

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PARKFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Saltley, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103385

Headteacher: Mrs S Harries

Lead inspector: Mr Sean O'Toole

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2004

Inspection number: 267471

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	604
School address:	Parkfield Road Saltley Birmingham West Midlands
Postcode:	B8 3AX
Telephone number:	0121 464 1131
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	To be elected
Date of previous inspection:	8 <sup>th</sup> March 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Located in Saltley, a suburb of Birmingham, it is much bigger than most primary schools. The school has grown in size since the previous inspection and is oversubscribed. Almost all of the 565 pupils (286 girls and 279 boys) speak English as an additional language and over half are at an early stage of learning English. The most common languages spoken are Mirpuri, Panjabi and Pushto. A further 35 boys and 43 girls attend the nursery part time each day. The area in which pupils live is amongst the most deprived in the country. Over half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals (well above average). On starting school almost all pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are very low when compared with those expected for their age, and their knowledge of English and personal, social and emotional development are particularly poor. The school has identified about 28 per cent of pupils with special educational needs, and ten have statements; both figures are above the national average. Most of these pupils have difficulties relating to speech and communication. The school is involved in several initiatives including Excellence in Cities and SureStart. In recent years it has earned several awards including the Basic Skills Mark, Healthy Schools and Investors in People.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20891	Sean O'Toole	Lead inspector	English as additional language; Information and communication technology; Physical education.
14178	Patricia Willman	Lay inspector	
21094	John Brennan	Team inspector	Special educational needs; Mathematics; History.
23566	John Iles	Team inspector	English; Art and design; Design and technology.
21858	John Pryor	Team inspector	Science; Geography; Religious education.
20911	Judith Dawson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Personal, social and health education and citizenship; Music.

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This inclusive school provides a good quality of education.** The teaching is good and enables the pupils to achieve well. Pupils do well in English, mathematics and science when compared to schools with similar intakes. The school is well led and managed and offers good value for money.

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

- The headteacher has created an effective team which successfully encourages pupils to succeed
- Pupils of all abilities make good progress in learning basic skills
- Standards achieved in ICT at the end of Year 6 and art and design through the school are above average
- Teaching is often very good in Year 6
- More able pupils could do better
- Some aspects of the curriculum are lacking in depth and balance
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good; relationships are very good because of the school's positive and caring ethos
- Standards in physical education are low

Improvement since the last inspection in March 1999 has been good; the key issues of the last report have been tackled well. Attendance has improved for the majority of pupils. The role of governors has developed significantly and the leadership team has a good grasp of issues facing the school. Despite some annual variations in pupils' performance in national tests, the school has met with good recent success in raising attainment. Involvement in a variety of initiatives has resulted in improvements, especially in English at the end of Year 6. Teaching, learning and assessment are better than previously reported. There is good potential for further improvement.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E*	E	E*	D
Mathematics	E	D	E	B
Science	E	C	E	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

There are significant barriers to pupils' learning. Pupils start school with very low levels of skill, knowledge and understanding and most come from very poor socio-economic backgrounds. Almost all are from homes where English is not generally used and their limited understanding of English hampers the pupils' success in national tests. Although mobility levels are about average, most of the pupils joining the school after the Foundation Stage have little or no English. Taking into account these factors, and the good improvement in test results in 2004, **achievement overall is good.**

Pupils make good progress in the nursery and reception classes and achieve well but few attain the expected goals for their age in the areas of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage. Poor language skills and limited personal, social and emotional development hamper pupils' achievement. Inspection evidence shows that progress and achievement for the different groups of pupils in Years 1 to 6 are mostly good. National test results in 2003 and inspection evidence show that by the end of Year 2, the pupils attained above average standards in writing and average levels in reading and mathematics when compared with schools with similar intakes although reading, writing and

mathematics were well below the average of all schools. Evidence in pupils' work over the last year shows improvement and higher standards at the end of Years 2 and 6. Over the last few years there has been some variation in national tests results at the end of Year 6 due to the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Inspection evidence and preliminary results of the 2004 national tests show there has been much recent improvement; standards are now high enough and achievement is good. The improvement has been achieved by changes in teaching and the impact of several initiatives. There is little variation in boys' and girls' performance in national tests. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and their achievement is good. Pupils at an early stage of learning English receive much support and achieve well. However, more able pupils could do better. Pupils achieve well in art and design and ICT, although their skills in history, religious education and geography need further development and standards in physical education are below average.

**The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.** The school council plays an active part in voicing pupils' opinions and staff encourage pupils to take a full part in decision making. Pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships are good; racial harmony and tolerance permeate the school. There have been no exclusions. The school has worked hard to improve attendance and punctuality, which are now satisfactory.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided is good;** the school is particularly effective in nurturing pupils through its programme of personal, social and health education. **Teaching and learning are good.** Good planning and teaching of basic skills linked to effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and those at early stage of learning English are some of the successes in teaching. The good use of assessment and well focused marking contribute much to pupils' development, though teachers do not always match the needs of the more able well enough and the work set for these pupils is sometimes too easy. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is mostly good, though it is at its best in Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils are keen to learn and work hard, although many lack confidence in initiating tasks and applying skills independently. The school's sound curriculum meets statutory requirements but the balance and depth of teaching of history, geography and religious education needs improvement. The school works hard to enrich pupils' learning experiences through extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. Pervading the school is a sense of care for individuals. Great importance is attached to parental involvement and links with the community are very good.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The very good headteacher, supported ably by her deputy and other senior staff, leads the school well and provides vision, clarity, challenge and inspiration for her staff. The school is very clear about its objectives, reflected in its strategic planning, and all staff show a strong commitment to school improvement and want the pupils to succeed. **Good leadership and management** combine with an active and effective governing body to make a successful team. Governors ensure that the school meets its statutory requirements. Subject leaders are developing their skills in managing the curriculum. Administrative systems are efficient and finances robustly managed. The school sets challenging targets through the very good use of data, and this process links well with the tracking of individual performance. Good use is made of funds, and best value principles are used effectively in purchasing supplies and services of good quality.

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

Parents are very satisfied with the school and speak positively about the impact it makes on their children. Pupils show pride in their school and regard the staff highly.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Provide more challenging work for more able pupils

- Provide more opportunities in religious education, history and geography for pupils to develop and extend their research, writing and thinking skills and to improve their confidence in using and applying what they have learned to solving problems
- Raise standards in physical education



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Overall, achievement is good. Standards in the 2003 national tests were higher than similar schools in mathematics and science and inspection evidence indicates that standards in English, mathematics and science have improved over the last year. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are equally successful.

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

- Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress in English
- Standards in art and design are above average and pupils in Year 6 attain well in ICT
- Many pupils find it difficult to apply basic skills in solving problems
- More able pupils could do better
- Standards in physical education are below average

#### **Commentary**

1. There are several significant factors which influence pupils' achievement. These barriers to learning include very low attainment on admission, socio-economic deprivation and a high proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning English. Mobility into the school is about average but the vast majority of pupils starting school after the reception year have little or no English and many come from homes backgrounds where the language relies on oral rather than written traditions. Almost all pupils have poorly developed language skills on entry to the school and personal, social and emotional development is very limited. The school compensates for these barriers well through good teaching and effective leadership and management.
2. Progress made by different groups of pupils is mostly good and at its best in Year 6. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. Many start school with low levels of language skills but prompt assessment of need and the successful targeting of language ensures that pupils do especially well in meeting the targets set for them in reading, speaking and writing. Pupils at an early stage of learning English, including new entrants, make good progress because their work is carefully pitched at the right level to maximise their learning and the level and quality of support provided enables pupils to make specific gains in learning and applying new vocabulary. The school's inclusive approach also provides opportunities for these pupils to work alongside more fluent English speakers. Gifted and talented pupils have good opportunities to extend their skills in subjects such as music and ICT. Although in most lessons teachers set different work for more able pupils, this is sometimes not pitched at a sufficiently challenging level.
3. National test results at the end of Year 2 in 2003 showed that standards were well below average and, when compared with schools in similar contexts, standards were below average in reading and mathematics but average in writing. Inspection evidence points to improvement in 2004. Improvement has been below the national trend mainly because of a dip in reading standards. The school's initiatives last year, including a strong focus on developing library skills, additional intervention and adult support and regular practice, have helped to raise standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	13.7 (13.9)	15.7 (15.8)

Writing	13.5 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.6 (15.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 87 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Results of the Year 6 national tests in 2003 showed that standards in mathematics and science were well below average and in English they were among the lowest five per cent of schools. Similar school comparisons showed that pupils attained average standards in mathematics and science and below average levels in English. Inspection evidence and preliminary test results show that in 2004 pupils achieved especially well in English and achieved well in mathematics and science. Changes in the teaching in Year 6, new support structures, a strong focus on reading and a range of initiatives to develop writing have made a good impact and their effects are being continued with the current pupils. Overall, the trend in improvement has not kept pace with national improvements because the cohort in 2003 performed at a low level due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a large intake of pupils at an early stage of learning English. Inspection evidence shows that standards are sufficiently high and recent improvements are likely to be maintained because of the rigorous system of assessment and well focused teaching of basic skills. In mathematics and science pupils have a secure grasp of basic skills and knowledge, but most find it difficult to apply their knowledge in problem solving.

***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.1 (24.9)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	24.9 (26.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	27.1 (28.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. There is good work in art and design throughout the school, with standards above average. Pupils achieve well in ICT and standards are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. A limited range of work was seen in other subjects. The main areas for development include raising standards in physical education which are below average and expanding the range of opportunities for pupils in religious education, history and geography.

**Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils respond well to the good opportunities provided for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, as a result, their attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. Pupils are punctual and attendance is satisfactory, representing improvement since the last inspection.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils’ good attitudes and behaviour help to create a positive climate for learning
- Relationships throughout the school are very good
- Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and are consistently encouraged and praised for making the right choices
- Systems to improve attendance are very good
- A significant number of pupils lack self-confidence

**Commentary**

6. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered through assembly themes, currently focused on the beauty of the world outside and that within each person. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of these concepts through the study of the beauty of form and colour and this is complemented by observations of nature. Pupils are taught about the values and beliefs which govern other communities around the world. Through their active and successful fundraising, pupils appreciate the difficulties faced by some of these communities in this country and overseas. The provision for cultural development is good and this has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about different cultural and religious traditions and the school provides a good range of interesting visits to support awareness. Pupils talk with enjoyment of past visits and with excited anticipation about those they hope to go on. Displays around the school reflect life in a wide range of countries both ancient and modern and pupils enjoy European, Islamic and African art and music.
  
7. Because of the strong moral and social values promoted consistently by the school and supported by parents, the pupils enjoy coming to school and show good levels of interest and enthusiasm. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The pupils willingly comply with these expectations and, as they grow older, they become useful and sensible members of the school community. They listen carefully to instructions and apply themselves well in lessons. However, in the afternoons, levels of concentration sometimes wane and a significant minority of pupils become restless. Pupils feel valued because teachers always listen to their responses and ideas in lessons, and this encourages them to participate.
  
8. Some pupils, many of whom are at an early stage of learning English, lack self-confidence and struggle to join in lessons but they are supported well by other pupils and staff. Because of the often very good relationships between most pupils, there are few concerns about bullying and pupils trust the staff to deal with any unkind behaviour fairly and effectively. The peer supporters play a useful role in mediating minor disputes and helping other pupils. This system has a good impact on playtimes. The school council has a clear understanding of its role and the members are proud to have been chosen to represent their classmates. There have been no exclusions.
  
9. Although the children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development, because many join the school with limited English and social skills, few reach the levels expected for their age by the time they leave the Reception class.
  
10. Although the published attendance figure for last year was well below that found in most primary schools, most of the absence relates to the 'Eid celebration when virtually all pupils are absent. The adjusted figure shows that attendance overall is similar to other schools. Almost 70 percent of pupils attend more than 95 per cent of the time. Unauthorised absence has been reduced by a system of first day calling and most parents now contact the school promptly when their child is absent. Very good systems monitor individual attendance and, with the valued support of the education social worker, any unusual or prolonged absence is followed-up. Problems are identified and resolved sensitively. Because parents are aware of the implications of taking their children on extended holidays during term time, there has been a significant reduction in this practice. Systems to encourage punctuality are very good and most pupils arrive on time.

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

Authorised absence	
School data	7.7
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are good and are enhanced through the effective use of assessment. These aspects have improved since the previous inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics is good
- Support staff contribute much to learning
- The more able are not always challenged sufficiently
- Marking is well focused and guides pupils on how to improve
- Some lessons lack pace
- Some pupils struggle to use their initiative in learning

### **Commentary**

11. At this early stage in the year, the mostly good teaching in the Foundation Stage is underpinned by caring relationships and an emphasis on encouraging pupils to settle into routines and to develop positive attitudes to each other and to learning. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is especially good. Staff make good use of resources to interest and motivate the pupils and the very effective intervention by adults ensures that the children learn successfully. Much attention is given to promoting communication, language and literacy skills, and pupils in the reception classes are encouraged to speak in English and their home languages. Access to good resources stimulate in the pupils a desire to “read”. On some occasions, in the nursery, there is an overemphasis on control by the adults at the expense of providing opportunities for independent learning. Mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world are taught well and include much practical work, such as baking gingerbread men. Staff have a good understanding of the areas of learning and of how young children develop skills, knowledge and understanding. Through careful observation and assessment they track the pupils’ needs and intervene at the right moment to move learning on.
12. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Staff are keenly aware of the needs of individuals and have good levels of expertise in providing work which is matched to the targets in individual education plans. Regular reviews of the pupils’ progress and discussion with them about their next steps in learning reassure the pupils and help them to focus on their work. Support staff play a pivotal role in extending the pupils’ skills. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, the teaching assistant guided pupils through a discussion about characterisation and extended learning through well focused questions designed to stimulate conversation and to encourage the pupils to express their thoughts and opinions.
13. Pupils at an early stage of learning English benefit from good teaching. Challenging work is planned to include a strong focus on improving language and relevant subject content. Much time is given to individuals to practise speaking and to learn new words. Support assistants and teachers, several of whom are bi-lingual, work alongside the pupils and work hard to include the pupils in class and group activities. Careful grouping enables the pupils to benefit from working alongside more fluent speakers. Good analysis of the pupils’ needs and regular and well focused assessment enable staff to track progress and provide increasingly challenging tasks. As a result, the pupils make good progress and achieve well.
14. There is a strong focus on developing pupils’ basic skills. It has been enhanced by the effective use of initiatives in speaking and listening, developing basic mathematical competence and

extending reading skills through improving library skills. The good teaching of English and mathematics is resulting in rising standards. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make effective use of the literacy and numeracy strategies to make lessons interesting and relevant to the pupils. Emphasis is rightly placed on supporting pupils' development in literacy and numeracy skills but more work is needed on providing opportunities for pupils to fully extend their thinking and understanding in some other subjects, such as religious education, history and geography. Some teachers help pupils to broaden their vocabulary and provide them with good examples of writing on which to model their work. This enables pupils to grasp new ideas and find different ways of expressing themselves. Reading is taught consistently and regularly and the introduction of assessment folders and targets has added a sharpness and clarity to the development of these skills as well as providing pupils with guidance on what to do to improve.

15. Pupils enjoy lessons and work hard. They listen attentively and follow instructions. However, younger pupils, in particular, lack confidence in exploring new ideas and in using their initiative, preferring to wait for instructions from adults. This slows the rate of learning. Teachers work hard to compensate for these attitudes by offering praise and encouragement. Older pupils are more confident in initiating their own learning, partly due to their greater competence in English and the good teaching of methods of research learned in library lessons. Pupils take pride in their work, although in some classes presentation is not as good as it should be and teachers do not always insist on well formed and correct handwriting.
16. There are some notable strengths in teaching. The use of assessment, including day to day marking, promotes in pupils a desire to succeed, and the guidance provided gives a spur to learning. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good. Lessons are planned thoroughly and preparation in most cases is meticulous. Resources are used effectively and staff are competent in using interactive whiteboards to introduce lessons. Support staff have very good expertise and are briefed well so that they are clear about their role. Adults make very good use of questions which are often pitched at the correct level to stimulate thinking. There are areas for development in some lessons, relating mainly to pace, challenge and the match of work. In physical education lessons too much time is spent in explaining what is to be done and most lessons are too slow-paced, resulting in inactivity and loss of concentration. Although teachers think carefully about the work for different ability groups within the class, the tasks are sometimes not challenging enough, especially for the more able. This results in some needless repetition, as in mathematics, where brighter pupils often tackle sums which are well within their capability. In some classes, not enough is expected of these pupils in thinking about mathematical and scientific processes and in applying their skills to solving complex problems.

***Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 81 lessons***

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (1%)	16 (20 %)	35 (43%)	27 (33%)	2 (2%)	0	0

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

**The curriculum**

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum. There are appropriate satisfactory strategies to enrich the curriculum. Good resources support the curriculum well; the accommodation in the Foundation Stage is very good and in the rest of the school is satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a well judged emphasis on the teaching of English and on the development of personal and social skills to meet the particular needs of the pupils
- The curriculum planning for the whole school is comprehensive
- The depth of experience provided in some subjects and the balance between them in some classes and year groups need improving

## Commentary

17. The barriers to learning faced by the pupils, particularly poor initial English language and social skills, are addressed well by the emphasis placed on those areas in the curriculum planning. The provision of support staff, many with appropriate language skills, is good so that pupils arriving in the school with little or no English are enabled to make progress in their learning and achieve well. Good use is made of national and local strategies to support this need. The challenge is renewed with each year's intake, and particularly when older pupils without English arrive in the school. The school successfully uses its well resourced library to support the development of English within the community providing regular and sensitive support for parents as well as pupils. Through its emphasis on language development the school has a significant and positive impact on the pupils' ability to learn throughout the curriculum. Similarly, through its emphasis on personal and social development the school has a positive impact on the pupils' ability to profit from the curriculum provided. The school provides a good programme of education concerning growth and development, drugs and relationships. However, for some subjects, such as history, geography and religious education the curriculum is too narrow.
18. The imaginative use of outside agencies, as well as a network of support from neighbouring schools, has led to improvements in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Sometimes, literacy and numeracy skills are not applied as carefully as they should be in other subjects, which affects the quality of some pupils' work. However, the school is open to innovation and after careful analysis embraces new initiatives which it monitors carefully. The enrichment of subjects through, for example, focus weeks in history and geography, the increased use of visits and visitors and the development of areas of study using a number of associated subjects have all been adopted and adapted successfully to meet the needs of pupils. The school is careful to provide a curriculum which is accessible to all its pupils and takes pains to ensure that none are disadvantaged. The transition from one stage to another in the pupils' education is carefully managed.
19. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school ensures that there is a very good number of skilled assistants to help these pupils. Very detailed assessment procedures guide their deployment so that for the vast majority of their time pupils with special educational needs are taught alongside their peers. This is balanced by short periods of additional support for individuals. Senior staff at the school, including the special needs co-ordinator, usefully direct their efforts at weaknesses in learning revealed by the school's detailed assessment procedures. Intervention in Year 2 in reading has resulted in pupils making good gains through intensive and regular periods of additional help. Pupils at an early stage of learning English benefit from good provision. Staff have good levels of expertise and experience and every effort is made to ensure that pupils have someone with whom they can communicate in their home language. Documentation and solid procedures help staff to monitor pupils' progress and to pitch intervention at the right level, although the match of work for the more able is not always close enough. Support is backed up with good resources and training designed to help the pupils to be included in all aspects of the curriculum.

20. The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Pupils take part in a variety of sporting clubs and activities and many also join in music making. Good developments, including the development and use of the library and opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of visits, enhance the curriculum. Pupils speak fondly of their visits to sites of historical interest and show much pride in their involvement in the life and work of the community.
21. Teachers and support staff contribute much to the quality of education provided and have good levels of expertise and experience. They keep up to date through attendance at courses and are clearly committed to working as a team for the benefit of the pupils. The school has good resources and staff make good use of them. The accommodation in the Foundation Stage is very good. The main school building is kept spotlessly clean by a dedicated team. Teaching staff enhance the accommodation through impressive displays of pupils' work. Nevertheless, the building poses some problems for access for the disabled.

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

The school makes very good provision for the care and welfare of all pupils. They receive consistently very good quality personal and educational support and guidance. Pupils have good opportunities to be involved in school life and their views are taken into account.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The kindness and commitment of all staff ensures that parents and pupils feel confident that any problems will be handled fairly and effectively
- There is a very sensitive approach to family circumstances
- The personal support and guidance for each individual is very good

### **Commentary**

22. There is a very good awareness of health and safety issues. Fire drills are carried out regularly and records are kept. There is good provision for first aid. Regular checks of the premises are carried out which ensure that the school provides a safe environment. The site supervisor is a key element in the quality of this provision. The headteacher is responsible for child protection issues and keeps up-to-date with developments, supported by another fully trained member of staff. All staff are aware of their duty of care in this aspect of pupils' welfare and follow recognised procedures. Pupils learn about the benefits of a healthy diet through their science lessons and older pupils are given appropriate information about growth and development and drugs. The *Life Caravan* visits the school annually and this provides a useful extension to pupils' awareness of personal issues. The local community police officer is a regular visitor, teaching pupils about personal safety. Teachers emphasise the safe use of resources in lessons and playtimes are well supervised.
23. The very good relationships between pupils and the adults who work with them encourages communication and pupils are confident that someone will help them if they are unhappy or worried about something. Staff are very knowledgeable and sensitive to individual pupil's needs and are vigilant in monitoring day-to-day behaviour and personal development. There are many linguists amongst the staff and, when necessary, most pupils are able to speak with an adult in their first language. Detailed records are kept and parents involved effectively to remedy any emerging problems. Based on good procedures for assessing pupils' educational development, individual strengths and weaknesses are identified and appropriate challenge targeted to improve achievement. Further development is needed for appropriate challenge for the more able pupils. Marking of pupils' work is a particular strength, enabling pupils to learn from their mistakes.

There are good arrangements for children joining the Foundation Stage and those who join the school at other times are helped to integrate into school effectively. Teachers are always available for parents on the playground at the beginning and end of the day. There is good communication between pupils and staff and this provides an informal channel for pupils' views to be taken into account. The School Council collates and presents pupils' views on a more formal basis and the school takes note of these views, making changes when practical and appropriate.

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

The school has a good partnership with parents and has very good links with the local community. Links with other schools are good. The quality of these partnerships has improved since the last inspection.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents support the values promoted by the school and trust the staff to care for their children
- There are very good opportunities for parents to learn the skills to help their children at home
- There are very good links with community support agencies and groups
- Because a significant minority of parents speak little English, they lack the confidence and the ability to involve themselves in their children's learning

### **Commentary**

24. The parents who took part in the consultation before and during the inspection expressed positive views about the work of the school. They consider that the school is managed well and teachers are easy to talk to. Parents are provided with good information through the prospectus, which includes the annual governors' report and the regular newsletters. The annual reports on the progress of children are good overall. Many clearly indicate how well children are achieving and almost all parents attend the consultation evenings where they receive a clear explanation of their children's strengths and weaknesses and details of the specific targets set. Interpreters are provided for this occasion where there is a need. Parents comment that they feel welcome in school and appreciate the opportunities that the school provides for them to learn about what their children are doing in school. The Inspire workshops and the NACE courses are very well attended and many parents are keen to learn how to help their children. Most parents encourage their children to complete their homework. There is a group of parents who would like their children to have more work to do at home to encourage independent learning and to prepare them for secondary school. Parents willingly volunteer to help with visits and large numbers attend the performances and celebrations held in school. The fund raising events organised by the school are well attended and the funds raised are used well to improve the quality of school life. Parents' views are canvassed both formally and informally and help the governors and management of the school to plan for the future.
25. The school has very good links with the local community. Pupils visit many local amenities and interesting visitors come into the school to share experiences with the children. There is very good support from many local welfare and educational agencies and the community police officer is a regular visitor to the school. All work as a team to help and support the families to bring the children to school regularly and to give them skills to extend the work of the school at home. Adults from the business community, through the Education Business Partnership, are regular visitors to the school, reading with children. Many of the local businesses support the fund raising activities with raffle prizes. There are good mechanisms for pupils transferring to the next stage of education, enhanced by the courses run by NACE for Years 5 and 6 pupils and their parents,



preparing them for the transition. Educational links with other schools are very good and of significant benefit to all concerned. The management arrangements for the shared premises work effectively.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and other staff have brought about much improvement since the previous inspection. The school is managed well. Governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very good headteacher inspires her colleagues and leads with determination and vision
- All staff show high levels of commitment to improvement
- The school is managed efficiently and effectively
- Very good use is made of data to set challenging targets

### **Commentary**

26. The effectiveness of leadership and management can be seen throughout this well ordered and vibrant school. A strong and positive ethos and drive for good quality underpin the school's work. In recent years, the headteacher and senior staff have successfully managed significant changes such as a large increase in the school roll, staff changes, building projects, involvement in several initiatives and, at the same time, have ensured that the educational vision for improving standards has remained at the heart of the school's work. This has been reflected in the recent improvement in standards and the school's good performance when measured against similar schools especially in English in 2004.
27. The governing body make a good contribution to school development and improvement. They are keenly involved in decision making and keep track of pupils' performance through analysis of data and monitoring the work in school. Governors are well trained and show an interest in improving their skills. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set appropriate targets for improvement through the well established system of performance management. Governors know about the main targets in the school's development plan and play a significant part in setting and monitoring its objectives. Governors ensure that the school meets statutory requirements and have overseen the implementation of important policies for equal opportunities, inclusion, racial discrimination and access for the disabled.
28. The parents and pupils hold the staff in high regard. There is a successful team of teachers and other staff who show a strong commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion and this is seen to good effect in lessons and other activities. The leadership encourages staff to look at creative ways to improve performance and recognises individual's strengths so that successful teams are built with complementary skills. Imaginative approaches have been used to raise standards in English, such as the development of the library and the increased emphasis on ICT, and these are having a good impact on attainment. There are good levels of co-operation between all staff and this has a beneficial impact on raising achievement in some significant areas, such as the work in special educational needs or with pupils at an early stage of learning English. Leadership of subjects has been successful in English, mathematics and science and ICT although more opportunities to extend the role of subject leaders in other areas are needed. The school's strategic plans focus on raising pupils' achievement and include well focused timescales, measures of success and responsibilities. The plan reflects the school's ambitions and goals and is reviewed regularly and monitored by the governing body. Parents' and pupils' views are taken into account. In order to implement the objectives, staff are given good opportunities for professional development and there is an enthusiasm among staff to develop their expertise.

29. The school is rigorous in self-evaluation and has a realistic view of its strengths and weaknesses. A particular strength in leadership and management is the way in which the school has used data to track the school's performance and then produce a workable and effective system of assessment based on its findings. This is having a very positive impact on pupils' progress. The data is also used to set ambitious targets and links well with the school's robust system for performance management. All in the school are held to account with the principle of the pupils' success and well being as the main criteria for judgement.
30. All aspects of the school are managed well. The provision for pupils at an early stage of learning English and the additional well organised support available are managed well. Effective procedures and practice underpin the work with pupils with special educational needs. Policies are implemented consistently and reviewed regularly. The co-ordinator for special educational needs leads this area well. Administrative systems are very efficient and detailed information on each pupil's needs is used well to guide the actions of the school and to pinpoint additional resources and training. Good systems check that provision is working and inform suitably detailed plans for the future. The effective deployment of teachers and learning support assistants has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning. Individual skills and talents are recognised and staff are encouraged to use their initiative.
31. The school has a large budget which is managed well, and the robust systems for administration ensure that the school runs smoothly and efficiently. Finances are linked well to educational priorities and funds spent wisely. The principles of best value form a good part of the school's practice in purchasing supplies and services. The school carried forward a large surplus from the previous financial year but these funds have been allocated to building work which is in the course of completion.

### **Financial information**

#### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1,447,297
Total expenditure	1,323,924
Expenditure per pupil	2,139

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	87,928
Balance carried forward to the next	123,373

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

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

32. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall and has been maintained since the last inspection. Children make good progress from very low attainment on entry to the nursery with many children having little English language. All adults in the nursery and reception classes work together well. Careful observations of the children's work and play help the Foundation Stage teachers to identify their needs. Several teaching assistants communicate with many children in their home languages when needed. The teaching is good overall. There is an appropriate curriculum securely founded on the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. Children with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Very clear speech and careful modelling of language help children to acquire English language. Although children make good progress overall, the very limited skills of almost all children on entry to school result in their achievements in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development being well below average by the end of their reception year. Their personal and social development is below that of other children nationally. At the time of the inspection only two-thirds of the children had started school and the emphasis was on helping the children to settle into school, with a limited timetable. As a result there was little teaching to support creative and physical development. Judgements about the children's achievements towards the early learning goals across all areas of learning are based on samples of work, assessments and photographic evidence of the work of the pupils now in Year 1.

33. Samples of work in **physical development** and **creative development** show that children in the nursery and reception classes do not find controlling fine movement easy. The written work and drawing from last year shows immature formation of writing and pictures and colouring lacks accuracy, although all these improve well during the year. Children struggle to control the "mouse" when using computers. Nursery children have very limited experience of balls, hoops and other small equipment before starting school and several do not know what to do with them when playing outside. Even descending stairs causes some problems for one or two children. The teachers' planning indicates that there is an appropriate range of activities to develop the children's physical skills. In a lesson for the reception children the teacher developed the children's knowledge of the names, sound and ways to play a range of musical instruments very well. Children listened very carefully and thoroughly enjoyed the singing and the action games because the teacher's enjoyment and the fun she generated gave them confidence. The children's work from last year shows a good range of experiences including drama and artwork in two and three dimensions using a range of media. However, their skills in drawing and painting are, in the main, well below those normally achieved by children of similar age.

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

Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

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

- Children and adults have very good relationships
- Adults have consistent procedures for managing behaviour
- The insistence on calm sometimes inhibits the children's interaction with others in the nursery

## **Commentary**

34. Almost all children enter the nursery with very immature skills in personal and social development and about a quarter of the children enter the reception classes with very limited contact with others outside the family. By the end of the reception year children show appropriate confidence and are beginning to develop an understanding of the impact of their action on others. The good and often very good teaching, in the reception classes encourages the children to be responsible for their actions. For example, very effective tidying up routines in one class were executed calmly, quietly and efficiently and children were proud of the justifiable praise from their teachers. The older children are enthusiastic about their learning and teachers ensure that more reticent children, including those with little English or special educational needs are fully included and encouraged to participate. Stories and drama help children to develop empathy with others, for example, the feelings of the Billy Goats in the “Three Billy Goats Gruff”, but in general children do not readily work and play cooperatively together by the end of their reception year and many have low self-esteem, in spite of the teacher’s efforts.
35. The adults provide good role models for the children, always treating each other with courtesy, kindness and respect. The sense of fun that pervades the reception classes encourages the children to learn eagerly. The nursery provides the children with a calm and caring start to their school life. Very good care and emotional support ease children over their initial parting from their home and the range of activities help them to settle well. In some lessons observed during the inspection, more could have been done to promote enjoyment and fun alongside the development of nursery routines to help children to begin to enjoy school.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Adults model language well and most encourage children to speak at every opportunity
- Children make good progress in identifying letter sounds and mark making
- Children are given very good guidance to help them learn

## **Commentary**

36. Bi-lingual teaching assistants provide valuable support for some children and the very clear and accurate speech used by all adults provides a very good model for the children. From their first days in the nursery children are expected to listen carefully and to respond to speech. Songs and rhymes support learning well so children begin to develop English vocabulary. The reception teachers and teaching assistants place considerable emphasis on conversation and question children in a way that encourages extended answers. They are sensitive to some children’s reticence but encourage all to converse, respond to stories and answer questions. Technical vocabulary, such as mathematical terms, is developed well.
37. The children’s work shows that they develop an understanding of the sounds letters make and the way they are written. A commercial scheme supports learning well and accurate assessment of the children’s achievements enables the teachers to match the work to individual needs. Some children in the reception classes make a good attempt at writing their names. By the end of the Foundation Stage most make some attempt at writing letters, some write words with feasible spelling while a few write some common words accurately. They make good progress in the reception classes because of the good teaching, especially the very good understanding of what

the children need to learn next. The children's understanding of stories also improves well as they become more accurate in ordering events. Stories often become the focus for developing other areas of learning. For example, The Gingerbread Man prompted cooking and Mrs. Honey's Hat led to role-play, hat decoration and a relevant computer program to develop "mouse" control. The children's low level of English language skills is a significant barrier to their learning and, in spite of good progress overall, very few achieve the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy by the end of their reception year.

## **Mathematical development**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Many of the daily activities are planned to develop mathematical understanding
- The reception class teachers match the tasks to the children's needs well

### **Commentary**

38. All the staff in the nursery and reception classes understand the way children learn and provide a good range of activities to promote mathematical understanding. In the nursery, counting songs and activities are often translated into Urdu to help children learn. Most children have little understanding of number on entry to the nursery but at the beginning of their reception year most manage limited counting and some match small numbers of objects to numerals. Children match objects such as cups and saucers, and use and name different shapes to make models and pictures. Very good pace and accurate matching of the questions and tasks to the children's abilities enabled children in one reception class lesson to make very good progress. Their attitude to their learning, generated by the teacher's evident enjoyment, the fun and the delight in their successes, enabled them to achieve well. The teaching is good overall. Resources are used well and are at their most effective when carefully selected to extend learning. The children's books from last year show good progress but most have skills well below the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good range of relevant activities and resources promote effective learning
- More could be done to build on children's home experiences in the nursery
- Most teachers use stories as a stimulus for developing knowledge of the world very well.

### **Commentary**

39. Almost all children enter the nursery with a very limited knowledge and understanding of the world, some with very little experience of the world outside their homes. The adults provide a range of experiences to extend their learning. Children who had only been in school a few days, played in the home corner with an adult and had access to a range of tools such as cake cutters that were obviously new experiences to many. There was, however, little to link the children's home experiences with school. The room is attractive and stimulating but there are few references to the children's experience, such as traditional clothing, pictures and equipment related to the children's cultures. Apples were obviously new to several children but the emphasis on creating a

calm and orderly snack session prevented discussion that would have extended children's experience. This is not the case in the reception classes where all adults engage the children in discussion and take every opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of the world. The work from last year shows a good range of interesting topics, which embrace many aspects of the area of learning. Children study homes and families, visit a farm, explore materials and structures and know how to keep healthy. Children in the nursery are introduced to computers and skills are developed throughout the Foundation Stage. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards to extend learning and children enjoy working with them. Children's limited personal development, especially their lack of confidence in working independently as well as their linguistic skills, impacts on their achievements. They make good progress due to the good teaching and interesting curriculum but few attain the early learning goals for knowledge and understanding of the world.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision for English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils make good progress in English and achieve well
- Good arrangements support the high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and they make good progress
- The progress and achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good
- More able pupils are not consistently challenged
- The links between literacy and other subjects are not as good as they should be

#### Commentary

40. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress in developing basic skills in English. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special needs receive good support which targets specific needs and focuses on developing experience of language in a positive learning ethos. Pupils' first languages are valued and the inclusion of parents and the community in learning is a strength. For example, parents are encouraged to borrow books from the school library and to share reading times with their children at home. In addition, there is a very popular weekly library session which helps parents to support their children's reading and to improve spoken English language. Pupils at an early stage of learning English represent a very high proportion of the school. They are very well supported by their teachers and support staff. Work is matched to meet needs and standards are improving. The most recent results in national tests indicate that the additional support given in English has been very successful in improving grades for pupils overall. The school is a welcoming environment and supports families as well as pupils. Parents are encouraged to learn alongside their children and in this way they are able to share in their children's education. The school works hard to reduce the impact of barriers to learning. For example, raising pupils' self esteem is recognised as an important factor in pupils acquiring positive attitudes. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and they are rewarded by the pupils' commitment to improve their achievement. More able pupils are identified but too often the work is not challenging enough. More should be done to tailor work to meet their specific needs and accelerate learning to enable this group to consistently reach their potential.
41. Initiatives to further develop speaking and listening and writing have had a very positive impact on raising standards. However, by the end of Year 2, many pupils need support to enable them to convey their depth of understanding. Often, oral language skills are not sufficiently well developed at this stage to enable pupils who speak several languages to reflect their knowledge and understanding. The coordinator uses drama effectively to promote speaking and listening but this good practice is not sufficiently well developed across all classes. The attention given to developing writing based on first hand practical experience has raised the importance of literacy skills and pupils' level of interest, enjoyment and achievement. They are encouraged to discuss their thoughts, feelings and ideas and to use texts in both English and their mother tongue that they enjoy. The school has good systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Targets are set and shared with individuals and pupils have a good understanding of their own progress and how to improve. Marking is of very good quality and supports learning positively. This has led to significant improvements in standards in reading and writing reflected in the upward trend in

national tests compared to similar schools. The latest test results suggest that at age eleven, pupils' performance is very good compared with their prior attainment.

42. Pupils say they enjoy reading. The teaching of phonics is good and very good use is made of the library. The high quality of library provision has been celebrated by the community through the achievement of an award. By the end of Year 2, pupils read simple texts fluently and have a developing understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling. By Year 6 pupils read widely and are confident to discuss their favourite texts and authors. Year 2 pupils write accurately and spelling is good. The use of descriptive language is developing as pupils' breadth and understanding of language increases. Pupils report writing and factual accounts based on their personal experiences are written logically. By the end of Year 6 pupils' writing is varied and interesting, conveying meaning clearly. They use a broader range of creative and formal styles appropriately. There is evidence of the use of paragraphs and work is neatly presented.
43. Teaching and learning are good. During the inspection teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. Most lessons seen were good. Displays support learning well and reinforce to pupils the expectations made of them. Where teaching is very good the pace and challenge in the work are well matched to pupils' needs, classroom management and questioning ensure the inclusion of all groups and pupils are expected to apply their skills independently. Teachers model English very effectively and the areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing are closely linked. They have good subject knowledge and receive good support from the coordinator. Teaching assistants give very good support. They have a clear understanding of what needs to be taught and their role in developing skills. Lessons are planned effectively and pupils concentrate and are well motivated. Good relationships and respect for diversity creates a positive learning ethos. A particular strength in teaching is the use of assessment and marking. Pupils benefit much from highly pertinent comments and advice which contribute much to learning. The pupils say they enjoy English lessons and this is reflected in the efforts they make to work hard.
44. The coordinator provides good leadership and monitors teaching and the implementation of the curriculum effectively. There is a well structured and a good range of guidance materials to support staff to achieve the school's aims. The capacity for improvement is good.

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

45. The use of language and literacy to support other subjects is developing. There is scope to increase the opportunities for pupils to extend their depth of learning of language and literacy across subjects. For example, in history, geography and religious education, writing could be improved by using subject specific language, debate and discussion as the focus for writing. In practical subjects such as design and technology and art and design, pupils record their observations and make evaluative comments.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

- Pupils achieve well in basic skills
- Teaching is mostly good
- More emphasis is needed on helping pupils to apply their mathematical skills
- Teaching assistants make a telling contribution to achievement
- Assessment contributes much to effective teaching and learning



46. Given the pupils' very low skills on entry, the school rightly stresses the need to develop basic skills. Achievement in acquiring these is good because effective management of pupils creates conditions in which adults and pupils can go about their work in peace. Much time is spent on this, especially in Years 1 and 2 and this can on occasion slow the rate of learning. However, the hard work of pupils and the generous amount of time given to key skills ensures that pupils through Year 1 to 6 achieve well. Nevertheless, in recent years standards attained in national tests have been well below average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6. Preliminary test results for 2004 show some improvement on previous years.
47. Teachers make good use of guidelines in the National Numeracy Strategy. They have good subject knowledge and plan lessons effectively. Teachers make good use of computer whiteboards, which capture the pupils' attention and help bring demonstrations to life. Teachers often ask searching questions and invariably stress key vocabulary. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the work they are to do in groups and learn to use correct mathematical terminology. Much of the pupils' work stresses computation and it is in this area that achievement is at its best. As a result pupils' ability to find the answers to sums mentally and in written form is in advance of their ability to solve problems.
48. The best teaching exploits pupils' good attitudes and pupils' increasing confidence by giving them tasks which requires them to make choices, solve problems and to think for themselves. This is most consistently done in Year 6, where, for example, pupils had to search for rules and generalisations that govern addition. However, this is the exception to the rule and too much of what pupils do consolidates learning rather than requiring them to use what they know in interesting and thought provoking ways. This restricts the achievement of higher attaining pupils in particular. Too often these pupils, although often working with bigger numbers, perform the same operation as the rest of the class, and complete too many sums in order to show they know what to do. In some instances, extension work is set but pupils still have to work through mundane tasks first. This is a shortcoming in the teaching, which tends to see problem solving as an 'add on' to what pupils do rather than part of everyday teaching
49. Pupils who have special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English achieve well. This in no small part is due to the effective partnership teachers establish with teaching assistants. Teamwork is very strong, with assistants adept at helping pupils understand teachers' class demonstrations by echoing what the teacher says and by reinforcing key points and vocabulary in group work. They also contribute to the smooth running of lessons by reinforcing the school guidelines for behaviour and by working with other groups, thereby freeing the teacher to work with groups of pupils with particular needs.
50. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. Curriculum changes, such as the additional time for teaching counting skills, and training on effective questioning, have led to improvements in provision. Detailed assessment procedures, backed by evaluative marking, ensure that pupils' progress is carefully tracked, that additional help is given where necessary and in ensuring that pupils know what they need to do to improve. Plans for the future identify the need to improve pupils' use of mathematical skills.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

51. Although the school has made some attempts to identify the ways in which pupils can use their mathematical skills in other subjects, this is not consistently achieved. There are some good links being made with ICT but in general pupils have too few opportunities to put into practice skills of measuring, counting and data handling in other subjects.

## SCIENCE

The provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, successfully overcoming considerable barriers to learning to do so
- Teaching overall is good, with some very good
- Science is well led and managed

### Commentary

52. The well managed provision for science focuses effectively on providing opportunities for pupils to overcome their difficulties with language and scientific understanding. Through a very good use of support staff as well as sensitive and intelligent teaching, pupils make good progress in understanding scientific concepts and language. By the time they are ready to leave school, inspection evidence shows that currently their standards in science are higher than those of similar schools, though still below those in all schools nationally. Over recent years there have been considerable variations in the levels attained from year to year. This is due to differences between the abilities of different year groups as indicated by the proportion of them having special educational needs. The rapid growth of the school has meant that many pupils arrive in the school each year with a very limited grasp of English and little experience of the sort of experiment and play which is the basis of early scientific understanding. The nature of these barriers to learning has contributed to the apparently slow developments in the subject since the previous inspection.
53. Where the school has been able to have an impact on the pupils' learning through new methods and approaches developed after careful analysis of how the pupils have learned, there have been improvements. This was clearly the case when a special effort was made to improve the breadth and range of scientific language resulting in improvements in the clarity of work presented. More recently the greater emphasis placed on experimental methods and the use of science in other parts of the curriculum has also resulted in improved understanding. One example is the link between science and design and technology where scientific understanding of the benefits and disadvantages of groups of foods was used in the design of meals for healthy eating. However, in some cases this approach to learning means that particular subject skills are given too little emphasis where the planning of the lessons lacks precision.
54. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good with most of the very good teaching found in Years 3 to 6. A very good feature of lessons is the use made of teaching assistants; in many cases they provide the extra support needed by pupils for whom English is being newly acquired, enabling them to achieve more success than would otherwise be the case. The teaching of basic skills and the care and support of the pupils to enable them to learn well are particular strengths. The proper use of scientific terms and expressions is well taught. Pupils are generally encouraged to think for themselves but the increased challenge for higher attaining pupils to explore ideas and devise experiments for themselves is unnecessarily restricted to the older pupils. The use of mathematics and information technology to support the subject is currently being improved as a means of improving standards, but it is too early to assess its impact. Pupils enjoy science and work hard at the subject; good use is made of homework to extend their knowledge and understanding of the subject, visits to places of scientific interest support the subject well. It contributes significantly to the education the pupils receive.

55. The energetic leadership of the subject has led to improvements in its assessment, and the use of the results of assessment to devise improved strategies for teaching. Teachers and teaching assistants are well supported by school based training so that new initiatives have a good chance of success. Sound funding and careful purchasing after a good analysis of needs means that the subject has a sound level of good quality resources based on the needs of the curriculum and of the pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils of all abilities achieve well
- Most of the teaching is good
- The subject is led and managed very effectively

### **Commentary**

56. By the end of Year 2 standards are average. Because of high quality teaching in Year 6 pupils attain above average standards by the time they leave the school. The school has improved provision since the previous inspection. Thorough training for staff, the introduction of new technology, such as interactive whiteboards, and a good range of resources have enabled teaching and learning to improve. Links with outside agencies have benefited the school's work and led to opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to take part in challenging work which has done much to raise the profile of the subject within the school. Boys and girls are equally enthusiastic and skilful in using ICT and all pupils make good progress. The school supports new entrants and those with little English very effectively and this enables the pupils to take a full part in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in learning and are helped much by skilled support staff.

57. Each aspect of ICT is covered and levels of competence among staff and pupils are rising. Pupils achieve well in word processing, control technology and data handling. They make good use of the Internet and understand the advantages of using technology when compared with manual methods, especially when sifting and sorting data. Year 6 successfully combine several operations and move between programs with ease; they are competent in framing questions and using a variety of tools to make good use of databases. Their work on creating multi-media presentations links very well with the application of literacy skills and writing for an audience. Pupils in all year groups take pride in their achievements, apply themselves well and work at a productive rate.

58. The quality of teaching is good and there are excellent examples of teaching where pupils are challenged and inspired by the high expectations and opportunities provided to experiment and explore a range of programs. Lessons are thoroughly planned and prepared and the good use of support staff, who have good levels of expertise, ensures that all pupils are included. In a good lesson in Year 3 the teacher made careful use of assessment from the previous lesson to pinpoint those needing extra help and this information was used to promote successful learning. In an excellent Year 6 lesson the brisk and purposeful pace and high levels of subject knowledge together with incisive explanations promoted quick and secure learning and resulted in pupils producing work of good quality. The pupils are managed effectively and encouraged through praise and reward; the way in which teachers use pupils to demonstrate skills is a particularly successful approach and helps to raise pupils' confidence and competence as well as contributing to their language development. Teachers insist on the use of correct technological vocabulary and

the pupils are mostly confident in its use. In a few lessons the introductions are too long and valuable learning time is lost.

59. The subject is led very effectively and the ambitious plans for further development are well underway. Good use is made of assessment to check on pupils' progress and the information used to plan the curriculum. There is good monitoring of planning and teaching and learning, and the subject leader's support has contributed well to raising the staff's levels of competence. Although the school has good resources, an area for development is in planning more opportunities for pupils to use computers to apply their skills.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

60. This aspect of ICT is developing well. Teachers make good use of computers and other technology to support pupils' work in a variety of subjects. The use of interactive whiteboards in several classes is proving to be an effective tool which motivates and inspires pupils. In English in Year 6 pupils use word processing skills effectively in writing extended stories. Throughout the school pupils access the Internet for research and this contributes to their learning in subjects such as history and art and design. Good links are made between mathematics and science through the use of spreadsheets and graphs. However, there are very few examples of pupils using computers to aid their work in design and technology and music.

### **HUMANITIES**

61. Four lessons were observed in religious education, two in history and none in geography. Other evidence was collected from discussions with staff and pupils and analysis of pupils' work. The evidence available in **history** points to some shortcomings in the curriculum. The most significant of these lies in the amount of time allocated. Pupils do not have sufficient time to carry out in depth studies of a wide range of historical periods and processes and the volume of work produced is much less than normally seen. Most pupils find it difficult to talk about different historical periods, and struggle to explain how historians work and to use a variety of sources to find reliable evidence. Although the teaching seen in lessons was generally satisfactory, opportunities are missed to respond to the interest pupils show in history. For example, because of the teacher's enthusiastic questioning in a lesson on The Fire of London in Year 2, pupils were bursting to ask questions of their own but the tasks restricted them to a simple exercise of matching sentences to a picture. Some of the work pupils do lacks imagination and does not fully exploit the potential history has for pupils to consider events and life from the point of view of others. The links made with pupils' literacy skills are underdeveloped, so that in Year 6 for example, writing in history is of a lower standard than that found in English books. Pupils go on a suitable range of trips to bring history to life and the addition of themed weeks dedicated to history provide some opportunities for drama role play and link with art and show what can be achieved. Pupils speak well of these and show a zest to learn about the past.
62. In **geography**, there is a better spread and quantity of work recorded in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6 where literacy skills and mathematical insights are underused. Pupils in Year 1 look critically at the local environment and learn how to make judgements about it. In Year 2 they begin map work and draw plans of how they come to school. Studies in local geography continue in Years 3 and 4. There is a study of the Caribbean area in Year 4. Links with citizenship are developed well. There is also a contrast drawn between the locality of the school and India. In Year 5 work is done on the British Isles and pupils identify places on the map. There is also a study of the water cycle. Little work was recorded for Year 6. A strong and positive feature of the subject is the focus on "World Awareness Week" where a single topic is studied at depth, such as the study of a country like Italy or of an environmental problem such as pollution. Pupils enjoy the subject and talked enthusiastically and knowledgeably about the work they remembered from the previous year. Geography is well managed by an enthusiastic coordinator. Individual year

groups decide on the pattern of work for each year. The use of national guidelines ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are covered.

## **Religious education**

The provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is related to the pupils' own experience and understanding
- The work undertaken is generally carefully assessed
- There is considerable variation in the amount of work undertaken in different classes and year groups and in its quality and standards
- The curriculum provided in the subject is restricted in range and narrow in its content

### **Commentary**

63. The standard of work displayed achieved at the end of Years 2 and 6 is broadly in line with the attainment targets in the syllabus followed by most schools in Birmingham. Pupils encounter difficulties in understanding religious language and concepts as a result of their lack of understanding of English terms and ideas. Their written work is generally not as of high a standard as that in their English books. The use of literacy and information technology skills for supporting the subject is currently underdeveloped so that there is little evidence of improvement in the subject since the previous inspection.
64. The teaching is satisfactory on the whole with some very good lessons observed. Where the better teaching takes place there is good use made of the pupils' own religious experience to enable them to understand about religious ideas shared by the faiths studied. This was particularly the case when a member of staff explained the significance of the Sikh Holy Book to the members of her faith. In another lesson older pupils discussed and then wrote about their feelings when engaged in prayer. The problems of language were highlighted in this exercise as the pupils had little previous experience of explaining prayer in English. Good use is made of the skills and understanding of the support staff and the cooperative endeavour between class teachers and teaching assistants is a very positive element in the teaching of this subject. Use is also occasionally made of visits to places of worship associated with the faiths being studied. This helps the pupils to understand what significance these buildings, such as a church or a gurdwara have for the members of those faiths, but even more could be done to provide the pupils with first hand experience.
65. The work with younger pupils is more general and deals with moral and social questions, such as the pollution of the environment, in ways in which the religious dimension of the matter being investigated tends to be glossed over, though the central theme and planned objectives for learning are usually achieved. This emphasis on the social and moral aspects of religious education supports the school's focus on developing an orderly and positively minded community in the school. There is a commendable emphasis on developing respect and understanding of the faith and practices of the religions studied. This leads to tolerance, understanding and an awareness of the beliefs and practices found in the religions studied and met in the wider community.
66. The subject is soundly led and resources are generally sufficient to meet the needs of the work planned. The contribution of the subject in providing topics for pupils' writing, and of literacy

supporting the written work in religious education is not yet having a significant impact on the quality of work either in English or religious education. It plays a part in promoting the pupils' spiritual, cultural, moral and social understanding with the emphasis clearly on the second two areas.

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

67. Five music and three each of design and technology and art and design lessons were seen during the inspection. Six physical education lessons were observed. In addition, inspectors looked at teachers' planning and talked to the teachers and pupils about the subjects. They also looked at a range of pupils' work.

### **Art and design**

Provision for art and design is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well
- Teaching and learning are good
- Art makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development

### **Commentary**

68. The school values good quality display work to create an environment to provoke thought and inspire pupils. Art and design plays a very important part of this process. There is a wide range of art from many different cultures on display and this gives pupils insights into ways of celebrating achievement through colour, shape and composition. Artefacts are carefully arranged to foster pupils' inquisitive nature and support the process of learning. The high priority given to art leads to good achievement. Standards are above average and this is evident in class portfolios and displays. Many events are organised by the school. For example, a 'Big Arts Week' focused on art across the world. Exhibitions of pupils' and adults' work bring relevance to learning and opportunities for the school to work closely with parents which make a significant contribution to the role of the school in the community.

69. By the end of Year 2, pupils are aware of the importance of colour and shade and this is reflected in their drawings and models. They explore the use of different materials and this enables them to test their ideas. Their work shows imagination and the use of a good range of skills and techniques. Pupils in Year 3 successfully produce pictures using plaster filler to interpret a seascape painted in the style of Van Gogh. The progression of skills is reflected in sketchbooks which are used as working documents. Pupils enjoy sharing their work with adults and say how much they look forward to activities in art. Older pupils work with care and enthusiasm. A fine example of creative work linking ICT skills and design was completed in Year 5 to create a stunning piece of work involving printing, fabrics and the manipulation of images.

70. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils enjoy challenges: through using a very good range of fruit and vegetables pupils make compositions in the style of Archimboldo. They understand the importance of arranging materials carefully to achieve the most favourable visual impact. The language pupils use as they move features makes a good contribution to wider learning opportunities. Good use is made of plenary sessions to evaluate pupils' ideas. Pupils suggest how improvements can be made and, equally as important, they celebrate features that

they like giving reasons for their preferences. Teachers are aware of the need to maximise the range of art within the local community and invite artists to school to talk about their work. The school is developing good links with art galleries in Birmingham and visits enable pupils to benefit from a wide range of creative experience. The subject is well led and there is very good potential for further exciting developments.

## **Design and technology**

Provision for design and technology is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily
- The subject is led and managed effectively

### **Commentary**

71. The school follows the latest guidelines in design and technology and prioritises links with other subjects to support learning across the curriculum. There are good examples of pupils' work. For example, pupils in Year 3 compare and assess a range of sandwiches. Speaking and listening feature prominently when pupils offer their opinions. These good quality language opportunities are built on as pupils give reasons for their preferences and work hard to identify words that precisely describe the tastes of different fillings. Links are made with information technology when ideas are recorded using interactive whiteboard facilities. The use of this technology excites pupils and helps to promote some good learning. Pupils recognise the importance of a systematic approach to making reliable judgments. Year 5 pupils plan how to make healthy drinks. This work is linked to science where they learn to understand that a balanced diet is important for health.

72. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staff are thoughtful in their planning and preparation. In one lesson the teacher provided an interesting range of fruit to stimulate good quality discussion about choices of ingredients and this work linked well with the school's aim to promote healthy eating. Staff work alongside pupils effectively and encourage the consistent development of skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils are enthusiastic about design and technology and enjoy making and refining models. They design and plan their work and this is evident from carefully drawn and labelled sketches in workbooks. Teachers use the subject well to motivate those who struggle with some aspects of English and a strength in the teaching is the focus on developing pupils' use of technical vocabulary. Models are attractively displayed around the school and are examples of good achievement.

73. The subject is well led and the potential for further improvement in standards is good. The school has good resources and the use of national guidelines helps to promote consistency between year groups. Teachers assess the pupils' performance and encourage improvement and refinement of models through helpful comments.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below average
- The visiting specialist teacher makes a significant contribution to pupils' musical development.

## Commentary

74. The school employs a very good specialist music teacher who alternates with the class teachers to provide the pupils' music lessons. The class teachers consolidate the learning from the specialist music lessons. In some year groups, one teacher provides the follow up lesson for all three classes. This is an effective way of ensuring that all pupils have access to very good quality music lessons. However, pupils' musical knowledge is limited and the quality of the singing in lessons is generally below that expected of pupils of similar age groups across the school.
75. In all lessons taught by the peripatetic teacher pupils achieve well because of good teaching. The teaching and learning in other lessons was satisfactory. The specialist lessons challenge and extend pupils' experiences well and the lessons are impeccably matched to their needs. The teacher includes music from the pupils' culture and in the home language of many. They are enjoyed by both the teacher and the pupils and a great deal is covered in the limited time available. Year 6, for example, sang a lively nonsense song to warm up their voices, learnt a new song and discussed types of songs and empathised with the singer. Although pupils' knowledge of different lyrical genres is very limited, the teacher boosted their confidence by valuing their contributions. Another new song extended pupils' skills by developing simple harmony in the chorus. The teaching in the classrooms is more varied. The best maintain the pace and enjoyment that is such a feature of the peripatetic music teacher's lessons, but some lack enough pace and variety for pupils to maintain concentration and effort throughout the lesson and to enable more than satisfactory progress.
76. The peripatetic teacher provides a recorder club before school and runs a choir at lunchtime with the support of the school's subject leader. The choir performs at concerts during the year and about 35 junior pupils enjoyed their first practise of the year for 15 minutes during lunchtime. A small number of pupils learn to play orchestral instruments using the city's instrumental tutors. There is no singing in assemblies and opportunities for music making beyond the lessons and the clubs provided by the peripatetic teacher are limited.

## Physical education

Provision in physical education is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average
- The subject leader has good plans for the development of the subject
- Some aspects of teaching are weak

## Commentary

77. Although the provision has improved since the previous inspection with a broadening of opportunities pupils make slow progress. Achievement is mostly unsatisfactory. Pupils move with little confidence and grace and boys in particular lack competence in sequencing a series of movements. Pupils start in Year 1 with low level skills and competence in their physical development and this is especially true of boys. The school provides a suitable range of opportunities for physical education and the subject meets statutory requirements. By the end of Year 6 standards have improved but pupils mostly lack confidence and competence in a range of physical activities. Opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities enhance the pupils' skills in games such as football, cricket, basketball and netball. Visits by coaches also help to promote interest and involvement in sport. Generally, the older boys and girls are equally successful. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in lessons. New entrants and those pupils at an early stage of learning English are also fully involved. Each of these groups makes satisfactory progress. The school is sensitive to the local community in arranging single



gender swimming lessons. Discussions with pupils show that most pupils make good progress towards the national standards in swimming.

78. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, although there are some shortcomings which detract from pupils' achievement. Teachers plan carefully and include a variety of opportunities to learn and practise skills. There are suitable warm up sessions and clear instructions and guidance on improving performance. There are opportunities for the pupils to discuss the effect of exercise on their bodies and to reflect on their work. However, the pace of lessons is often slow and pupils sometimes sit and watch rather than participating. Some lessons are disrupted by unsettled behaviour and this hampers progress with the effect that not all pupils reach their potential. When engaged in activity the pupils concentrate and work hard but frequent interruptions impair the development of skills and techniques.
79. The subject leader has begun to have a positive impact on the provision and the school has increased the number of lessons each week for physical education. There are plans to extend the provision further but the most pressing need is for further training for teachers on improving the quality of teaching especially the pace of lessons.

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

80. Two lessons were seen in **personal, social and health education and citizenship** and evidence was drawn from analysis of pupils' work, discussion with staff and scrutiny of displays as well as attendance at assemblies. A good scheme of work has been devised to extend pupils' understanding of how to take care of themselves. Healthy eating has been a focus in recent months and the school has gained an award for promoting healthy eating in school. There is appropriate provision for growth and relationships education and drug awareness and both parents and pupils have been consulted on aspects of the curriculum. Pupils are taught that they can make informed choices, to recognise risk and how to resist pressure. The school works closely with the Birmingham health education centre and has held a Health Week with the support of members of the community including dental students and the police. The school is developing activities to aid thinking with activities such as "brain gym".
81. Many pupils have low self-esteem and the teachers are committed to enabling pupils to value their personal and academic achievements. Both academic and personal targets help pupils to work towards their goals. There are corporate goals for personal development with "Golden Rules", attributes that reflect the desirable characteristics of citizenship, such as cooperation and respect. In some lessons, however, more could be done to promote independent thinking and to stimulate curiosity. The terms are adapted for different age groups but are central to the ethos of all classes. Effective reward systems, stickers, certificates and time to choose an activity [Golden Time] reinforce these concepts and encourage pupils to take responsibility for their actions. The school buddy system encourages pupils to care for each other. Older pupils may sign the "Parkfield Pledge" to show their commitment to the Golden Rules.
82. There is a school council that includes both infants and juniors, encouraging pupils to influence the school community. Opportunities for discussion are built into the timetables in the form of "Circle Time" where pupils are encouraged to respect the views of others and, if they wish, contribute to the discussion. For the reception children at the beginning of their school career, a very effective circle time helped children to get to know each other as children guessed who was calling their names. Assemblies reinforce personal qualities such as sharing. Older pupils learn how the British democratic system works, through, for example their studies about Parliament. Support for a range of charities is encouraged and the school responds to major appeals. All pupils are valued and there is no evidence of any racism amongst the pupils.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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