory levels of resources, but the library is not inviting and many books are well worn. The building is well maintained, but its open plan nature leads to some noise transference that is at times distracting for pupils. Accommodation for the Foundation Stage both indoors and outdoors has improved since the last inspection.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like coming to school. • The school expects children to work hard and they make good progress. • The school is approachable. • Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity for parents to work more closely with the school and to be kept better informed about their children's progress. • The consistency of the school's approach to homework. • The range of activities outside school. • The challenge for more able pupils.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size and organisation of classes in Years 3 to 6.
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In addition to the above views individual parents expressed their dissatisfaction on a range of issues, including the use of supply teachers, the support provided for their children with special educational needs, the failure to adequately address an issue of bullying, a lack of privacy when teachers speak to parents about their children's progress and insufficient emphasis given to the development of basic skills. The findings of the inspection largely support the positive views of parents, but acknowledge that in some instances, but not all, parental concerns are justified. Provision for the more able pupils is not always adequate to promote good learning, but provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school gives appropriate emphasis to the development of pupils' basic skills. The mixed age classes in Years 3 and 4 operate effectively and the teaching of these groups was found in all instances to be at least satisfactory and often good. Classes in Years 3 to 6 are larger than average, but support is generous and progress for most pupils is satisfactory. However, the large class sizes have to some extent made it more difficult for teachers to fully meet the needs of the more able pupils. During the inspection, the homework set was relevant in both quantity and quality. The level of information given to parents is generally satisfactory. The school's arrangements for addressing issues of bullying are satisfactory, but further work could be done with pupils to help eliminate all instances of this unacceptable behaviour and the school must ensure that all reported instances are followed up immediately and thoroughly. Supply teachers are used no more frequently than in other schools, appropriate checks are made on these teachers by the school and those observed during the inspection contributed well to the pupils' learning. Suitable extra-curricular provision is made, but this could be enhanced for younger pupils. The school was unaware of parental concerns regarding the lack of privacy available on consultation evenings and will in future seek to address this.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the last inspection pupils entered the nursery and reception classes with average skills. By the age of seven, attainment was judged to be broadly in line with national expectations in English and mathematics. By the age of 11, the attainment of pupils was in line with national averages in English and mathematics and was above in science. Evidence from the current inspection indicates that standards have risen in English in Years 1 and 2 and have been maintained in other subjects with the exception of science which is now in line with the national average.
2. Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills that are average, overall, for their age. However, many children lack experience of practical and social activities, resulting in under-developed pre-reading, mathematical, manipulative and social skills. Inspection evidence shows that after only a short time in the nursery class, where these experiences and opportunities are provided, children make rapid progress and most quickly develop these skills. Children continue to make good progress during their time in the nursery class and they make satisfactory progress in their reception year. Children for whom English is an additional language and with special educational needs make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning and some children of higher ability attain beyond this.
3. The results of the 2001 national tests for pupils aged seven indicated that pupils attained standards well above the national average in reading and writing and above in mathematics. When compared with attainment in similar schools, pupils achieved standards above the average in reading, well above in writing and below in mathematics. The percentage of pupils who achieved the higher levels was inconsistent. Performance at the higher levels in reading was above the national average and close to similar schools. In writing, performance at the higher levels was well above the national average and above similar schools. In mathematics, attainment at the higher levels was close to the national average and below similar schools. Overall, in the three years 1999-2001 standards have risen in reading, writing and mathematics. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standards in science, based on teacher assessments, was very high in comparison with the national average and with similar schools. The percentage of pupils who achieved the higher levels in science was above the national average and close to similar schools.
4. The results in the 2001 national tests for English for pupils aged 11 were below the standards found nationally. Standards in mathematics and science were close to the national average. When compared with similar schools, performance in English, mathematics and science was below average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was close to the national average in mathematics and science but below in English. When compared with similar schools, the percentage of pupils who achieved the higher levels was close to the average in mathematics, but below in English and science. In the three years 1999-2001 the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science has fallen below the national average. By the end of Year 6, standards in information and communication technology are above national expectations and standards in religious education are below.
5. Analysis of the 2001 national test results for pupils aged 11, when compared with their results when they were aged seven in 1997, shows that a significant number of pupils in that group did not make the expected progress. The school attributes this to insufficient practice in preparation for the external tests leading to some underachievement and performances that did not give a true reflection of the pupils' abilities. The inspection team's analysis of statistics, scrutiny of pupils' work, observations in lessons and discussions with subject co-ordinators can support this assertion, as evidence indicates that progress, overall, is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. In some lessons, provision for more able pupils restricts

the progress they make. The pattern of boys' and girls' attainment at the age of 11 in the three years 1999-2001 is similar to the national picture in English, with girls out performing boys, and in science, where the performance of boys and girls is similar. In mathematics, over the same period, girls out performed the boys against the national trend. During the inspection, there was no discernible difference between the performance of boys and girls.

6. Target setting has been established throughout the school. The targets for pupils in Years 3 to 6 are realistic and challenging, overall, and take account of the differences in year groups. The pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve and, thereby, achieve the targets, is developing. The school needs to develop further the tracking of pupils so that expectations and targets are reviewed more frequently to take account of the progress made by individuals and specific groups of pupils. The school exceeded the 2001 target for English by 1 per cent, but missed the target for mathematics by 15%. The targets for 2002 are more demanding and the current Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve them.
7. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are well established in the school and have had a positive impact on the basic skills of pupils throughout the school. Inspection findings indicate that, by the end of Year 2, pupils achieve standards that are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Progress in English is good. In mathematics, provision has improved and, with consistently good teaching, the pupils are beginning to make good progress in developing their mathematical knowledge and understanding, but this has yet to be fully realised in the standards achieved. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations in English and mathematics and pupils make satisfactory progress in both subjects, although the learning of some more able pupils is sometimes restricted by tasks not being matched to their ability and not stretching them. Good use is made of additional staff to implement the various intervention strategies for literacy and numeracy for pupils who may be falling behind. By the time they are seven, most pupils read with an appropriate level of accuracy, fluency and expression. Most can write independently, using simple punctuation, accurate spelling of common words and letters that are formed correctly and are consistent in size. In mathematics, most pupils can explain what they are doing, using the appropriate mathematical language and can solve simple problems, using the four operations. By the age of 11, pupils read material appropriate for their age with fluency, expression and understanding. Most pupils use a fluent, joined script and a suitable range of punctuation to write in a wide variety of contexts. Most pupils can select the appropriate mathematics required to complete a task. They have a good understanding of place value and work confidently with larger numbers.
8. In science, standards seen during the inspection are above average at the age of seven and average at the age of 11. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. At the age of seven, pupils have an above average knowledge and understanding of science. They know about materials and their uses, they can identify the major parts of a bird's body and they know what plants need to live. By the age of 11, a significant number of pupils have an above average knowledge and understanding, but few are able to use this to plan their own experiments, or to write their own reports.
9. Standards in information and communication technology are average at the age of seven and above average by the age of 11. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6. At the age of seven, pupils can use a word processor, changing the colour and size of font and use a paint program to create patterns and pictures. By the age of 11, pupils are able to work confidently with a range of programs and applications and use these skilfully to support work in other subjects.
10. Due to timetable arrangements, the opportunities to observe the teaching of some subjects, such as music and history in Years 1 and 2 were limited. However, evidence from lessons seen, samples of pupils' work, school documentation, displays and discussions with pupils indicate that standards are at least in line with national expectations in design and technology, geography, history, music, art and physical education by the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in religious education are in line with national expectations in Years 1 and 2, but below in Years 3 to 6 where, by the age of 11, pupils recall of the beliefs, teachings, practices and lifestyles of faiths other than

Christianity is poor. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all subjects throughout the school with the exception of religious education in Years 3 to 6, where it is unsatisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. At the time of the last inspection, the attitudes of pupils had a positive impact on the progress they made and this remains the case. They clearly enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. However, behaviour is not as consistent and is now only satisfactory, overall. Pupils have sound relationships with their peers and with adults, but the opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities and be involved in making decisions are limited. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now in line with the national average.
12. Many children enter the Foundation Stage with limited social skills in terms of sharing, taking turns, conforming to routines and playing with others. However, with skilful teaching and warm relationships most learn quickly to work harmoniously and are helped to understand the impact of their actions on others, but a few continue to display immature behaviour and have difficulty in concentrating and in working co-operatively.
13. Overall, the attitudes of pupils are good. The majority are happy to come to school and clearly take an interest in their work. With the support of adults and their peers, pupils with special educational needs are confident to tackle the tasks they find difficult. Most pupils work hard and show pride in their achievements. This is demonstrated well in the many displays throughout the school and during the whole-school merit assembly. Pupils co-operate or work independently, taking responsibility for their own and other pupils' learning whenever they are encouraged to do so. Throughout the school, pupils respond well to questions and join happily in discussions. However, in some lessons, a minority of older pupils, mostly boys, sometimes lose concentration and waste time.
14. Pupils willingly accept responsibility, when it is given. They act as monitors, taking responsibility for various routine aspects of daily classroom life, return registers to the office, check in latecomers and help with assemblies. Older pupils are very involved in the school website, which includes examples of pupils enjoying a wide variety of activities and experiences. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in making decisions about life in school.
15. Behaviour throughout the school is satisfactory and sometimes good, with the majority of pupils behaving well in lessons, during break times and around the school. The school functions as an orderly and caring community with all of the adults providing effective role models for the pupils. However, when levels of supervision are low, during unstructured periods and occasionally in lessons, a number of older pupils display immature behaviour and a lack of self-discipline. Year 6 pupils had completed their National Curriculum tests the week prior to the inspection and the release from this structured regime may have contributed towards the decline in behaviour of some pupils. One pupil was excluded last year for a fixed period.
16. Relationships are secure between pupils and staff. Although there are occasions when pupils fall out with each other, there were few visible signs during the inspection. Most pupils show respect for others and appreciate how their actions can impact on others. Pupils feel confident about approaching adults in school should they experience bullying and are confident that issues are dealt with to their satisfaction. However, a few incidents, where parents have been less satisfied with the school's approach were brought to the attention of the inspectors. Overall, pupils work in an environment free from oppressive behaviour, but, on occasions, some older pupils, in particular boys, respond inappropriately when exposed to issues from cultures other than their own.
17. The school has made strenuous efforts to tackle the problem of attendance, which was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Attendance has improved and is now broadly in line with the national average, with unauthorised absence being below the national average. The school is involved in the LEA 'First Day Response' project in which parents are contacted on the first day of their child's absence. This has had a positive impact on reducing authorised absence, but family holidays during term time continue to effect absence rates. Punctuality, both at the start of the day and in the lessons, is satisfactory.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. In the previous inspection report, teaching was found to be satisfactory, overall, but over one in five lessons was unsatisfactory. There have been considerable improvements to teaching since the last inspection, but the majority of lessons remain satisfactory. However, there is now no unsatisfactory teaching, including in lessons in the Foundation Stage, where half the lessons were previously unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved in the Foundation Stage and is now consistently satisfactory and often better in all areas of learning and good, overall. Teaching and learning in classes for five to seven-year-olds have also improved from nearly one in five lessons being unsatisfactory to being good, overall. The strongest teaching is in Year 2, where four out of ten lessons are very good or excellent. Pupils, including those with special educational needs consolidate their previously acquired skills and develop their knowledge and understanding well. Teaching and learning in classes for seven to 11 year-olds have improved, but, although a higher proportion of lessons are good than at the time of the last inspection, overall, teaching remains satisfactory. The quality of teaching is strongest in Year 5, where a third of lessons are very good. In Years 3 and 4 teaching is consistently satisfactory and good in over half of lessons. Less than a third of lessons in Year 6 are good or better. Pupils build appropriately upon their previous learning and make satisfactory progress. The learning of those with special educational needs is often enhanced by the positive contribution made by support assistants.
19. The quality of teaching is good in mathematics throughout the school. It is good in English, science and physical education in Years 1 and 2, and in information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6. In all other subjects teaching was found to be satisfactory, except in history and music in Years 1 and 2, where there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement. Previously identified weaknesses in the teaching of physical education across the school and in religious education in Years 3 to 6 have been addressed. The quality of teaching has improved in classes for five to seven year-olds in English, but declined in geography. Teaching has improved in classes for seven to 11 year-olds in information and communication technology, but declined in science. Currently, the main strengths of teaching are teachers' subject knowledge, planning, management of pupils and their use of resources. Weaknesses include stretching the more able, meeting more precisely the different needs of pupils, promoting initiative and independent learning and providing more opportunities for spiritual and cultural development.
20. There are a number of factors affecting the rate of progress in improving the quality of teaching. Monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching in English, mathematics and science and the induction of new teachers are good. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has provided good quality training for all teachers. However, the leadership and management of information and communication technology, geography, history, art and design, physical education and religious education have not improved from being satisfactory and these subject leaders have had less influence on the teaching of their subject. Consequently, the quality and range of the curriculum and the supporting resources remain only satisfactory. Some classes for seven to 11 year-olds are large, which affects the proportion of time that can be given to individual pupils. More importantly, procedures for checking and recording the standard of pupils' work are unsatisfactory in subjects other than English, mathematics and science and cannot be used to develop planning with the accuracy required if all pupils are to be provided with learning opportunities tailored to their needs.
21. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum subjects. This supports the development of vocabulary, for example, to discuss points of literacy and numeracy. It gives teachers confidence to tell creation stories in religious education in a way that engages pupils' interest. In art and design, teachers use their knowledge of the importance of careful observation to enable pupils to improve their work through patient looking. In music, there is insistence on pupils applying the correct techniques for playing instruments.
22. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught competently and some teachers, particularly in Years 1 and 2, promote these well. Teachers put across skills in other subjects satisfactorily, overall, and do this well in classes for five to seven year-olds. For example, in a successful Year

- 1 art and design lesson, the teacher taught her pupils how to look carefully at the work of William Morris, and then expected them to use their observations to develop their skills with different media. In swimming, the instructors model the best techniques so that pupils develop their strokes. However, in some lessons, opportunities are missed to reinforce and develop the required skills. For example, in another art and design lesson the teacher failed to intervene appropriately and pupils were allowed to draw what they thought they had seen rather than what was in front of them.
23. Teachers are very clear about what they want pupils to learn and they put this across to pupils in a way that keeps them aware of the purpose of the lesson. However, in some lessons insufficient attention is given to the needs of all pupils. Quite often, teachers plan the same work for all pupils, support the less able and pupils with special educational needs, but do not provide work with enough challenge for those pupils with high ability. This means that too often these pupils do not extend their learning sufficiently. Some teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to learn from one another, such as in an English lesson in Year 5, where they discussed a text in groups, rather than being told what was good about it. This resulted in pupils feeling confident and contributed to good relationships. Where planning is careful, all pupils develop a clear understanding of what they are doing and of how it fits in with other subjects they are studying. For example, in a Year 6 design and technology lesson, pupils learnt the necessary skills for making Greek masks, but derived further motivation by knowing that would be used as part of their history work. Teachers make effective use of final discussions to consolidate learning. This was particularly well exemplified in the design and technology lesson, but also featured in literacy and numeracy lessons. There is also scope for improving consistency in providing a balance of teacher input and pupil activity, so that pupils maintain their interest in what they are learning.
24. Teachers generally have satisfactory expectations of pupils, but, at times, expect too little of the more able pupils. This was evident in some of the written work for science, history, geography and religious education. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress in their scientific knowledge and understanding because of high expectations of what they can achieve, whilst in other years, low expectations result in shallow writing. In religious education, pupils make little use of their literacy skills, because they are not expected to write in any detail. Sometimes teachers rely too heavily on the more able completing more work rather than providing them with more demanding tasks, and opportunities to think for themselves and to develop their independent research skills.
25. Teachers' methods are satisfactory. Where they are good, they make what is to be learnt clearer to pupils. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, the teacher demonstrated the task clearly and used discussion well at different points in the lesson to bring out such ideas as a 'fair test'. She also made good use of pupils' ability to predict whether seeds would float. Most teachers focus their time well during group activities. This was seen, for example, in a Year 6 science lesson, where the teacher intervened with probing questions as pupils carried out their bubble experiments with mixtures of different concentrations. Teachers often use pupils to teach one another. This is particularly helpful to their learning on computers. The quality of teachers' questioning techniques is inconsistent. Some teachers use questions that are probing and pitched appropriately for all targeted pupils, but sometimes questions are too general, require too little thought and teachers take responses only from those who are confident to answer.
26. Management of pupils is good. However, the more challenging behaviour in Year 6 is not always dealt with satisfactorily. This reinforces their immaturity and reduces the progress made. Older pupils are provided with too few opportunities to take responsibility for their learning so that they increase their independence and improve their attitudes to school.
27. Teachers make good use of the school's resources. They make sure that they are well prepared before the lesson, so that pupils waste no time in settling down to group work. On the whole, teachers make effective use of worksheets and balance these with practical tasks and recording work for themselves in exercise books. Lesson introductions have a good pace. This is particularly evident in the daily mathematics lessons, where quick-fire questions and answers stimulate pupils' learning. Classroom assistants work satisfactorily alongside teachers. They

provide good support for individual and group activities, but, occasionally, they are not sufficiently involved during whole class sessions.

28. Marking is adequate, but varies in its degree of support for improvement. The programme for homework is satisfactory and is generally adhered to, with parents being invited to be involved through a useful home-school record.

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

29. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided for pupils are satisfactory and meet statutory requirements. At the time of the last inspection weaknesses were identified in the curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage, in the balance of the curriculum that disadvantaged geography and design and technology in Years 3 to 6, in curriculum planning, and in the provision for religious education, which did not meet statutory requirements. These weaknesses have largely been addressed and the strength identified in the provision for special educational needs has been sustained. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school is now good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory for pupils aged five to 11 years. The recently published Foundation Stage curriculum has successfully been introduced and this provides suitable coverage of each area of learning and relates appropriately to the Early Learning Goals for children at the end of the reception year. In general, the school has an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. However, religious education is underrepresented and the timetabling of subjects such as history and geography into short lessons each week has the effect of sometimes fragmenting topics and this in some cases reduces the depth of coverage. Curriculum plans have been reviewed and schemes of work have been put in place. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
30. The school has successfully implemented effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy in the Foundation Stage and for pupils aged five to 11 years. The development of literacy skills is supported well by work in other subjects, and information and communication technology skills are applied well to support learning in other subjects such as mathematics, English and art and design. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily provided for across the school.
31. The curriculum is appropriately planned on a termly, weekly and daily basis and conforms to the requirements of Curriculum 2000. Subject leaders have drawn up programmes of work for their designated curriculum areas. Teachers in parallel classes plan together on a weekly basis and a high degree of consistency in what is taught in each year group is achieved. Planning for literacy and numeracy reflects the national strategies, whilst planning for other subjects is based on the nationally recommended schemes of work. The national scheme for information and communication technology has been enhanced to take account of local circumstances and makes good provision for this subject. Planning for religious education now conforms to the requirements of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus.
32. The school generally provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to all that the school has to offer, but there are weaknesses in the provision for more able pupils. As part of the induction of new staff, discussions take place with the headteacher to clarify the school's commitment to equal opportunities. The establishment of the girls' joint football team with a neighbouring school makes an important statement about equality of opportunity to all the pupils.
33. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Need. Pupils benefit greatly from the well organised system for identifying their needs, the detailed planning and the thorough preparation of work designed to meet their particular needs. Individual Education Plans are carefully followed and pupils' progress is monitored well. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides effective support for teachers and support assistants working on programmes to meet the specific needs of individual pupils.

The provision for the very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good and ensures that they make good progress.

34. Over recent years, the school has identified a very small number of pupils who are very able and currently provides for the needs of one child through acceleration into the next year group. However, there is no member of staff acting as a co-ordinator for able pupils, no whole school policy and no agreed strategies for the identification and provision for able, gifted and talented pupils. Whilst there is some evidence that the more skilled teaching now taking place in some classes is providing for the needs of some of these pupils, for example through the planning of different tasks, the lack of a clear whole-school structure currently compromises the consistency and quality of provision for all able pupils across the school.
35. The school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, arts and information and communication technology, but these, with the exception of football, are open only to the older pupils. Instrumental lessons are provided for older pupils by visiting music specialist teachers, but extra-curricular musical provision for younger pupils, available at the time of the last inspection, has not been sustained. The 'After School Club' caters well for the needs of working parents and is popular with the pupils who attend. The school is planning to extend the 'After School Club' to include a 'Breakfast Club' in September 2002. Pupils are taken on educational visits to local museums and places of interest, such as the Cannock Chase Heritage museum to enhance their learning. However, the school has relatively few visitors into school to enrich the curriculum and provide first hand experiences. The local minister contributes well to the pupils' religious education, for instance by sharing with pupils an insight into Christenings and by welcoming visits to his church. The Leisure Centre swimming pool on the campus provides good opportunities to develop skills in physical education for all pupils. Teachers use the school's locality effectively to develop the pupil's understanding of local history and geography, and as a resource, for example, for observational drawing within the art and design curriculum.
36. The school has developed sound links with local pre-school settings and the High School that are beneficial and supportive of a smooth transition from one phase of education to another. The school has a well-established system of bridging projects, which support the transfer from primary school to secondary school. Older pupils from the High School undertake work experience placements in the Primary School and Year 6 pupils share in a number of special events at the High School. The schools share an information and communication technology technician. The school has attempted to work in partnership with the University of Derby to provide community courses, using video conferencing, but this has recently lapsed owing to funding difficulties. Links with other schools are limited and this has to some extent reduced the school's capacity to compare its own provision and standards with that of other local providers.
37. The school makes satisfactory provision for personal, social and health education. The caring ethos of the school contributes significantly to pupil confidence. Sessions are planned well and pupils work together openly to discuss issues and develop supportive relationships. The governors have an appropriate statement on Sex and Relationship Education and learning for all pupils incorporates elements of the understanding of relationships, feelings, good health, drugs and substance misuse and environmental issues at an appropriate level for the pupils' age. A retired policeman visits the school to talk to individual classes about how to say 'no' to illegal drug use.
38. Overall, the school provides satisfactorily for the pupils' personal development. The provision for the social and moral development of pupils is satisfactory, but the provision for their spiritual and cultural development is unsatisfactory. This contrasts with a more positive picture at the time of the last inspection, when provision for moral development was good and for spiritual, social and cultural development it was sound.
39. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. The school does not fulfil statutory requirements relating to the provision of a daily Act of Collective Worship for all pupils whose parents have not stipulated that they be withdrawn, nor does it fulfil the requirement to notify parents and carers clearly of the right to withdraw their child if they so wish. This significantly reduces the time available for pupils to come together to experience the spiritual

dimension of school life. Those subjects of the curriculum that might reasonably be expected to contribute to spiritual development, such as religious education, art and music, are making very little contribution. Pupils are given too little opportunity to reflect on the values and beliefs of others or to marvel at the natural world.

40. Provision for pupils' moral education is satisfactory. Pupils of all ages and abilities have an understanding of right and wrong and of what is fair and unfair, and show concern and respect for differences amongst their friends and in the wider population. Pupils say that they like their teachers and midday supervisors and appreciate the time that is taken by all adults to explain to them why poor or anti-social behaviour is unacceptable. The adults within the school provide good role models for the pupils and give clear moral messages, supported by classroom rules. Pupils are less aware of the whole school rules and have no recollection of helping to devise these. The 'Thought for the Week', introduced by the headteacher at assembly and displayed in classrooms, is remembered and discussed by some older pupils. Younger pupils make good attempts to explain it, but are sometimes confused by the complexity of the concept and the language used. The school's behaviour and discipline policy is currently under review, using the expertise of an external consultant. The use of rules to support good behaviour and moral understanding currently presents a confused message to many pupils.
41. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop socially, including the week-long residential visit for Year 6 pupils to Coven Outdoor Centre. The oldest pupils run the school shop and are proud that they are trusted to count the money. They also are given responsibility for a range of tasks related to the annual dramatic production at the end of the school year and a small group work diligently to produce the school newspaper. Older pupils help the younger ones if they are hurt at playtimes and lunchtimes. Playtimes are generally harmonious and many instances of pupils showing care and concern for others were seen during the inspection. In all classes, pupils take turns to undertake simple tasks, such as taking the registers to the office, but these opportunities are limited. Pupils are sometimes encouraged to work co-operatively and where this is encouraged pupils respond well, such as in a geography lesson involving the identification of the currencies of different countries. However, this is not consistent across the school and, as a result, too few opportunities for independent learning are developed.
42. Provision for the cultural development of pupils is unsatisfactory. Within the statutory curriculum, there are some opportunities for pupils to learn about their own culture and that of others; for instance, a pupil recounted his gran's recollections of life in Britain in the 1940s as part of a history topic and literacy lessons provide pupils with the opportunity to read, listen to and discuss a variety of different forms of writing from a variety of cultures. The end of year production by Year 6 pupils, based on a Greek legend, is likely to provide these pupils and their audience with an insight into a past culture. However, there are very few instances of artists, musicians, poets and other visitors supporting pupils' cultural development in school or planned opportunities for pupils to extend their cultural awareness through visits out of school. Several effective strategies in place at the time of the last inspection, for instance, the twinning with a school in Burton-on-Trent and e-mail links with European countries, no longer exist. Opportunities to use displays around the school to promote multicultural understanding, are rarely taken and the range of resources to promote learning about different religions and cultures is insufficient.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school is a caring community that reflects its stated aims well. The overall provision for pupils' safety, support and well-being is satisfactory, but arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic performance are unsatisfactory.
44. The school provides a secure environment for the pupils to work in and the friendliness and courtesy of the staff and the majority of the pupils are characteristic of the school. There is a good range of policies and procedures, which are generally applied by all the staff. This effectively promotes pupils' welfare. The school is committed to a positive discipline and behaviour policy and as a result, functions as an orderly and caring community. Pupils are well disciplined and good behaviour is an expectation of the school, with the majority of pupils responding well.

Supervision of the children during lunchtime and other breaks is satisfactory, but some older pupils do not always live up to expectation when not directly in the view of an adult.

45. Suitable procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, including racism and sexism, have been agreed. Pupils report they have confidence in how the school handles any incidents of bullying that arise, but, on occasions, parents have not been kept adequately informed of progress in dealing with an issue and, infrequently, issues have not been resolved to everyone's satisfaction. Exclusions are carefully considered and appropriate sanctions are taken to minimise disruption to pupils' education. The school is in the process of developing its existing provision to promote race equality.
46. Pupils are well cared for and the procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Teachers and support staff have a very caring attitude towards the pupils. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are good and pupils are seen caring and supporting each other. Throughout the school, pupils are more than willing to talk about themselves and their feelings and to ask for help when it is needed. Parents are encouraged to contact the school should a problem arise and many parents said that staff are more than willing to discuss any difficulties. The school has an effective child protection policy and staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area. Good arrangements are in place to deal with sick children.
47. Since the last inspection, when attendance was identified as a weakness, the school has rigorously monitored attendance patterns and introduced effective strategies for promoting good attendance. The school is involved in the LEA 'First Day Response' project and this has had a positive impact on reducing unauthorised absence. Parents are regularly informed of the school's reporting procedures and the need to minimise absences and they have been made aware of the times in the year when it is most inconvenient for pupils to be absent.
48. The governors regularly monitor the health and safety policy and a fire practice takes place each term. Currently they are involved in the preparation of a risk assessment policy for the school. A small number of minor health and safety concerns have been raised with the school, which need dealing with as soon as possible. The school takes the necessary precautions to ensure safe use of the internet.
49. There are good procedures for early identification of pupils with special educational needs in the Foundation Stage. This is facilitated through the analysis of the assessments made soon after pupils' entry to school, on going assessments through observation, and the recent designation of a special needs co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage. There is an increasing trend in the number of pupils who are identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties and autism throughout the school. This is recognised by both staff and governors. Provision for pupils on the special education needs register and with statements of special educational need is good. Support programmes are well planned and delivered and there is good liaison between class teachers and specialist staff to ensure progression in learning when pupils are withdrawn and return to classrooms.
50. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory, overall. They are satisfactory in English, mathematics, science and physical education, but unsatisfactory in information and communication technology, design and technology, geography, history, art and design, music and religious education. There are policies for target setting, assessment and marking that provide suitable guidance for teachers. Assessments completed soon after entry to school are made, using an approved scheme. National Curriculum tests are administered at ages seven and 11 years, according to requirements. In addition to the statutory assessments, pupils are tested in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 using the optional national tests. The headteacher and the subject co-ordinators analyse the test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. Results of the analysis are discussed with the governors and teachers and are reflected appropriately in changes made to planning for literacy and numeracy. The school is currently in the process of setting up a computerised system to plot progress towards targets. Arrangements for assessment in most of the foundation subjects are

less comprehensive and result in progress being less marked in these subjects. In these subjects, there are no formal systems of assessing, recording or tracking pupils' progress to ensure that expectations are being met and that group and individual targets are sufficiently challenging for all pupils. Subject leaders recognise the need to improve procedures for the frequent assessment of pupils' progress to track them more effectively in all subjects and to guide curricular planning.

51. The support and advice provided for pupils about their academic progress are unsatisfactory, overall. In English, mathematics and science, the use of assessment data to record the levels of pupil achievements and share them with pupils is satisfactory. It is unsatisfactory in the foundation subjects, with the exception of physical education. The on-going use of assessment data to target support to meet the needs of particular individuals or groups of pupils and to set targets for improvement for all pupils is under-developed. The marking policy supports the process of target setting and good practice was observed in teachers relating their marking comments in books to pupils' targets and the intended learning, but this is not consistent across the school.
52. Since the last report, the school has not sufficiently developed procedures to assess and review the academic progress of pupils, which was raised as an issue at the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The school has developed satisfactory links with parents and carers and, overall, there are suitable opportunities for them to become involved in the work of the school. Through this involvement they have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school has previously sought parental views and has attempted to respond to any issues as they arose and, consequently, the school already knew most of the matters brought to the attention of the inspection team. Most parents have a positive view of the school and the majority support social and fund raising events.
54. The view of the majority of parents' and carers is that Cheslyn Hay Primary School is a happy, friendly school which their children enjoy attending and where the staff care deeply for their children. A number of new parents also said how much their children had improved in their work and how much happier they were since moving to the school. Most parents feel that the school expects children to work hard and believe their children make good progress. They find the school approachable and are confident that the quality of teaching is good. However, a number of parents raised concerns about the progress of the more able pupils, the arrangements in the Year 3 and 4 classes and the class sizes for pupils aged seven to 11 years. Some parents raised concerns about the consistency of homework requirements, feeling that in some classes pupils receive too much and in others tasks are inadequately followed up in lessons. They also expressed concern about the number and quality of supply teachers engaged by the school and disappointment in the range of activities available outside school. Individual parents expressed their dissatisfaction on a range of issues, including the support provided for their children with special educational needs, the failure to adequately address an issue of bullying, a lack of privacy when teachers speak to parents about their children's progress and insufficient emphasis given to the development of basic skills.
55. The findings of the inspection largely support the positive views of parents, but acknowledge that in some instances, but not all, parental concerns are justified. Provision for the more able pupils is not always adequate to promote good learning, but provision for pupils with special educational needs is found to be good. With the successful introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies the school has given appropriate emphasis to the development of pupils' basic skills, and during the inspection pupils were seen to be extending these effectively through work in other subjects. The school has faced difficult staffing decisions as the school population has declined, which has necessitated the introduction of mixed age classes in Years 3 and 4. Careful consideration has been given to these arrangements and, during the inspection, teaching of these groups was found in all instances to be at least satisfactory and often good. Classes for pupils aged seven to 11 years are larger than average, but the school has to some extent eased the pressure caused by this by providing above average levels of support for these groups.

However, the large numbers have, to some extent, made it more difficult for teachers to fully meet the needs of the more able pupils. The school's homework policy makes appropriate provision for pupils to receive increasing amounts of work to do at home as they become older. During the inspection the homework set was relevant in both quantity and quality. However, the school could usefully continue to monitor this to ensure that the policy is implemented consistently and unrealistic deadlines are avoided. On the whole, the school's arrangements for addressing issues of bullying are satisfactory but further work could be done with pupils to help eliminate all instances of this unacceptable behaviour and the school must ensure that all reported instances are followed up immediately and thoroughly. The number of supply teachers used by the school is not significantly higher than in other primary schools. The school makes the necessary checks on these teachers and those observed during the inspection contributed well to the pupils' learning. Suitable extra-curricular provision is made, but this could be enhanced for younger pupils. The school was unaware of parental concerns regarding the lack of privacy available on consultation evenings and will in future seek to address this.

56. The level of information given to parents is generally satisfactory. Parents receive half-termly news leaflets and curriculum newsletters. They can also access information about the school and ask questions through the high quality website which is constantly brought up to date. The provision of information about the curriculum is a welcome improvement since the last inspection. However, the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents still fail to meet statutory requirements. Parents are generally kept well informed about the school, though a number of parents have asked for more information about how they can best support their own children's learning.
57. Satisfactory information is given to parents about their children's progress through two formal consultation meetings and an annual written report, which includes targets for each child. A number of parents asked for information earlier in the year so that they can more effectively support their children if difficulties are being experienced. Parents spoken to during the inspection did, however, appreciate the accessibility and approachability of the majority of the staff when they had a concern. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly contacted and appropriately involved in discussions related to their children.
58. A small but active group of parents known as 'Friends of Cheslyn Hay Primary School' are active in organising social and fund raising events for pupils and their families. These events contribute well to the life of the school and funds raised are spent appropriately to improve provision and learning opportunities. Parents are welcomed as volunteers and a small number help on school outings, in school as classroom helpers and by undertaking other general tasks.
59. Throughout the school, homework is given on a regular basis and this has improved since the last inspection. Many parents help their children with homework and reading and make good use of the homework diary. There is a satisfactory home-school agreement in place.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. Since the last inspection, the deputy headteacher has left the school for promotion to headship, and the governors have sensibly taken this opportunity to review the management structure within the school. The revised senior management structure of headteacher and two assistant headteachers is relatively new, but is beginning to prove an asset to the school. Although the specific roles and responsibilities of the assistant headteachers are still to be confirmed, both have a clear vision for the future and a good track record within the school as team leaders. Staff and governors already report that communication and the consistency of practice have improved under these new arrangements. The headteacher has been in post since before the last inspection. He has retained his enthusiasm and has secured satisfactory improvement for the school since the last inspection. However, over the last few years he has over-stretched himself through his work at a national level for the National Association for Teachers of English (NATE) and for Her Majesty's Inspectorate. Whilst these experiences have been beneficial for his professional development they have resulted in some aspects of school development being given too little priority. His recent withdrawal from these external commitments is providing him with more time

to address, in full, the school improvement agenda. The pace of improvement has begun to increase as a consequence. The school is now suitably placed to make further improvements. Relationships between staff are good and there is a shared commitment to the realisation of the school's aims and values.

61. The governing body, led by a dynamic and very capable Chair, is clearly determined to support the school in its drive for improvement. Governors are fully involved in shaping the direction the school takes and they are beginning to hold the headteacher and staff to account for the school's achievements more rigorously, through the setting of performance targets, derived appropriately from the improvement programme. Governors are well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses and many are regular visitors in school. They support the school well and take seriously their responsibilities, but they have failed to ensure that all statutory responsibilities related to the delivery of collective worship and regarding the information to be provided for parents, are met. The governing body conducts its business efficiently through a committee system. The school development plan is a sound document that details suitable priorities and appropriately identifies responsibilities for actions and the resources needed to fulfil these. However, greater clarity is needed in defining the intended outcomes, to assist governors and staff to evaluate more closely the impact of the actions taken.
62. The two assistant headteachers provide effective leadership for the lower and upper school, co-ordinating well the work of their respective teams and ensuring the smooth running of the school as a whole. They provide good role models for colleagues and have, through their careful monitoring of literacy and numeracy, secured significant improvements in the quality of teaching and the successful implementation of the national strategies. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator has similarly used her personal skills to improve the provision for the youngest pupils and to successfully introduce the new Foundation Stage curriculum. The special educational needs co-ordinator works closely with colleagues to monitor and track the progress of pupils with special educational needs, liaising effectively with outside agencies. Her leadership of this area has ensured that the previously good provision has been sustained.
63. Responsibilities for the leadership of subjects are mostly delegated appropriately. For English, mathematics and science there are two named co-ordinators for each subject, drawn from different parts of the school. This arrangement helps to secure continuity across the school and safeguards against possible disruptions caused by staff movement. In these subjects, there is a well-focused programme of monitoring of pupils' results and achievements and of teaching and learning, which is providing leaders with a secure knowledge of the standards and provision in their subject. This helps them to develop effective strategies to address any issues identified. Leadership in these areas is good. In other subjects, there is often only one subject leader with responsibility across the school. Opportunities for monitoring by these co-ordinators have been less consistent and have relied to a large extent on the individual's determination. As there are no whole-school procedures in place to give teachers regular access to pupils' work and to teachers' planning and assessment records, monitoring has been patchy. Most co-ordinators are aware of the national expectations in their subject and know broadly what needs to be done to develop the subject further, but without more precise information gleaned at first hand they cannot always identify the specific developments required to raise standards across the school. Leadership of most subjects is satisfactory and it is good in music. In religious education, the leadership of the subject has been disrupted owing to the long-term sickness of the co-ordinator. The newly designated religious education co-ordinator is beginning to be effective in this role. In design and technology there is none designated to take a lead and this is unsatisfactory.
64. The school has a declining population and, therefore, a reducing budget. In setting the budget, governors have wisely taken heed of advice and have sensibly ensured a phased approach to managing staff reduction. This has resulted in the school having a substantial under-spend, but has minimised the need for further mixed age classes that are not popular with some parents. Governors regularly monitor expenditure, but too little information has been made available to the Governing Body to enable them to evaluate with sufficient rigour, the impact of spending decisions. The governors are committed to getting the best value for money when buying goods and services, but the school has no 'Best Value Statement' outlining how this is to be done. Information from

National Curriculum tests is used appropriately to compare the school's performance with that of other schools and the findings are rightly used to set challenging targets. However, other benchmark data are not used effectively to provide a context in which comparisons can be made. Parents and pupils have been consulted on aspects of school life and their views have been taken into account when management decisions are made, for example, in keeping to a minimum the number of mixed-age classes. Competitive prices are sought when purchases are made or services are acquired. The school's allocation of Standards Fund grant has been spent properly for the purposes designated. Additional support for literacy and well-targeted professional development opportunities are having a positive impact on standards and have led to improvements in the quality of teaching. The school was audited in 2001. The minor issues raised within the report have now been addressed. The headteacher is very well supported by experienced and highly committed administrative staff who help to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school.

65. The school makes effective use of new technology. Computerised administrative systems are used to manage the school's finances, record and analyse attendance patterns, manage pupils' personal information and, more recently, to help with the analysis of assessment data. The school has developed an impressive website that provides parents and pupils with a window into the life of the school and a good opportunity to communicate with the school on a range of issues. Secure sites give staff and governors easy access to information and a convenient forum for discussion. The school is conscious of the minority of parents who do not have Internet access at home and ensures that all vital information is also available in a more traditional form.
66. The school is staffed by suitably qualified teachers and there is an appropriate balance between experienced and more recently qualified staff. Performance Management, the scheme that links staff development and the school's priorities, is fully in place and operating effectively. The school has a strong commitment to the professional development of teachers and support staff. The school employs a higher than average number of support staff. These members of staff are suitably deployed and make a valuable contribution to the learning opportunities provided for pupils with special educational needs and in general during class lessons. The induction arrangements and training of new staff are good and the school is appropriately placed to provide initial teacher training.
67. The school has satisfactory levels of appropriate resources to support all subjects. Resources for science and for music are good. However, the school library is not inviting and many of the books within it are well worn and beginning to lose relevance. The school has recently received funding for additional hardware through the National Grid for Learning Scheme, which it plans to spend on a computer suite. When this is in place the already satisfactory resources will be greatly enhanced.
68. The school building was originally designed as an open-plan middle school. Various minor building programmes have, over the years, modified this to be more fitting for the primary curriculum, but some classrooms are tight for space and the remaining open-plan areas sometimes suffer from noise transference, particularly when shared areas are used as a thoroughfare or for lessons in information and communication technology. The building is well maintained, clean, in good decorative order and provides a safe and secure environment. Most classrooms are well-organised and displays in classrooms and around the school celebrate the pupils' work well and provide valuable information to support their learning. There is a need to rethink the use of space in the library, which feels very congested and dull. The Foundation Stage is accommodated within the main school in a unit comprising the nursery class and two reception areas. These are well organised for delivery of the Foundation Curriculum and have direct access to the shared outdoor play area that has been developed since the time of the last inspection. The school shares an extensive site with the adjacent High School and benefits from the use of the swimming baths and the occasional use of the Community Sports Hall. These well maintained facilities offer good opportunities for play and physical activities.

69. Overall, since the last inspection the school has made satisfactory progress, although the pace of improvement has not been even. The issues raised in the previous report have mostly been addressed satisfactorily. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully implemented and standards in English and mathematics are beginning to show signs of improvement in Years 1 and 2. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are less secure and further work remains to be done to increase the pace of learning, particularly for more able pupils. The school has put in place more effective monitoring and evaluation procedures that have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching, but these need to be extended to include all subjects on a more regular basis. All lessons are now satisfactory and the quality of teaching has improved significantly. Good progress has been made in improving provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage. A nursery has been established that makes good provision for the youngest pupils, the Foundation Curriculum has been successfully introduced, the quality of teaching in this part of the school has dramatically improved and a secure outdoor area has been made available, although this is rather small and resources for use outdoors are limited. The school has been unsuccessful in improving the standards in religious education. Teachers have received training and support with planning to ensure that the school complies with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils in lessons show more enthusiasm for this subject, but, as yet, there has been insufficient impact on attainment and progress and these remain below the expected level for pupils aged seven to 11 years. The school has made strenuous efforts to improve rates of attendance, putting in place rigorous monitoring procedures and some improvement to attendance rates has been achieved, but, despite the school's best endeavours, some parents continue to remove their children for holidays during term time. However, parents have mostly appreciated that it is inappropriate for their children to be absent during the national test period. The health and safety issues raised in the last report have been addressed. The school has made suitable advances in promoting race equality.
70. Taking account of the careful use of financial resources, which are broadly average for a school of this size, the satisfactory progress pupils make during their time at the school and the satisfactory progress made since the last inspection, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to further improve the quality of education and pupils' standards of work, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- i. Improve the provision for and progress made by more able pupils by: (Paragraphs: 16, 19, 23, 24, 34, 111, 116, 121, 125, 150, 158, 171)
 - (a) presenting more able pupils with tasks that offer more challenge;
 - (b) identifying a co-ordinator for the more able;
 - (c) agreeing and implementing a policy for the more able; and
 - (d) establishing a register of more able pupils.
 - ii. Improve standards in religious education in Years 3 to 6 by: (Paragraphs: 4,10,39,63,69,168,172)
 - (a) enriching the curriculum to provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and to gain a deeper understanding of the beliefs and values of different religious communities;
 - (b) increasing the time allocated to teaching religious education in Years 3 to 6;
 - (c) securing the leadership of the subject to ensure that an adequate check is made on the subject's performance; and
 - (d) raising teachers' expectations to enhance pupils' performance.
 - iii. Meet statutory requirements by: (Paragraphs: 39,56,61)

- (a) establishing a daily act of collective worship; and
 - (b) revising the school brochure and the governors' annual report to parents to ensure that all the required details are included.
- iv. Improve the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development by:
(Paragraphs: 19,38,39,42)
- (a) ensuring that teachers systematically plan opportunities for spiritual and cultural development across the curriculum;
 - (b) providing more opportunities for pupils to reflect on the values and beliefs of others and to marvel at the natural world; and
 - (c) providing further experiences for pupils to extend their cultural awareness and multi-cultural understanding.
- v. Improve arrangements for assessing standards, particularly in the foundation subjects, and use this information to better track pupils' progress and evaluate the school's improvement initiatives by:
(Paragraphs: 20,36,43,50,51,52,61,64,133,139,145,151,157,161)
- (a) recording with greater consistency the outcome of pupils' learning in teachers' short-term planning;
 - (b) ensuring that teachers regularly work together to review pupils' achievements and to agree standards using criteria identified in the National Curriculum;
 - (c) developing efficient systems for recording attainment and progress;
 - (d) analysing results with greater precision and greater regularity to evaluate the value added to individual performance;
 - (e) using the analysis of assessments to consider the extent to which initiatives have been successful.

Other issues which should be considered by the school

- Increase the opportunities for independent learning and for pupils to be involved in decision-making.
(Paragraphs: 19, 24, 26, 131, 150)
- Improve the information provided for parents about the progress their children make and how they can help them to learn at home.
(Paragraph: 59)
- Improve the resources for and the organisation of the library.
(Paragraphs: 67,108)
- Secure the leadership of design and technology.
(Paragraph: 63)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	95
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	109

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	13	35	44	0	0	0
Percentage	2	14	37	46	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	12	379
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	29

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	83

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	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.6

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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	28	21	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	27	28
	Girls	19	21	21
	Total	46	48	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (94)	98 (98)	100 (96)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	28	28
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	48	49	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (98)	100 (96)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	29	36	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	21	27
	Girls	28	23	34
	Total	47	44	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (74)	68 (70)	94 (81)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	28
	Girls	30	26	34
	Total	52	49	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (80)	75 (78)	95 (81)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	327
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	29.2

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	233

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	44
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.6
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	757291
Total expenditure	727648
Expenditure per pupil	1737
Balance brought forward from previous year	51130
Balance carried forward to next year	80773

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	400
Number of questionnaires returned	244

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	41	51	6	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	57	6	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	50	8	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	55	15	3	2
The teaching is good.	35	55	5	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	45	18	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	44	6	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	51	4	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	28	47	19	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	33	50	9	3	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	53	5	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	46	14	10	7

Other issues raised by parents

- The progress made by more able pupils.
- The arrangements in the Year 3 and 4 classes and the class sizes for pupils aged seven to 11 years in general.
- The consistency of homework requirements and the follow up of homework in lessons.
- The number and quality of supply teachers used by the school.
- The security of the school site.
- Needs of pupils with special educational need not adequately met.
- Issues of bullying not always dealt with to parents' satisfaction.
- A lack of privacy at parent-teacher consultation meetings.
- The information provided about how they can best help their child at home.

- Insufficient emphasis given to the development of basic skills.

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

72. The provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is good and has improved since the last inspection. The Foundation Stage consists of a 26-place nursery class and two reception classes, each with 30 places. At the time of the inspection 24 children were registered for part-time places in the nursery and the two reception classes had 25 and 26 pupils respectively. Children are admitted to the nursery the term after their fourth birthday on a part time basis. Session times are equal for those attending in the morning and afternoon, thus ensuring equality of access to the curriculum. Children transfer into the reception classes at the start of the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday.
73. Both the nursery and reception classes are housed within the main school. They are immediately adjacent to each other and this facilitates opportunities to share resources. Since the last inspection, the school has improved and continues to improve the accommodation and provision for outdoor play.
74. Children enter nursery with a variety of experiences of pre-school provision. Attainment is broadly average on entry to nursery in all areas of learning and the majority of children have the potential to achieve well. However, many children lack experience of practical and social activities, resulting in underdeveloped pre-reading, mathematical, manipulative and social skills. Inspection evidence shows that after only a short time in the nursery class, all children make rapid progress where these experiences and opportunities are provided, and where teaching is consistently good. Children generally make steady progress throughout reception year and inspection evidence shows that most have already attained the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning as they near completion of the Foundation Stage. Some children of higher ability are attaining beyond this. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and the few for whom English is an additional language and they make good progress.
75. Teaching has improved in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection and, consequently, children are now achieving the goals. Teaching is at least satisfactory and is good, overall, compared with a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching observed during the last inspection. Teachers, the nursery nurse and classroom support staff work well together as a team. The support staff are well deployed and take a full and effective role in teaching the children. An appropriate curriculum has been established and planning and teaching are based on the Foundation Stage curriculum and Early Learning Goals, as was required by the last inspection. Nursery and reception staff plan activities together to ensure that children benefit from a balanced range of experiences according to their needs and abilities. Careful assessment through observation takes account of children's different starting points so that teaching is building on what children can already do. The co-ordinator leads the phase effectively and has a good understanding of what needs to be done to develop the curriculum and further improve teaching.
76. Parents are well informed about the Foundation curriculum and what is to be taught every term in each area of learning, through regular newsletters and the school website. There are suggestions and guidance on how parents can help their children achieve specified learning intentions. Further opportunities for informal dialogue between staff and parents, on curricular or other issues, are available at the start and end of sessions, when parents are welcome to come into classrooms. Where parents are able to give time to support their child's learning at home, this valuable contribution make a positive impact on children's progress in school.

Personal, social and emotional development

77. Many children entering the nursery class have had limited opportunities to develop personal and social skills in terms of sharing, taking turns, conforming to routines and playing with others. Skilful teaching and warm relationships ensure that children make significant progress in the

nursery in these areas. Sound teaching in reception ensures that children build appropriately on the good skills developed in the nursery. Most reach the goals set nationally in this area of learning at the end of the Foundation Stage.

78. In the nursery class, there are many opportunities to build self-esteem and independence. For example, children are confident to find their name cards to self-register and de-register at the start and end of sessions, many without adult help. Mostly, children come happily into school, choose an activity and take leave of their parent or carer without fuss. The very good learning environment, well-organised routines and effective admission procedures ensure that children settle very quickly into the nursery class. Older children are encouraged to support the younger ones and 'show them the ropes'. Parents are actively encouraged to come into the nursery and reception classes with their children at the start of sessions. Some children need this parental support for a short while, but others have enough confidence to come in by themselves. Children are happily engaged in a variety of activities after parents leave. Children's self-confidence and self-help skills develop rapidly in nursery as a result of encouragement to choose their own activities and try new ones. These skills are built on in reception where children make informed choices from a wide range of equipment and resources and are well able to tend to their personal hygiene and undressing and dressing for physical activities and swimming. Staff in both year groups promote personal development effectively by ensuring that equipment and resources are easily accessible to children and help them to become independent. Children take responsibility for clearing away, putting on protective clothing for messy activities and washing hands afterwards.
79. In the nursery class, staff have high expectations of behaviour with clear boundaries, which are known to the children, who are generally well-behaved. In reception, children remain absorbed and concentrate for long periods on chosen tasks, showing perseverance and maturity of attitude. However, a minority of children who are immature or have special educational needs find it hard to participate sensibly or sustain concentration during some activities when part of a large group. This can sometimes result in the loss of valuable teaching time, while the teacher is dealing with the inappropriate behaviour. Individual children who experience personal, social or emotional difficulties are well supported and generally make good progress towards their targets.
80. In both year groups, children generally play and work well together. For example, in reception, a group of children engaged in making a large collage dragon from 'litter' and other materials co-operate well to negotiate who will complete the different parts. They are considerate towards each other, working amicably as members of the team and sharing materials and equipment sensibly.
81. Adults provide good role models for the children in terms of mutual respect and courtesy. Children are constantly encouraged to show tolerance and friendliness in their relationships and they show an increasing self-awareness and awareness of others, including those from other cultures and with beliefs different from their own, as they progress through the Foundation Stage.

Communication, language and literacy

82. Most children reach the standard expected in communication, language and literacy by the end of the reception year and some attain higher levels than this.
83. Many children enter the nursery class with good vocabularies and the confidence and ability to communicate clearly. A small number of children who have English as an additional language and a small group with limited speech and communication skills receive appropriate support and make good progress. Children's listening skills are less well developed. Teaching in both year groups is good and all staff ensure that all children have opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills and that these are reinforced within all activities. In the nursery class, staff promote the use of language for communication, thinking, problem-solving and imagination effectively. Children are encouraged to use language creatively when describing the sounds made by percussion instruments. When asked if he thought that the instrument sounds like rain falling, one child replies that it is more like 'books falling off a shelf'. Expressive language is effectively developed through role-play when children take on the parts of shopkeeper and customers in the

Pet Shop. Children are reminded that they must listen to each other during discussions about their pets or when making suggestions for names for the new class goldfish. Reception staff use every opportunity to develop these skills further by encouraging children to listen to others speaking and, with some success, not to interrupt. Many children listen well in large groups and most contribute clearly when answering questions or engaging in discussions. The reception classrooms are appropriately equipped with areas for role-play, but these are not exploited to the full because there are insufficient staff to intervene in the play and enhance learning on a regular basis. When staff do participate, they intervene effectively to reinforce and promote vocabulary, introduce ideas and make links to other areas of learning.

84. Many children enter nursery with little knowledge or experience of books or reading. Staff encourage them to handle books properly and teach early reading skills well in both year groups. Children in the nursery class like to sit quietly in the book area, choose books and 'read', either independently or with a friend. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children develop interest in and enjoyment of reading. They choose books on a regular basis to take home to share with their families. By the time children enter the reception classes, they have a good understanding of the meaning of print and how to turn the pages of books carefully. They are confident to re-tell their favourite stories and recognise some familiar words. Children pick out words from books, wordlists and captions on displays successfully to include in their writing. The work on letter sounds is begun in the nursery class where children are introduced to various letter sounds through games, rhymes and songs. Many can remember objects and characters beginning with 'k' from a video programme they have watched previously. Adults model reading with expression, using the speech of different characters in the story of Red Riding Hood and ask certain children to copy. The children show a good understanding of story characters and begin to explore how they might think, feel or act during a question and answer session where they ask questions of the 'wolf'. Elements of the Literacy framework are used in the reception classes and a sound understanding of letter sounds is developed through word, sentence and text level work. The teacher encourages the children to use various strategies to read unfamiliar words. Children can recognise words, using initial letter sounds, rhyme patterns and pictures as clues. Reception children are encouraged to read at home and take key words to learn where appropriate. Children's progress is carefully tracked, using comprehensive records.
85. The development of early writing in the nursery class is encouraged and included wherever possible in play activities such as the Pet Shop, where shopping lists of the pet foods need recording. The children have written all the labels on the tins of food themselves. There are good examples of children's early writing displayed around the classroom and there are many opportunities for them to develop their skills. Most children can write their names legibly with well-formed letters; some can do this independently. The writing corner invites children to become real writers and they make cards for friends and family and 'write' messages inside them. They have word lists around the room to help with their writing and they are encouraged to find the words they need by looking at the initial letter. Some children can write simple sentences and have a go at spelling the words themselves. Good teaching in the nursery class ensures that the children progress well and are at expected levels or beyond by the time they enter reception. Teaching in reception is good and takes account of the concentration spans of a minority of less mature children. By the end of the reception year, many children have a sound knowledge of simple grammar and punctuation and are beginning to apply this in their writing. Displays of children's writing around the classrooms and in books demonstrate that they write for a variety of purposes. Good progress can be seen in the increasing accuracy and control in letter formation and successful attempts to write regular three and four letter words using their knowledge of sounds. Most children are at the expected goals in this area of learning and some exceed them by the time they enter Year 1.

Mathematical development

86. Children's mathematical experiences in terms of counting reliably, sorting, matching, sequencing and shape recognition are often limited when they enter the nursery class. This area is well taught and all pupils make good progress in nursery. Children rapidly establish an understanding of number through counting rhymes, songs and games and engage in a variety of activities to

promote skills of matching and sequencing. Good quality displays encourage children to investigate and experiment with number and shapes through sorting and matching. Some children who are new to the nursery are unsure about naming numerals and counting reliably to five. The majority of children are secure counting to ten and more able children can count beyond this. Counting and number recognition are effectively reinforced through role-play in the Pet Shop. Here, children buy and sell tins of pet food and have to look on the counter to see how many pennies each item costs. Children are helped through prompt cards with the correct number of pennies drawn on for each price. Children playing in the shop are able to count out the correct number of coins in exchange for the goods. The nursery nurse intervenes to move learning on by challenging 'How many more pennies do you need to buy that tin?' Nursery children are secure in recognising and naming simple two-dimensional shapes and can identify properties such as side and corners. A few children recognise similarities and differences of the shapes. Some begin to relate their knowledge of shapes to everyday objects – one child looking at a triangle said it looked like a boat's sail. An early understanding of capacity is promoted through play in sand and water and practical activities such as baking.

87. Sound teaching and practical activities help reception children to make steady progress as they take part in numeracy sessions, number games and role-play. Teachers use guidance from the National Numeracy framework for the reception year appropriately, ensuring that children have a secure basis for National Curriculum work in Year 1. The introduction to numeracy sessions is used suitably to reinforce and extend mental number skills, for example, enabling the whole class to count numbers from zero to 50. Practical activities in the reception classes ensure that children build with interest on earlier skills and provide opportunities to use numbers and coins in everyday contexts. A group of children play a bus stop board game, having been introduced to addition and subtraction symbols and the rules of the game. They know that the minus and plus symbols mean take away and add and move their counters forwards or backwards correctly when they land on them. Children building a bus station with construction bricks can calculate how many buses will be left when two are taken away. Two children filling in numbers on the front of buses can say and write numerals in the correct order accurately up to 20y. After some help, they are able to recognise patterns in the numbers and begin to predict how to write numerals beyond this. A more able child can record numbers to one hundred and read them. Children playing in McDonald's café appreciate the principle of exchanging real coins for items on the menu and know that the items have different costs. Children try to add up the bills to calculate what they will have to charge and are successful in adding two or three items. The majority of children have attained the goals in this area of learning by the time they finish the reception year.
88. Resources are of good quality and children handle them with care. Teachers use classroom displays appropriately to constantly reinforce new skills and knowledge, and ensure children have opportunities to use these in activities across other areas of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

89. When they begin in the nursery class, many children have an adequate range of experiences for their age and a basic general knowledge. Because of this, the majority of children achieve the learning goals by the end of reception. Generally, they are very inquisitive and are eager to investigate and experiment with everything around them. Nursery staff capitalise on these positive dispositions effectively. All children achieve well in widening their knowledge and understanding of the world through a broad range of exciting and interesting activities. As part of a topic on 'Growth and Living Things', nursery children help the nursery nurse to plant some seedlings in the outdoor play area. She explains clearly about the needs of plants to be able to grow and relates this to their own experience of eating and drinking. Key technical vocabulary such as soil, compost, leaves, roots and stalk is introduced appropriately. The children are very eager to take a turn in planting the seedlings and handle them very carefully so that the roots are not broken. Later in the day they water the plants and, when questioned, remember that the plants will die if they don't get water and they need soil to 'fix the roots in'. The arrival of a new pet goldfish creates great delight and children watch it swimming with fascination. They talk about the parts of a fish as they make models of the goldfish, fix on fins and tails and make patterns to represent scales. They know that the pet fish must be looked after and fed fish-food otherwise it will die.

90. Both nursery and reception children have opportunities to observe changes in living things over the passage of time. They study photos of themselves as babies and now as four and five year olds and can describe the differences. Children in both year groups are generally confident and competent in the use of computers and listen to taped stories and rhymes on machines, which they operate independently. Children use a variety of programs to support different areas of learning and use the mouse competently to point, click and drag on-screen pictures. Three nursery children take turns sensibly to operate the computer and join in the songs and rhymes enthusiastically. They can change the program and close it down when it is finished. Opportunities for further developing children's computer skills are sometimes limited by the unreliability of the equipment and the unsuitable height of computer workstations for the age of the children.
91. In the reception classes, children undertake an appropriate range of activities that make good links to other subjects and teaching is sound. Children build on what has been learned in the nursery class and use this knowledge to explore the properties of materials by sorting them into simple categories of wood, metal and plastic. They are able to say which materials might be found in different rooms in a house and the suitability for purpose. Children learn about electricity and are challenged to think of things in their houses, which are powered by electricity. They come up with many sensible suggestions – microwave cookers, kettles, fridges, televisions and computers. Some children know the difference between appliances, which are battery operated and those needing to be plugged into a socket. The teacher introduces and reinforces key vocabulary and children begin to use this correctly in the lesson. A study of bulbs and seeds planted in the classroom and outside add to their knowledge of the life cycle and the effects of the environment on living things. The outdoor play area is also well used to extend children's understanding in this area of learning. They 'paint' pictures on the ground with water with a selection of brushes. When questioned about why their pictures disappear after a while, children can explain that the sun has dried up the water like it does puddles.
92. During self-chosen and planned activities, children are given opportunities to design and make items, using a variety of tools and resources. They choose tools and materials appropriately and manipulate them safely and sensibly with increasing accuracy. For example, a small group of children choose a cardboard box, scissors and felt-tip pens to design a facemask. They make holes for the eyes, nose and mouth and these are positioned to fit the designer's face. The children collaborate well and agree colours and decoration for the mask. When asked by an adult how the mask could be kept in place without holding it, they start to discuss the ways they can attach strings or elastic to achieve this.

Physical development

93. By the end of reception, most children meet the goals for this area of learning. Children enter nursery with well-developed physical skills and confidence in terms of co-ordination, balance and control of large body movements. However, few have had experience or opportunities to practise finer manipulative skills, such as using pencils, paintbrushes or scissors and playing with constructional toys and jigsaws. Teaching is good and all children make good progress in these skills in the nursery class, where they learn to manipulate a range of tools and equipment for writing, drawing, painting and cutting with increasing skill. Adults do not intervene too quickly when children have difficulty in manipulating materials, but guide and encourage them to practise their skills and enhance their learning. Children in the nursery class have daily opportunities to use a range of wheeled toys outdoors and show increasing control in pedalling and steering. The nursery nurse joins in with the play and encourages them to stop at the zebra-crossing and steer within the marked roadways safely. Children climb and slide on large equipment confidently with good control as they play on the outside grass area. Staff supervise these activities closely and are careful to impress on the children that they need to take turns and behave sensibly and safely.
94. Following improvements to the outdoor play area, the provision for reception children is better. They now have access to this secure area, which they share with the nursery class. The school recognises the need to extend and further develop outdoor play facilities to provide more space

and a greater variety of opportunities to complement the indoor learning environment. The existing outdoor area can be used only at certain times, as there are insufficient staff to provide continuous supervision and intervention. Opportunities for development of physical skills are supplemented by weekly sessions in the small hall, where children play ring games and walk, skip and dance with an increasing sense of rhythm and co-ordination. They are gradually developing self-control and awareness of others in the space around them. Teaching is sound and most children make steady progress. Additional support from adults secures good progress for those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. Children in reception benefit from weekly swimming lessons. A qualified instructor leads these. The children enjoy the sessions and look forward to them with excitement. Most of the children are confident to swim with the aid of armbands or rings. A few can swim without any aids. They make very good progress during the lesson, improving technique and style.

Creative development

95. The provision of a good range of activities, including art, music and imaginative play, contributes appropriately to children's creative development, and they achieve the goals in this area by the end of the reception year.
96. In the nursery class, children become familiar with a rich variety of materials with which to make pictures and models. Many have had limited previous experience of experimenting with and exploring colours and textures, or working creatively to a large or small scale. The quality of teaching and the provision for creative development for nursery children is very good and they all progress very well. They explore the potential of paint in their colourful pictures of pets with good effect and make very good likenesses of dogs, cats and fish, using the modelling materials with sensitivity and skill. Children sing with confidence and select instruments from the music table to experiment with sound. A small group of children give an impromptu performance of 'Pitter, patter raindrops', singing tunefully and accompanying themselves with rainsticks very competently. From listening to a selection of instruments, they can say which ones sound the most like raindrops falling and are beginning to recognise the difference between playing loudly and softly. The role-play area enables children to take part in imaginative play in the Pet Shop. Staff participate very effectively in role-play and small world activities to encourage children's imagination and creativity which blossom as a result.
97. In reception, activities are appropriate and well organised for the children and teaching is sound. There is a permanently supervised creative area, which provides on-going opportunities and experiences for all children to develop their skills. Classroom assistants provide good support, to enable children to benefit fully from the activities in this area. This is especially effective in the case of some children with special educational needs, whose self-esteem and confidence are boosted through these practical activities. Children build on their experiences in nursery and choose with confidence from a full range of materials to complete their work. A group of children working co-operatively to make a collage picture of a dragon choose shiny scrap paper to represent scales and long straws for the tail. They create an effective textured result by using a selection of pasta and buttons to supplement the coloured paper. There are many opportunities for singing and moving to music and rhythms. In assembly, children sing tunefully and softly accompanied by the guitar. In movement lessons, they skip and clap the correct number of beats and keep time reasonably well. In the reception classrooms, there are good opportunities for children to act out roles and create imaginary scenes in imaginative play. They play independently and construct their own scenarios with little adult intervention. Teachers intervene occasionally to encourage, direct and pose questions. However, there are too few staff to extend children's ideas and imagination on a regular basis in order for them to make even better progress.

ENGLISH

98. At the time of the last inspection, standards in English were in line with the national average for seven and 11 year olds. Progress was satisfactory throughout the school. Since the last inspection, attainment at age seven has improved and is now above average in both reading and writing. At age 11 attainment remains broadly average. Standards are good at Year 2 and

satisfactory at Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs continue to make good progress throughout the school. There is no overall gender difference in the progress made. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

99. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2001, pupils' performance was well above the national average in reading and writing. When compared with attainment in similar schools, pupils achieved standards above the average in reading and well above in writing. Performance at the higher levels in reading was above the national average and close to similar schools. In writing, performance at the higher levels was well above the national average and above similar schools. In the last three years, standards have risen in reading and writing. During the inspection, evidence showed that pupils' overall performance is above average in reading and writing and average in speaking and listening. Progress is good in reading and writing and satisfactory in speaking and listening.
100. The results in the 2001 national tests for English for pupils aged 11 were below the standards found nationally. When compared with similar schools, attainment in English was also below average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was below the national average and below similar schools. In the three years 1999-2001, the performance of pupils in English has fallen below the national average. However, during the inspection, evidence showed that pupils' attainment is in line with the national average and that pupils make satisfactory progress. This is largely due to differences between cohorts, but can also be attributed to more secure teaching resulting from the Literacy Strategy. The school exceeded the 2001 target for English by one per cent. The target for 2002 is more demanding, but the current Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve them.
101. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing speaking and listening skills throughout the school. Pupils are keen to answer questions and contribute to whole class discussions. They express their own points of view with confidence and back these up with reasoned argument. Teachers value the contributions pupils make to discussion and praise them. Pupils are generally attentive to the teachers, other adults and each other. Their responses to discussion and questions show understanding of what they hear and they follow instructions carefully. Speaking and listening skills are developed well through such activities as a pupil in a Year 6 class taking the role of a character from a book and being questioned by the rest of the class.
102. By the age of seven most pupils read suitable material with an appropriate level of fluency, expression and understanding. They are able to recount stories in sequence, talk about the main characters and events in a story and predict what might happen next. Pupils use different strategies to read unfamiliar words. They use their knowledge of letter sounds, look at illustrations and consider the text of the story. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and can use the library to find specific information. Pupils use contents pages, index pages and dictionaries independently and use skimming and scanning techniques to find the information they need. They know what a glossary is. By the age of 11, pupils of all capabilities read suitable material with an appropriate level of confidence, accuracy, fluency, expression and understanding. They talk about their reading preferences and name favourite authors and literature. They can retrieve information from a variety of sources, including the internet. Some pupils reported not using the school library, preferring the village library, but when required to do so, pupils can locate books and use them appropriately as suggested in the National Literacy Strategy. Many pupils show an enjoyment of reading and frequently read at home, but a small minority displayed a dislike of reading anything. Pupils develop their skills of inference and deduction and can support their opinions about events and characters with references to the text they have read. In class discussions, they show empathy with characters in the text they are studying.
103. By the age of seven, most pupils write independently, spell common words correctly and use simple punctuation accurately in their sentences. Most pupils form their letters correctly and achieve a consistency in the size of their writing. A few pupils join their writing consistently. Pupils of all capabilities use a variety of openings in their sentences. Pupils of average and higher ability begin to use a greater range of punctuation and description, but often make careless

mistakes in the use of capital letters and full stops. Simple stories are written with a sequence of events. Pupils experience a wide range of writing opportunities, including news, story writing, poetry, letters, book reviews, invitations, lists, instructions and suspense writing. By the age of 11, most pupils use a fluent, joined script. Their writing features more sophisticated use of sentence structure and vocabulary to gain the interest of the reader. Sentences are varied for effect; include metaphors and similes and an appropriate range of punctuation. Pupils of all capabilities are able to develop characters through their writing and average and more able pupils use paragraphs correctly. Higher attaining pupils make effective use of suspense and twists in their writing to engage the reader. A wide range of writing experiences is offered to the pupils and includes eye-witness reports, note-taking, wills and testaments, terms and conditions, letters, instructions, persuasive writing, poetry and personal responses to Shakespeare. Pupils are encouraged to draft and redraft extended pieces of writing, but these opportunities may need to be increased at the expense of the breadth of writing. The subject leaders are aware of this issue and the need to review it. Pupils have opportunities to use their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum, as in geography, history and art and design where pupils select the form of note-taking that they prefer when researching information. The study of texts, such as the story of a family in South Africa at the time of apartheid, contributes to the cultural and moral education of the pupils. Information and communication technology is used to practise the skills of researching for information and word processing and to present illustrated work.

104. Overall, the behaviour and attitudes of pupils in lessons are very good in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Generally, pupils are attentive in lessons, are keen to answer questions and take part in discussions. They show an enjoyment of the subject. Pupils generally respond positively to the teachers and have good relationships with all adults and each other. Pupils co-operate well, work collaboratively when required to do so and sustain their concentration when working independently of the teacher. However, a small minority of older pupils, mostly boys, are sometimes inattentive and rude when the teacher is talking, engage in off-task behaviour and distract others from their work. This behaviour is not always handled effectively, interrupts the flow of the lesson and has a negative effect on the experience of the whole class. Most pupils show a pride in their work, discuss it sensibly with adults and each other and show an appreciation of the work of other pupils.
105. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a good knowledge of the English National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. Planning is good and the intended learning is clearly indicated and shared with pupils so that they clearly understand the purpose of the lesson and what is expected of them. Work provides appropriate opportunities for all pupils to learn, but only occasionally does this involve tasks specifically designed to challenge the more able pupils. There is good support from teaching assistants for pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make good progress. They provide good support for pupils taking part in the intervention strategies for literacy such as the Early Literacy Support and Additional Literacy Support programmes. Classrooms are tidy and attractive and resources are organised so that the pupils can use reference materials independently. Teachers respond positively to the pupils, value their contributions to discussion and encourage them to build their confidence. Teachers demonstrate reading and writing for the pupils to show how the objectives of the lesson can be met and to show good practice. There are often good links between the whole class work and the group-work to provide the pupils with opportunities to practise their skills. Some lessons would benefit from a more flexible approach to the order of literacy lessons to achieve a better flow between the whole class and group-work. For example, in a Year 6 lesson the work on grammar would have been better placed at the beginning of the lesson so that the shared reading could lead directly to the related group-work on the text. Questioning is often used effectively to involve all pupils and to develop understanding. Lessons maintain a good pace and time-limited tasks are set for the pupils to help them sustain concentration. The final part of the lesson is sometimes used well to question the pupils about what they have learnt and understood and to involve them in an evaluation of their work to see if the lesson objectives have been met. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress is satisfactory. The use of marking to focus comments on the pupils' targets and lesson objectives is inconsistent. In the best examples, the comments give pupils a clear idea of the progress they are making against their targets and what they need to do

to improve. Where teaching is less effective, there are missed opportunities for the pupils to read aloud the shared text. The flow of the lesson is sometimes interrupted by the order in which work is introduced and, at the end of lessons, teachers do not always pick up fully on the lack of progress of some groups of pupils. In Years 3 to 6, a more consistent and assertive approach to behaviour management is required to deal more effectively with a minority of pupils who are disruptive.

106. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator in the upper school has observed lessons, but the co-ordinator in the lower school has not yet had the opportunity to do so. Both have had release time to undertake a scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work and they have a good overview of the subject that is helping them to identify strengths and weaknesses in the subject and to support colleagues in raising standards. Reports have been provided for governors and these have helped governors to keep in touch with the standards achieved and the progress made. The National Literacy Strategy is well established throughout the school and the intervention strategies such as the Early Literacy Support and the Additional Literacy Support programmes are having a positive impact. The co-ordinators have clear priorities for the development of the subject to ensure that the needs and interests of boys are met. Arrangements for assessment are satisfactory, overall, but the co-ordinators are aware of the need to strengthen the target setting process at group and individual level and to improve information for parents so that they can become more involved in supporting their children.
107. Classroom resources are well organised, appropriate for the age range and of good quality. However, the library is in need of additional resources and reorganisation to improve the range and quality of books and to provide the pupils with an attractive, stimulating and resourceful area. Many of the books are outdated and in poor condition and are not attractive to the pupils. Some of the furniture is in a poor condition.

MATHEMATICS

108. At the time of the last inspection, standards in mathematics were in line with national averages by the ages of seven and 11. Since the last inspection, standards in national tests at age seven have remained broadly in line with national expectations. Results in national tests for 11 year olds have varied over the last three years, but remain close to the national average. Evidence from the current inspection confirms that standards at seven and 11 are in line with national averages. Pupils with special educational needs continue to make good progress. Overall, the school achieves satisfactory standards through the school and has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
109. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2001, pupils' performance was above the national average and when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was very high. The proportion attaining at the higher levels was close to the national average, but below average when compared with similar schools. The trend of improvement over time has been similar to the national average. Over this period, boys have tended to outperform girls, but this has not been by a significant margin and was not discernible within the work seen. Inspection findings indicate that attainment of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and in line with national standards. The difference between the previous year's test results and the attainment seen during the inspection arises from differences in the cohorts with the current Year 2 having more pupils with special educational needs. However, consistently good teaching, well targeted support for pupils with special educational needs, small classes and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy are beginning to secure good progress for pupils.
110. In the national mathematics tests for 11 year olds, in 2001, pupils' performance was close to the national average, but the number of pupils attaining the expected level fell below the national average and was below similar schools. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels was close to national averages, but was below the performance of similar schools. The school believes this below average performance was a result of pupils being given insufficient preparation to familiarise them with the nature of the external test, leading to a number of pupils not demonstrating their true

level of ability. Inspection evidence would support this view, as pupils are generally attaining satisfactory standards in line with national expectations, although there is some evidence of a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. Over the last three years, the rate of improvement has been similar to the national average. Overall, pupils aged seven to 11 make satisfactory progress and there is no difference between the performance of boys and girls. The school missed the target set in 2001 for mathematics by 15%. The targets for 2002 are even more challenging, but Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve these. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented, leading to better teaching in many classes, but this has yet to impact fully on standards. In addition, the large class sizes in Years 3 to 6 make it difficult for teachers to provide the detailed support required in some lessons.

111. By the age of seven, most pupils can explain what they are doing, using appropriate mathematical language and can explain the meaning of common mathematical symbols. Most pupils can solve problems, using the four operations with support and many know their addition and subtraction number facts to 20. Most pupils have a good understanding of place value and are able to employ an appropriate variety of strategies to their work. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils quickly worked out the facts required to solve magic square puzzles and then applied this new knowledge to the construction of their own magic squares, showing that they understood terms such as diagonals, columns and rows.
112. By the age of 11, pupils are able to select and use a variety of units of measure and the associated equipment correctly, justifying their choices appropriately. They can then use this information to solve problems associated with the use of scale drawings, and most pupils can discuss the relationships created by doubling areas and perimeters. Most pupils can select the appropriate mathematics required for each task and many can use mental methods of calculating areas and volumes, quickly. Pupils have a good understanding of place value and work confidently with two, three and four digit numbers. In a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils enjoyed the challenges involved in finding percentages of bigger numbers and used their calculators effectively to check answers.
113. Across the school, appropriate emphasis is placed on linking mathematical development to other subjects. Pupils use their mathematical understanding in information and communication technology lessons, for example in Year 2, to work out how to move the programmable toy in the right direction and in geography to calculate the number of countries using the Euro. In design and technology, in Year 5, pupils employed careful measuring skills to make and test their 'crash vehicle' for a project. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' mathematical development, for example, pupils in Year 4 used a 'Paint' program to enhance the pupils' understanding of symmetry.
114. Pupils throughout the school are generally well behaved and show good and sometimes very good attitudes towards mathematics. In Years 3 to 6, most pupils have positive attitudes and behave well, but the unacceptable behaviour of a minority of older pupils compromises the smooth running of some lessons and interrupts the learning of the class. Generally, however, pupils respond well to teachers and other adults and show care and concern for their peers. When presented with the opportunity, pupils of all ages are able to work co-operatively and learn from each other.
115. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers' planning follows the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy and the three-part lesson is a familiar feature for all pupils. Teachers make sure that the intended learning is expressed clearly and shared with the pupils at the beginning of each lesson, so that they have a good understanding of what is expected of them. Mental and oral sessions are well planned, usually delivered with appropriate pace and pupils use with confidence a variety of equipment that enhances their understanding and maintains their interest. In the majority of lessons, work is suitably matched to the needs of pupils, although some tasks designed for the more able pupils lack sufficient challenge or these pupils are required to complete more basic activities before moving on to work that is more demanding, resulting, occasionally, in these pupils making insufficient progress. In most lessons, teachers use effectively the last part of the lesson to establish if lesson objectives have been achieved. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent across the school. The best practice clearly indicates to

pupils what they have achieved and what needs to be done to improve, but, in many instances, teachers use marking solely to congratulate pupils on their achievements. Pupils have group targets pasted inside their mathematics books and some teachers make useful reference to these to help pupils to check on their progress.

116. All pupils, but particularly the lower attainers, benefit from the extensive provision of Learning Support Assistants, who advise and support pupils effectively as they work. Most teachers manage their pupils well, but, on occasions in Year 6, unacceptable behaviour is overlooked to the detriment of other members of the class. Most pupils enjoy and respond well to the work set by their teacher. Teachers use skilled questioning techniques and where this happens, it raises the level of pupils' understanding and encourages them to think more deeply. In most lessons, effective classroom organisation means that time is used well and pupils are able to work productively.
117. The leadership and management of the subject are good. There are two mathematics co-ordinators who work together effectively. They have written a mathematics policy, reflecting the changes brought about with the National Numeracy Strategy, that provides clear guidance for teachers. They have prepared an action plan for mathematics that links appropriately to the School Improvement Plan and addresses well the identified priorities. Both co-ordinators have a good knowledge of the subject and, on occasions, have successfully modelled the teaching of mathematics for colleagues. They have scrutinised pupils' work and observed lessons, providing helpful feedback to teachers. They are well versed in recent developments and have arranged for an extensive training programme for other staff that has successfully improved the quality of the teaching of mathematics across the school. They have analysed national, local and school data, but a more rigorous approach is needed for tracking the progress of individuals and comparing this with what might be expected nationally. Resources for the subject are managed well and other staff have been encouraged appropriately to incorporate new equipment, such as number squares and number fans, into their lessons to make learning accessible to all, whatever their preferred style of learning. There was little evidence of pupils using the library to support learning in this subject.

SCIENCE

118. At the time of the last inspection, standards in science were in line with national averages by the ages of seven and pupils made satisfactory progress. By the age of 11, standards were above average and pupils made good progress. Since the last inspection, standards have risen for pupils aged seven from being average to above average. However, they have declined for pupils aged 11 from above average to average. Evidence from the current inspection largely confirms these standards. While attainment at the age of seven is above average, inspection evidence does not indicate it to be as high as judged by teacher assessments for pupils in 2001 when all pupils achieved the expected level. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls at both ages. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, but the drop in standards by pupils aged seven to 11 indicates unsatisfactory improvement in standards for these age groups. At the end of Year 2, standards are good and at the end of Year 6 they are satisfactory.
119. Teacher assessments of seven year olds in 2001 indicate that the school's performance was very high in comparison with the national average and with similar schools. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels was above average and close to similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards at the end of Year 2 are good and above national expectations. Good teaching and a well-devised curriculum contribute to the good progress made by pupils.
120. In the national science tests for 11 year olds in 2001, pupils' performance was close to the national average, but below that found in similar schools. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels was below the national averages and well below the performance of similar schools. Over the last three years, the school's trend of improvement has fallen slightly below the national

average. Inspection evidence confirms these standards. The major reason for these less favourable results is that teachers frequently under-estimate how capable pupils are of thinking independently. This is particularly apparent in pupils' experimental work and applies especially to more able pupils whose progress is often unsatisfactory.

121. At the age of seven, pupils have an above average knowledge and understanding of science. They know about materials and their uses, as well as physical processes. They compare different materials in many ways and know the changes which can or cannot be reversed if substances like chocolate or clay are heated. Higher attaining pupils understand that metal conducts electricity. Pupils can explain an electrical circuit and use an appropriate vocabulary to contrast different lights and sounds. They realise that things move because of pushes or pulls and explain night and day at a simple level. Pupils' knowledge of living processes is not as advanced. They identify the major parts of a bird's body and a plant. They know what plants need to live and give details about the differences between spiders and birds, but they are unsure about how creatures' bodies help them adapt to their environment. In Year 2, pupils begin to develop well their scientific skills of enquiry.
122. At the age of 11, a significant number of pupils have an above average knowledge and understanding. However, few use it to plan their own experiments or to write their own reports. They can identify and explain the functions of body and plant organs and describe the process of photosynthesis. They know some of the ways animals are classified. They explain the water cycle and reversible and irreversible changes to materials. They understand sieving, filtering, dissolving and separating through having carried out set experiments, but they are less confident about physical processes. They explain the apparent movement of the sun and know that pushes and pulls are measured in newtons, but only the higher attaining pupils can explain different types of electrical circuits and friction.
123. Pupils have good attitudes and behave well in science lessons throughout the school. They handle resources with care and enjoy the opportunities provided to take part in practical sessions. They usually listen well, contribute sensibly to class discussions and follow instructions carefully.
124. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good in classes for five to seven year-olds, where teachers expect pupils to think for themselves and pupils respond with enthusiasm. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on growth, the teacher asked pupils to suggest ways to investigate what plants need. They initiated some sensible ideas and the teacher was careful to include all of them in the discussion. This led to the more able pupils already beginning to understand what constitutes a fair test. Moreover, all pupils thought carefully about how to set up their own experiment, choosing their own resources and predicting the outcome. Pupils' work shows that teachers expect them to explain what they write. Consequently, they develop an advanced understanding, for example, of the effects of a tree on the growth of other plants. Teachers throughout the school have good subject knowledge and manage their classes well. This helps pupils to learn scientific terms and to take the trouble to present their work neatly and accurately, often with good illustrations. They collaborate well when working in groups. However, as pupils become older, teachers pay too little attention to addressing the widening differences in their abilities. All pupils often have to undertake the same work, which means that those with special educational needs have difficulties when additional support is not available, while those with high ability are not stretched.
125. The subject leaders provide good direction. They ensure that the quality and range of opportunities to learn is good, with a careful balance of factual input and experimentation. They pay careful attention to pupils' work and ensure that a good systematic check is kept on the curriculum and teaching. Science is a current priority and teachers are strongly committed to improving standards further. However, there has been little in-service education focusing on improving teaching methods and, thereby, standards of attainment. Resources to support the subject are good, but there is little evidence of pupils using the library extensively to research scientific issues. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to record findings.

ART AND DESIGN

126. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in art was judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Evidence from the current inspection shows that standards of attainment have remained in line with national expectations at ages seven and 11. Pupils, including those with special educational needs continue to make satisfactory progress throughout the school. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
127. By the age of seven, pupils are able to use a variety of materials to create artefacts and can suggest ways to improve their work. Higher attaining pupils work with greater skill, producing more detailed models. Pupils of average and lower ability produce recognisable minibeasts, using clay, and, with support, they can describe their work appropriately. Pupils are able to express their ideas for making particular artefacts, can execute their designs, using joining techniques learnt in design and technology, and can decorate their models appropriately, understanding why they need to cover the waxy surface with plain paper first.
128. By the age of 11, pupils may have undertaken research at home for particular projects and usually share their knowledge freely with their peers. Most pupils can collect information and review the features of the work of an adult artist, discussing the similarities and differences between their work and the original. Some pupils are able to compare and contrast the work of different adult artists in relation to the style, subject matter and medium employed. Most pupils can use a range of media to produce an image of an everyday object, also having the opportunity to extend this work effectively, using the 'Paint' program on the computer.
129. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good throughout the school. Pupils enjoy this subject and are attentive to their teachers, listening carefully to instructions and responding appropriately. They use materials and tools safely and help to tidy away willingly at the end of lessons. They show that they can support each other and work collaboratively when the situation allows.
130. The quality of teaching in art and design is satisfactory across the school. Teachers work from detailed plans that clearly identify the intended learning and show links to other subjects such as science and religious education that give relevance and purpose to the tasks undertaken. Activities are pitched appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers are well prepared and resources are readily available and presented in a stimulating way. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher had taken the time and effort to display an array of plants to appeal to the pupils. Resources are generally adequate, but not always sufficient, to provide pupils with enough variety to make independent choices. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge and introduce techniques confidently. However, in some lessons there is a lack of emphasis on the use of technical vocabulary that limits opportunities for pupils to develop a dialogue about progress. Where it is available, teachers deploy adult support suitably to offer guidance and encouragement. This ensures that pupils remain on task and observe what they are drawing with care and growing precision. However, on occasions, teachers intervene too little to reinforce teaching points, for example, when drawing, pupils are allowed to draw what they think they see rather than representing what they are observing.
131. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leader for art and design has only recently taken on the responsibility and is relatively new to teaching. She has secured the use of a designated art room, which she has revitalised with advice from the specialists in the High School. She runs the weekly Art Club, which is usually attended by 12 or 14 older pupils. She is currently working on the 'Celebrating Art' aspect of the school website and on extending the Art Week to include the younger pupils. The subject leader attends network meetings run by the LEA, but there have been few opportunities for training to be extended to other members of staff. The subject leader monitors planning through the planning files and pupil achievement largely through the work on display. These strategies provide useful information about the work covered and a broad overview of standards, but they do not give her sufficiently detailed knowledge to allow her to track progress. Through discussion with colleagues she seeks to identify weaknesses in provision and put in place strategies to redress them, such as inviting colleagues to

observe her own teaching. However, there is currently no opportunity for her to monitor the teaching and learning taking place in classrooms.

132. The subject has an appropriate policy, which provides sound guidance for teachers and supports the nationally recommended schemes of work that the school has adopted. Evidence from the extensive displays that enhance the school environment shows that pupils have experienced a wide range of media within their two and three-dimensional work. Good use is made of the 'Paint' program on the computer and pictures and designs created in this way are of good quality. However, very few artists and craftspeople either visit the school or host visits to their galleries and workshops and the subject leader recognises that this denies the pupils an important reference point for the development of their own work. Assessment of art and design is insufficiently developed across the school and does not inform coherently the planning of future learning. Consequently, teachers are not always aware of the differing rates of progress made by pupils and the necessary adjustments to secure good progress are not recognised. The library includes books to support this subject, but few pupils were seen to access this resource during the inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

133. A limited number of design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on discussions with teachers and pupils, school documentation and displays of work, as well as the few lessons observed. At the time of the last inspection standards in design and technology were broadly in line with expectations throughout the school and pupils made satisfactory progress, although for the older pupils there was uneven coverage of some aspects of the subject. Standards are now securely in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and all pupils make satisfactory progress, including those pupils with special educational needs. The introduction of the nationally recommended scheme of work is ensuring improved coverage and greater continuity and progression in the subject. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in most aspects of provision.
134. By the age of seven, pupils can discuss the purpose of a project, can draw and sometimes label a design, select appropriate materials and employ skills learnt earlier to make the artefact. Thereafter, they can record an elementary evaluation of the success of the project, identifying whether they were pleased with the outcome and why. Pupils in Year 2 reported on how they took their puppets into assembly to show the other children and identified the follow-up work that they had done on the computer.
135. By the age of 11, pupils show an increased facility in handling tools and materials commensurate with their age. They can relate their work in design and technology to other areas of the curriculum and generally use tools and equipment safely and appropriately. They are able to design an artefact, drawing upon previous knowledge and relating the context to the needs of the user. They can make the necessary changes to their designs, as they work. In discussion, they can explain what has worked well and what could be improved and the available samples of work show increasing accuracy and attention to the quality of the finished product. Opportunities for pupils to make choices are sometimes missed, for example, in a Year 6 lesson on mask-making, the teacher had set out only one type of glue and one type of paper, leaving no scope for alternative methods to be introduced. In some instances, too little emphasis is given to the planning stage and pupils are not given sufficient encouragement to produce step-by-step plans that are clearly labelled and easy to follow. The work set for more able pupils too often fails to place increased demand on them and the teachers are sometimes too willing to accept average work from these pupils. Pupils' work demonstrates appropriate use of literacy skills to write reports on their projects and a good use of information and communication technology to research the products they design.
136. Most pupils enjoy this subject and, particularly, the opportunities it presents to be involved in making articles. They are helpful to each other and work co-operatively when the situation encourages this, sharing resources and commenting positively on the work of others. Pupils

generally are attentive in lessons and respond promptly to the teacher's directions. However, in one Year 6 lesson, the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils was such that the teacher rightly stopped the lesson and removed the pupils from the art room until reasonable behaviour ensued. Most pupils show that they are aware of the safety requirements of the subject and take part in clearing away without delay at the end of the session.

137. No design and technology lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, but from the planning seen, the discussions held and the work considered, the quality of teaching appears to be at least satisfactory for pupils aged five to seven years. Similarly the teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. One lesson observed in Year 6 was very good. Teachers produce clear plans with the intended learning identified and shared with pupils. Teachers give pupils clear instructions and demonstrate techniques clearly, although older pupils are sometimes disrespectful to the teacher, talking over her, which impedes the efficiency of the teacher's demonstration and disadvantages the learning of others. Teachers have good subject knowledge, but, at times, expectations are too low, limiting the progress made. Pupils are praised both for effort and achievement and the final part of the lesson is used appropriately to evaluate progress so far and to identify the next stages of the process. In the very good lesson, the teacher had high expectations, the design was well researched and pupils confidently reflected upon their work in a well conducted question and answer session at the end of the lesson.
138. This subject currently has no subject leader owing to staffing difficulties, but it is hoped that a new appointee, joining the school in September, will take on the role. In the meantime, the headteacher has maintained an overview of the subject, but development during this period has been unsatisfactory. Teachers plan lessons based on the nationally recommended schemes of work and willingly support each other in amassing the necessary materials and equipment. There is currently no policy for the subject, no guidance for teachers in interpreting the national schemes of work to relate to the needs of the pupils of Cheslyn Hay Primary School and no action plan to indicate how the subject will develop. Assessment systems for the subject are currently unsatisfactory, although the strong corporate ethos of the staff ensures that all teachers provide for pupils appropriate access to the design and technology curriculum. Only limited use is made of the library to support work in this subject.

GEOGRAPHY

139. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was found to be in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils made satisfactory progress throughout the school. During the current inspection, evidence from a small number of lesson observations, samples of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and staff, school documentation and displays indicate that standards at ages seven and 11 remain in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
140. By the age of seven, pupils can draw independently a labelled plan of their bedroom and their classroom with a key to the information provided. They can identify what has changed in a locality over a period of time and can identify what they consider to be good and bad features in their local environment. They can offer their own suggestions on how to improve safety in the local park. Pupils of all capabilities can identify the physical and human features of a seaside location. They can identify a country they have been studying on a map of the world. When studying an island they can identify the range of vehicles that would be needed or used and make informed choices about the types of employment that could be found there. They answer questions, using selected information from a variety of sources and their own observations. Pupils understand that different countries use different money and that some countries in Europe have changed their currency. Many pupils can locate those countries on a map of Europe and know that England is part of the UK.
141. By the age of 11, pupils of all capabilities can identify features, using geographical language. They understand and can illustrate the formation of geographical features such as volcanoes and lakes. They are able to locate relevant information from a variety of sources, including the internet and use information and communication technology in the presentation of their work. Maps of a

variety of scales are used to identify journeys and calculate distances. Pupils show a knowledge and understanding of different environments in various part of the world and know the difference between man-made and natural disasters. The subject provides good opportunities for the practice of literacy skills, as when Year 6 pupils used note-taking skills to record information and Year 5 pupils wrote to the Highways Agency about the new road. The study of problems and developments faced by communities, locally and further afield, contributes to the personal development of the pupils. The study of countries such as Peru contributes to the cultural development of the pupils. Some lessons are rather short and to some extent this fragments pupils' learning and reduces the opportunity for pupils to work in depth.

142. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are mostly satisfactory, but a small number of older pupils are frequently inattentive and off task and disrupt the learning of others. Most of the pupils show a genuine interest in the subject, respond to questions willingly, use resources sensibly, work collaboratively, help each other and apply themselves well to tasks and sustain their concentration.
143. The quality of teaching, overall, is satisfactory, with some examples of good and excellent teaching. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and use technical vocabulary appropriately, so that pupils incorporate the correct terminology in their responses to questions. The intended learning is clearly identified in teachers' plans and this is shared with the pupils. The personal experience of the pupils is drawn on to good effect. For example, one pupil in Year 2 was able to relate his experience of a long stay in Spain to the change of currency there. Pupils are given good opportunities to put forward their ideas and teachers are skilful in drawing out from pupils their thoughts and extending their thinking. In the more successful lessons teachers secure a brisk pace and exemplify what is being learned as the lesson progresses. A variety of sources of information is used for pupils to practise their information retrieval skills. Resources are generally well-organised and pupils receive good support from teachers and other adults. A suitable range of books is made available to support geographical themes, but opportunities for pupils to make an independent selection of materials are missed when pupils do not retrieve books for themselves from the library.
144. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinators are developing their role and are beginning to identify the strengths and weaknesses in their subject. A policy statement has been produced and the planning ensures the coverage of the geography National Curriculum. They have reviewed the provision and organisation of resources and ensure their effective use through a recording system. The co-ordinators have completed a work tawl to gain an overview of standards, but have not yet had the opportunity to observe lessons. Assessment of the progress the pupils make is unsatisfactory. Procedures to assess the progress of pupils at the end of each unit of work need developing to ensure that targets are being met and that there is appropriate challenge for all pupils. The co-ordinators are developing links with other schools to share best practice. The co-ordinators' role in monitoring and school self-evaluation is in need of further development so that they have a thorough understanding of standards of teaching and learning throughout the school.

HISTORY

145. Standards have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection and are typical of seven and 11 year olds. The curriculum has been reviewed in line with changes to create a balanced programme that suitably covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection.
146. Pupils across the school make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs often make good progress when work is adjusted to suit their needs and additional adult support is targeted at specific groups. No history lessons were observed in the five to seven years age group, but on the basis of the work seen, discussions with pupils and teachers' planning, pupils make steady progress in developing their understanding of the past. Younger pupils study old and new toys and can identify similarities and differences between these. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of people and events in the past and are beginning to

appreciate the passage of time. They show some understanding of how life in the 1900s differed from today and are able to contrast then and now.

147. Between the ages of seven and 11, pupils develop a sound understanding of chronology and a greater awareness of life in earlier times. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils are working at the nationally expected level, but few pupils attain the higher levels. Most pupils can describe characteristics of past periods and societies, showing a growing factual knowledge and understanding. They can suggest a variety of historical sources and appreciate that these might be interpreted differently. In Years 3 and 4, pupils studying Tudor Britain are able to extract key information from portraits of Henry VIII and Anne of Cleves and relate these to known facts about the period. Pupils in Year 5, working on the theme of Britain since 1948, show developing research skills, making good use of the internet and the library to search for relevant information. Working in groups they are able to devise historical questions to steer their investigations. By Year 6, pupils all demonstrate knowledge of the Ancient Greek civilisation and many can describe the influence that this civilisation has had on today's world, for example the tradition of theatre.
148. Most pupils show a lively interest in the past and many are able to talk with enthusiasm about notable events and key characters from history. In lessons, pupils apply themselves appropriately to the tasks given, but some lack a sense of urgency in their work and the presentation in books is not always as good as might be expected.
149. It was not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching in the five to seven years age range as no lessons were observed. Teaching of the seven to 11 year olds is satisfactory. Teachers question pupils well, keeping them alert and interested. Lesson plans are clear and all pupils are aware of what they are expected to do and learn. Tasks are appropriately adjusted to make them accessible to all pupils, but, on occasions, teachers miss the opportunity to challenge the more able to organise and interpret information in more detail and with greater precision. Teachers generally manage pupils well, but occasionally in Year 6 the challenging behaviour of a few pupils interferes with the progress of others. Teachers provide interesting activities in lessons, making effective use of the sound resource boxes prepared for each topic and, occasionally, they enrich the curriculum with visits to museums and less frequently by introducing visitors who are able to share experiences or show artefacts. Some teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to collaborate, research and to present their findings but in some lessons teachers rely too heavily on individual work or teacher direction. Pupils respond well when given the option to work together. Teachers make appropriate links with literacy and information and communication technology when presenting history. Pupils are given a range of recording opportunities including letters, lists, tables and newspaper reports and they have regular access to the internet, CD ROMs and historical software as sources of information.
150. The subject leaders provide sound leadership for the subject. They have audited resources and have organised these well in topic boxes to support the planned curriculum. They have a good understanding of the history curriculum and provide support for colleagues when asked to do so. Opportunities for the monitoring of lessons and the review of pupils' work have been limited, as the school has sensibly given priority in the first instance to English, mathematics and science. The subject leaders work closely together to highlight areas for development. They realise that assessment and recording systems are unsatisfactory and appreciate the need to further develop teachers' understanding of the National Curriculum levels and introduce a more rigorous framework for assessment that allows pupils' progress to be tracked more effectively. The school's programme for history is broadly based and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, the school's timetable arrangements that allocate single lessons to history each week, sometimes results in a fragmentation of topics with some aspects not being covered in sufficient depth.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

151. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment was satisfactory and in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6 it was above average and pupils made good progress. Evidence from the current inspection shows that this position has been sustained and, overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school has

continued to give information and communication technology a high profile, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and pupils confidently use new technology to support their learning across the curriculum. The school has recently received funding through the National Grid for Learning Scheme and there are suitable plans in place to create a computer suite with this money. This will be of great benefit and supplement well the current arrangement that consists of a combination of networked and stand-alone computers arranged around the school in classrooms, shared areas and in a small community room. Computers are in great demand throughout the day and, although timetabled, their location sometimes makes it problematic for class teachers to supervise and intervene effectively. Occasionally, sessions on the computer can prove distracting for the pupils in the adjacent classrooms. The school is scheduled to embark upon intensive staff training through the New Opportunities Funded Training Programme immediately following the inspection. However, some staff have independently completed computer courses to develop their personal skills and the headteacher has provided staff with regular support to ensure that all teachers are able to deliver the National Curriculum to the appropriate level. The range and quality of software is good.

152. On the basis of the work seen, discussions with pupils and the taught sessions observed, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making satisfactory progress and those in Years 3 to 6 are making good progress. Standards are in line with those expected of seven year olds and are above those expected of 11 year olds. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through the use of carefully selected programs designed to support literacy and numeracy. The school is well poised to further improve standards in this subject.
153. In Year 1, pupils are able to use a paint program to draw 'Action Man' figures, showing good mouse control. In Year 2, pupils can program a toy to follow a prescribed route. They direct the toy forwards, backwards, left and right and gradually refine its movements to increase accuracy. By the age of seven, pupils can use a word processor, changing the colour and size of the font, and use a paint program to create patterns and pictures. Only limited opportunities are provided for pupils to use a computer to classify information and few are able to recall how this is done. By the age of 11, pupils are able to work confidently with a range of programs. Year 5 pupils use a spreadsheet, entering data and selecting a suitable function from the icon bar to calculate. Higher attaining pupils are able to create their own formulae to solve a range of problems. They are able to edit their work on a word processor and incorporate pictures from clipart or the Internet. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were seen using a paint program to good effect to represent everyday objects in the style of the artist Andy Warhol. Higher attaining pupils working on a project about the construction of a new motorway link near to Cheslyn Hay were able to integrate information from a variety of internet sources, combine this to create a persuasive argument in favour of the development, prepare a presentation using Power Point software incorporating pictures and diagrams and email this to the headteacher for his comments.
154. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy using computers and have very positive attitudes towards their work. They concentrate and respond well in class or group sessions and get on with their work responsibly when they have specific tasks to complete. Pupils are keen to learn and want to improve their skills. Pupils with special educational needs gain success and achieve well because they are enthusiastic about information and communication technology. Throughout the school, pupils co-operate well and help each other willingly; they like to demonstrate what they can do. They recognise that computers are an important feature in everyday life and that they are used extensively in shops, businesses and hospitals for a variety of purposes.
155. The quality of teaching is sound in lessons for five to seven years olds and good in lessons for seven to 11 year olds. Teachers' subject knowledge varies, but it is never less than sound and often it is good. Other adults working in the school contribute well to the teaching of information and communication technology as they support groups and individuals in their learning. Direct teaching methods are used to teach skills and routines or to introduce programs; pupils then are given suitable opportunities to practise these. Appropriate tasks related to the work to be completed on the computer are provided for groups without immediate access to a computer, but, occasionally, this work is not adequately monitored, owing to the siting of the computers. Planning clearly identifies what pupils are to learn and this is shared with them. Teachers give

clear instructions and have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Most teaching is done effectively as part of other subjects, for example when pupils in Year 4 use quadrants on the computer to consolidate their understanding of symmetry. Other opportunities include word-processing work in English, collecting and recording information in history and drawing pictures and diagrams in art and design. In setting homework, teachers often encourage pupils to use their computers at home. However, other sources of information are highlighted for the minority who do not have access to a computer.

156. The headteacher holds overall responsibility for this subject and he provides satisfactory leadership. He has a clear vision for future developments in this subject. He has ensured that national guidance has been taken into account and suitably adjusted to meet the needs of the school and there is a clear policy that provides good guidance for teachers. The headteacher supports information and communication technology teaching across the school and thus has a sound knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in this subject. He enthuses pupils and gives a high level of commitment to the regular production of a pupils' newspaper that is posted on the school's website. Arrangements for assessing pupils' work in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory. Teachers assess the progress made during lessons and record this in their mark books, but there is a lack of consistency across the school. Not all teachers have a detailed knowledge of the progress made by individual pupils and this reduces their capacity to target work precisely to meet individual needs and to track progress over time. However, they evaluate their delivery of the planned units and use this information appropriately as they plan the next unit of work.

MUSIC

157. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment was in line with national expectations throughout the school and all pupils made satisfactory progress. During this inspection, only one lesson was observed in classes for five to seven year-olds. However, pupils' singing was heard and a practical session was taken with a representative number of pupils from Year 2. A broader view of pupils' work at the age of 11 was possible by access to several lessons, singing in the classroom and on videotape and a similar practical session with pupils from Year 6. This evidence shows that standards at Years 2 and 6 have been maintained at a satisfactory level and pupils throughout the school continue to make satisfactory progress. The good use made of teachers with expertise in music contributes positively to the standards achieved. However, there is not enough opportunity in some activities for the more able to progress at an appropriate rate. This was shown in class lessons on the recorder, when all pupils worked at the same level. Here, the school is not taking advantage of having two classes in each year to be flexible in order to meet pupils' needs. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection.
158. At the age of seven, pupils sing with a satisfactory sense of melody and maintain a steady beat. They create simple sound effects by choosing appropriate instruments. Pupils listen satisfactorily to each other and imitate simple rhythmic phrases, but find it difficult to be creative and improvise. At the age of 11, pupils' singing is also in line with expectations. Although there are variations in accuracy of intonation, the volume and rhythm are sound. Pupils' listening to music for the purpose of appraisal is not as well developed in Year 6, although it is in other years. This is more to do with behaviour than ability. However, pupils improvise brief melodic and rhythmic phrases as part of a group performance and work from notation. Their knowledge of musical terminology is good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are provided with equal access and this ensure that those with special needs make at least satisfactory and often good progress.
159. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in classes for five to seven year-olds. In the one lesson seen, there were high expectations, so that all pupils were included both in participation, in performance and in listening attentively to one another. The teacher had a very good rapport with her pupils and generated strong interest and very good collaboration. The quality of teaching in classes for seven to 11 year-olds is satisfactory. However, there is a significant number of pupils in Year 6 with an immature attitude and their behaviour is not always adequately addressed. This was demonstrated by their reaction to singing from a culture different from their own, which contrasts with the attitudes in the other classes. There is very good teaching in Year 4, where teaching of

techniques on the recorder and notation is well structured and pupils learn the correct terminology. There are high expectations of accuracy and the teacher generates a great deal of enthusiasm.

160. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leaders provide good support to teachers, especially with a scheme of work which recognises their needs. They have a good understanding of the subject's strengths and points for development and have ensured that there is a wide range of very good resources. Assessment arrangements are weak and this reduces the accuracy with which individual progress can be tracked and work can be adjusted to meet the needs of all pupils. Although some pupils have access to lessons on musical instruments and Year 6 take part in a school production the school has not sustained the extra-curricular opportunities for younger pupils. Musical resources, including a range of instruments, recorded music and software, are very good. The library resource is adequate, but it is not used well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

161. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was found to be in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6, but a significant number of pupils did not attain national expectations and progress was unsatisfactory throughout the school. During the current inspection, observations of a small number of lessons, including swimming sessions, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of school documentation indicate that standards are in line with national expectations in gymnastics, games and athletics at Years 2 and 6 and progress is satisfactory throughout the school, including those pupils with special educational needs. Swimming provision is a strength of the school and most pupils meet the required standard by the age of 11. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection.
162. By the age of seven, pupils know the importance of a safe warm-up before exercise and the effect it has on their bodies. They have experienced a range of activities, including dance, games, gymnastics and swimming. They have developed appropriate skills of controlling a ball with a bat. They can remember, copy and repeat simple actions and many pupils can sustain the control of a ball whilst moving. All pupils, including those not taking part in the physical activity, are involved in observing and evaluating the performance of others and giving feedback to help them improve their level of skill.
163. By the age of 11, most pupils demonstrate an appropriate level of precision and control in their performance. Warm-up activities are completed sensibly and many pupils offer suggestions from their experience of sport outside school. They can describe the effect particular exercises have on their bodies and show an awareness of safety. They have a clear understanding of the value of exercise to health and fitness. Many can throw and catch a ball with accuracy within the context of a competitive game and they show a developing understanding of tactics. Pupils of all capabilities can observe and evaluate the performance of others to help them improve their skills. Most pupils show a confidence in their physical skills. Pupils have opportunities to take part in dance festivals at the secondary school and perform for parents. Football training is provided after school once a week, and girls' football is strong. The school is about to develop links with Wolverhampton Football Club.
164. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They enjoy lessons and participate fully. They use space safely, are sensible in their warm-up activities and handle equipment carefully. Most pupils are very attentive to the teacher and listen carefully to instructions. They encourage each other and are very supportive of each other whilst maintaining a balanced and healthy attitude to competition.
165. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. All lessons are carefully planned to include what is to be learned and this is made explicit to pupils. Equipment is well organised and teachers ensure that it is handled safely. Teachers accommodate pupils' suggestions on warm-up exercises. Lessons build effectively upon previous learning. Teachers demonstrate the skills to be practised and constantly give feedback to the pupils on their performance and provide challenge for all. Pupils are also involved in the demonstration of skills. Lessons proceed at a good pace and there is an appropriate balance between instruction, physical

activity, observation and evaluation of performance. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and ensure that most pupils respond promptly to instructions to make for a safe working environment. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on competition, including the improvement of personal performance. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities. In some lessons, the teacher needs to exercise more direct control of team activities to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils and to prevent others dominating. The good opportunities provided for swimming and the excellent quality of the teaching in those lessons are strengths in physical education. Many activities require the pupils to co-operate and compete at the same time and this makes a good contribution to their social and personal development. Opportunities for the practical application of pupils' numeracy skills are provided in lessons such as the one where a Year 5 class measured and recorded individual performances over a given distance.

166. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has recently taken on this responsibility. Although he has not yet observed lessons or looked at planning, he has a reasonable overview of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject from discussions with staff and informal observations of pupils' skills. He is aware of the need to develop his role in monitoring and school self-evaluation to ensure that he has an accurate overview of standards throughout the school and clear priorities for development. Teachers base their planning appropriately on the nationally recommended scheme of work and this ensures that all elements of the National Curriculum are adequately covered.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

167. Standards of attainment have not progressed sufficiently since the last inspection where they were a key issue for improvement. Assessment of the school's standards is inadequate, so that there is little basis for long term planning. While the curriculum meets the expectations of the county's syllabus for religious education, it is not sufficiently rich and contributes little to pupils' spiritual or cultural development. There has been discontinuity in leadership and this has led to an inadequate check being kept on the subject's performance. The school allocates too little time to the subject for improvements to be made. Overall, therefore, there has been unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
168. At the age of seven, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the local syllabus. They recount Bible stories well and give good examples of what Christians believe. They clearly understand the major teachings of Jesus and recognise how important Easter and Christmas are to Christians. A recent visit to the local church has given pupils a detailed knowledge of its features and they understand how they are used and their symbolism. Pupils lack confidence in asking questions about what they find mysterious.
169. At the age of 11, pupils' attainment has declined and is below the expectations of the local syllabus. Their knowledge of the Bible has not progressed and they confuse the Ten Commandments with Jesus' teachings. Only the more able know more than the major Christian festivals. Pupils do not speak confidently about what Christians believe to be the message of Easter. Pupils' recall of the beliefs, teachings, practices and lifestyles of faiths other than Christianity is poor and they have made no progress in searching for meaning through asking important questions. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress.
170. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. However, although teaching is satisfactory, overall, the effect of its strengths on pupils' learning is reduced by low expectations of what they can do. Strengths lie in lesson planning, use of resources and the way teachers organise and manage their classes. In the lessons seen during the inspection, most teaching was good or very good. For example, in one where pupils were considering the purpose of prayer, the teacher stimulated a great deal of interest and mature reflection on the hardships some people face by bringing in a range of photographs. By the end of the lesson, pupils had a deeper understanding of abstract ideas such as anxiety and despair, even though they found it difficult to express in writing. Pupils respond throughout the school to teachers' lessons with very good attitudes and behaviour. This was particularly shown in both Year 2 classes when they visited a local church. However, teachers make too little use of writing in developing pupils' thinking and consolidating their learning. Moreover, they pay too little attention to its quality and do not stretch the more able.
171. Currently, the subject does not reflect the school's aims in developing the pupils' religious knowledge and understanding as well as their spiritual growth. There is an overall lack of coherence in the organisation of the subject. This is hindering progress in improving both the subject's and pupils' performance. Resources for the subject have improved and are now good, but further use could usefully be made of the library and information and communication technology to support this subject.