

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Lancasterian Infant and Nursery School**  
London N17 8NN

LEA area: Haringey

Unique Reference Number: 102094

Headteacher: Ms Tara Moran

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Reporting inspector: Glesni Thomas  
22248

Dates of inspection: 6 – 9 December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706618

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	King's Road Tottenham London N17 8NN
Telephone number:	0181 808 8088
Fax number:	0181 880 3321
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Jeannie Chapman
Date of previous inspection:	March 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Glesni Thomas, RgI	English Design and technology Geography Art	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Gail Ellisdon, Lay Inspector	N/A	Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Peter Kerr	Mathematics  Information technology  History Music Special educational needs	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Efficiency
Morag Thorpe	Science Religious education Physical education Equal opportunities Under fives Section 11	Curriculum and assessment

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

Teaching is consistently good or very good and this enables pupils to make good progress.

- The ethos is excellent, therefore children are very well behaved and are keen to learn.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced, relevant and enriching.
- Provision for under fives is very good.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good.

### Where the school has weaknesses

Attendance levels and punctuality are unsatisfactory.

- I. The religious education curriculum does not have enough detail about what pupils are to learn.
- II. The school's approach to teaching reading is not systematic enough.

**The school's strengths by far outweigh its weaknesses. The weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or carers of pupils in the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has successfully addressed the weaknesses which were found at the time of the last inspection. Governors now play a full part in the management of the school and are closely involved in agreeing spending priorities and in monitoring the budget. Curriculum planning and assessment procedures are now good in Key Stage 1 and very good for under fives; lessons are well organised and standards of attainment are being raised. The daily act of worship is now a core element of school life. It makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual development, reinforces the values of the school and inspires pupils and adults.

The school has built on the solid foundations that were in place in 1995; it is well placed and has a good capacity to bring about further improvements. Teaching, which at the time of the last inspection was satisfactory, has improved and is now good and, in a third of lessons, very good. The school has further developed its partnership with parents. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced and have had a positive impact on pupils' progress, which is good in most subjects and very good in mathematics, art and physical education. The partnership with the Vale Special School has brought a new dimension to the life of the school and led to improvements to the school environment and welcome opportunities for pupils' personal growth. The new purpose-built nursery has created enviable opportunities and encouraged staff to improve further the provision for under fives in the school.

### Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in Year 2 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools		Key
Reading	E	B	<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
			<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
			<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
Writing	E	C	<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
Mathematics	E	C	<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

The information shows that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average when compared with other schools in the country. In comparisons with similar schools and taking into account the large proportion of pupils who have a limited grasp of English, reading standards are above average and standards in writing and mathematics are broadly average. The inspection findings broadly confirm the results

of the 1999 tests and point to an improving picture. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in science, religious education and information technology. Good progress in all subjects is made by pupils throughout Key Stage 1 and by under fives in the nursery and reception classes.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Very good
Science		Good
Information technology		Good
Religious education		Good
Other subjects	Good	Good

All teaching in the school is at least good. In three out of ten lessons teaching is very good and in a further one out of ten lessons teaching is excellent. The strong teaching in the school has a powerful impact on pupils’ positive attitudes to learning, their good behaviour and the good progress they make. Teaching in mathematics, art and PE are very good.

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. ‘Satisfactory’ means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses*

• **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good in response to high expectations and consistent good management by staff in class and in the playground.
Attendance	Below average. Too many pupils are late for school.
Ethos*	Excellent. It promotes very good relationships and good progress.
Leadership and management	The head gives very good leadership and excels in ensuring that its aims and values permeate the school’s work. Good support from deputy. Governors make a good contribution.
Curriculum	Very good; relevant for all pupils and enriched by a wide range of visits. Assessment is good and is well used to plan the next stage of learning.
Pupils with special educational needs	They make very good progress towards their targets.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good - a strength of the school.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staffing and accommodation are good. Resources for learning are at a satisfactory level.
Value for money	Good.

*\*Ethos is the climate for learning; attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*



## **The parents' views of the school**

### **What most parents like about the school**

- III. Children enjoy school.
- IV. Parents feel welcome in the school.
- V. The attitudes and values the school promotes.
- VI. Good standards of behaviour.
- VII. Parents are kept well informed about what is taught.
- VIII. The inclusion of Vale pupils.

### **What some parents are not happy about**

- IX. Homework.
- X. The lack of a bullying policy.
- XI. Not enough information about their children's
- XII. Home/school reading arrangements.

Inspectors endorse the positive views expressed by parents. Inspectors found that the homework given to pupils was appropriate. They found that the school has clear guidance about bullying which is incorporated into the staff Code of Conduct. On the matter of information about children's progress, inspectors found that arrangements for keeping parents informed about their children's progress were adequate. There are written reports and twice yearly interviews and parents can obtain further information by approaching the school. Inspectors agreed that home/school reading arrangements are not as good as they could be.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to raise standards and further improve the progress pupils make, the governing body, headteacher and staff should: -

ensure that all pupils have the full advantage of the good quality of education that the school offers by: -

- taking more positive action to promote punctuality; *p 27, 28, 29*
- improving levels of attendance; *p 27, 28*
- enlisting the co-operation and support of parents for improvements in attendance and punctuality; *p 27, 28, 29*
- introducing effective systems to monitor and analyse attendance levels. *p 56*

**In addition to the key issue above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are found in the paragraphs indicated.**

- Ensure reading books are well matched to pupils' needs. *p 34, 63, 97, 100*
- Provide home/school reading diaries. *p 63, 101*
- Provide more detailed curriculum plans for religious education. *p 42, 125*
- Devise appropriate assessment procedures for religious education and non-core subjects. *P 46, 125, 131, 137*
- Further develop joint planning for parallel classes. *p 36, 42, 109, 114*
- Improve progression in the development of pupils' musical skills. *p 139*
- Conduct regular health and safety checks of the school building. *p 59*

ON

· **Characteristics of the school**

1. Lancasterian Infant and Nursery School is a popular school, which serves an inner city community in North Tottenham, part of the London Borough of Haringey. It is situated next to an attractive large open park. The school shares a site with the Lancasterian Junior School and, until recently, the governance of both schools was in the hands of a joint governing body. A local school for pupils with special educational needs (the Vale School) shares the site in an innovative development, which has taken place, since the school was last inspected. Pupils, including those who use wheelchairs, have recently benefited from imaginative improvements to the outside play area and a new, purpose-built nursery which has specialist facilities for pupils who have special educational needs. Nearly one third of pupils in the school are on the special needs register and six have statements of special educational needs. Four Vale School pupils are fully included in the school's programme and a further small number join mainstream pupils for a few lessons.
  
2. Children are admitted to the nursery in the autumn or spring following their third birthday and at the time of the inspection, 81 children attended the nursery on a part-time basis. The infant school has 172 pupils on roll. Pupils are normally admitted to the reception classes in the September after their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection 44 pupils in the reception classes were under five. Normally, 58 pupils are admitted to two reception class but every fourth year 78 pupils are admitted to three reception classes. The nursery and reception classes are organised as an early years unit. When pupils enter the nursery the attainment of the vast majority is poor and when they are five and progress to Key Stage 1 the attainment of the majority is well below average. Over 40 per cent of pupils in the infant school and over 60 per cent of pupils in the nursery come from families where English is not the home language. Of these, the largest proportion come from the Kurdish and Turkish communities but several other ethnic groups are represented, among them the Somalian community. The school welcomes the opportunities presented by the diverse ethnicity of the local community. Additional resources from the Ethic Minority Achievement Grant project (EMAG) have been allocated to the school to provide support for pupils who have limited acquisition of English, and two part-time teachers and a classroom helper have been employed. The school serves a community, which has a high degree of mobility and a significant proportion of pupils leave and enter the school during the school year. Over 57% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Apart from the Vale provision, the school's admission profile has changed little since the time of the last inspection. There is a supportive and active governing body. The headteacher has been in post for less than two years. The staff, many of whom are experienced, are hard working and committed to the school. The school is welcoming to parents.
  
3. The school's priorities over the past twelve months have been to: -
  - raise attainment in reading and to improve pupils' phonic skills;
  - involve parents more actively in their children's learning by providing Family Literacy sessions and arranging craft sessions;
  - improve pupils' skills in information technology;
  - raise standards in mathematics by implementing the national numeracy strategy;
  - improve standards in mental mathematics;
  - involve governors more fully in working parties;
  - train governors with responsibilities for literacy, numeracy and information technology;
  - increase the management and leadership skills of the headteacher;
  - refresh first aid at work qualification;
  - review the school's aims and objectives incorporating the Vale inclusion project;
  - review the equal opportunities policy and extend it to pupils with special educational needs;
  - continue to provide safe, accessible and interesting outdoor recreation;

- make the library more accessible to pupils;
- introduce a rolling programme of redecoration starting with the hall;
- improve toilet and cloakroom areas.

• **Key indicators**

1. **Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
For latest reporting year:	1999	42	38	81

4. <b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils	Boys	22	22	31
At NC Level 2 or above	Girls	31	30	31
	Total	53	52	62
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	66 (55)	66 (57)	78 (66)
	National	81 (80)	81 (83)	86 (84)

4. <b>Teacher Assessments</b>		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	20	28	31
At NC Level 2 or above	Girls	30	31	34
	Total	50	59	65
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	63 (57)	74 (70)	81 (75)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

.....

<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

5. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
Through absence for the latest complete Reporting year:	Authorised	School	6.6
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	2.5
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

6. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during The previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

6.

7. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	38.5
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

## 7. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 7. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

#### 7. Attainment and progress

2. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 assessments, the average points scored in reading, writing and mathematics were well below national averages. When compared with similar schools and taking into account the significant proportion of pupils who have a limited acquisition of English, point scores were:-

- .above average in reading;
- .average in writing and mathematics.

Improved test results this year mark a reversal to a three-year decline in performance in all three subjects. The proportions of pupils attaining the expected levels for seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics are well below average. When compared with similar schools, the proportions reaching the expected standards are: -

- .average in reading and mathematics
- .below average in writing

The proportions attaining the higher level (level 3) are: -

- .average in reading
- .above average in writing and mathematics.

1. Since the last inspection the school has improved its performance and although test results are well below the national average, a few pupils attain high standards and the progress pupils make, which in 1995 was judged to be satisfactory, is now good. The improvements have been brought about because of the effective implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies and the school's drive to raise standards by effective target setting and by involving parents more actively in their children's learning. The available data reveals variations in the performance of boys and girls from year to year over the past four years but no significant trends have emerged.
1. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education programmes because these are clear and relevant, reviewed regularly and incorporated into teachers' planning. A few pupils make such good progress towards their learning targets that their names are removed from the special educational needs register. For example, a pupil with very little English is placed on the register and given very specific learning targets in mathematics. She achieves all these and more within two months and is ready to progress to stage one, where she will be supported without an individual educational programme. Pupils who are learning English, make good progress because of the support they receive from designated staff and from their class teachers.
2. When they enter the nursery, the majority of children have levels of attainment which are poor. Well over half the children have a home language other than English; most have a severely limited vocabulary and a significant proportion do not communicate at all in English. They have limited skills and experience in using and sharing equipment. Compared to most three-year-olds their ability to concentrate is underdeveloped. Children remain in the nursery until the end of the school year and then transfer to the reception class where, by the summer term, they are introduced to a more formal curriculum. However, the high quality planning for early years (incorporating the nursery and the reception class) ensures that there is continuity of experience as pupils progress through the early years

department and begin a programme of study based on Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum in the final term of the reception year.

3. By the time they are five, the majority of children have made very good progress in their personal and social development and meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes for the age group. They work with a degree of independence, can take turns, listen well and are beginning to understand set school routines. Their progress in language and literacy is good but their attainment falls well short of the expectation set out nationally for five-year-olds. Stories are listened to with enjoyment; children join in key passages and a few read simple picture books for themselves. They make good progress in developing writing skills in the reception classes because some letters and sounds of the alphabet have been taught. In mathematics, children make good progress also but do not reach the expected standard by the time they are five. Nevertheless, they count small-groups of objects, arrange blocks in order of size and sing counting rhymes. Children make good progress in creative areas of learning and in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world but do not attain the objectives set for five-year-olds. In their physical development, they make very good progress and attain standards expected of five-year-olds. They have appropriate manipulative skills and can throw and catch with skill.
4. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in English are below average. Nevertheless, pupils make good progress because of the good English teaching in the school. Overall, speaking and listening skills are below average but listening skills are as expected for seven-year-olds. Pupils are attentive and listen closely in small and large group settings including in school assembly, when they listen exceptionally well. They make good progress in developing listening skills because teachers have high expectations. Speaking skills are not as well developed; however, pupils make good progress contributing their ideas during class discussions. Reading standards are below average. Despite this, a few pupils have well developed reading skills and confidently read a range of fiction and non-fiction books. The majority of pupils make good progress in reading. Their confidence is increased by their good phonic skills, which they often employ well to help them make sense of an unfamiliar text. This is an improvement on the last inspection when phonic skills were reported to be underdeveloped. Writing standards are below average and written work is often restricted by the limitations of pupils' grasp of spoken English. Nevertheless, they make good progress and higher attaining pupils write effective extended stories. Handwriting is generally well formed and, by the time they leave the school, most pupils write in sentences and use full stops and capital letters correctly.
5. Throughout the school, literacy skills are appropriately applied across the curriculum and listening skills are well employed in every lesson. In science, pupils explain the effects of push and pull forces and in history they describe old kitchen utensils. In geography, they write about the weather and about environmentally friendly forms of transport. Pupils make sound use of the school library and older pupils know how to find information from reference books.
6. In mathematics, pupils attain standards which are below average but a significant minority have well developed number skills and utilise mental methods to work out problems involving addition and multiplication processes. There are clear indications that standards in mathematics are steadily improving. By the time they leave the school most pupils can name regular solid shapes and can employ metric measures when measuring length and weight. Pupils make very good progress because of teachers' high expectations and a stimulating learning environment. Good progress is particularly evident during the well-conducted, whole-class oral and mental session of the numeracy lessons. In Year 1, pupils learn about tens and units and effectively extend their knowledge of place value in Year 2. They learn to collect, record and interpret data and pupils in Year 1 talk confidently about their bar chart which shows how many pupils in the class have particular animals as pets. Pupils who have little English are very effectively supported and make good progress. Good support is given also to pupils with special educational needs and this enables them to make good progress towards their targets.
7. Numeracy is well used across the curriculum. In art, pupils measure the length of components for their bicycle collage. During registration sessions, the number of absent pupils is mentally deducted from the total in the class to find out how many are present. In science, pupils employ their numeracy skill when they record their experimental findings. Number games and interesting shapes provide a mathematical focus in the outdoor learning area and in the playground.

8. In science, pupils attain average standards and make good progress. Pupils understand that humans need food and water to stay alive and know the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Through testing the blow rockets they have made, they begin to develop the notion of fair testing. Pupils employ scientific vocabulary accurately and with understanding. Throughout the key stage pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and the high proportion for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in all attainment targets.
9. In religious education, standards are satisfactory and pupils make good progress. By the time they leave the school, the majority of pupils have appropriate knowledge of the important facts associated with major world religions and particularly with Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They know about and have had opportunities to share in celebrating many festivals including Ramadan, Lent and the Hindu festival of Diwali. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this has a positive impact on the progress pupils make in religious education.
10. Attainment in information technology is average and pupils make good progress. At the end of the key stage, pupils have appropriate word-processing skills, can access information from CD-ROMs and know how to send e-mail messages. Throughout the key stage, they make good progress in learning keyboard skills and control of the mouse. They learn to use computers to explore imaginary worlds and begin to develop Internet skills. At the time of the last inspection, standards in information technology were judged to be above average. The drop in standards reflects the fact that the school has had to reduce the amount of time it spends on teaching information technology. Nevertheless, given the low starting point, pupils make good progress.
11. Very good progress is made in physical education and art and in all other curriculum areas pupils make good progress. The arts are a strength in the school. Art is well linked with design and technology and a range of community skills is effectively and imaginatively employed to enrich pupils' experience. Pupils' singing is spirited, often accompanied by gesture and hand signals. The vibrant school environment and inspiring school assemblies provide evidence of the positive impact that the visual arts and singing have on the quality of education which pupils experience and on their spiritual and cultural development. The school has an excellent ethos and a strong commitment to raising standards; and it has the undoubted capacity to bring about improvements to the attainment of pupils in the core subjects and to the progress they make in all areas of the curriculum.

20. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

1. The good attitudes and behaviour reported on at the time of the last inspection have been improved on and all aspects are now very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work throughout the school. For example, they respond enthusiastically to the challenging questions in the literacy and numeracy hours and most are very willing to join in discussions, answer questions and offer suggestions. Pupils enjoy talking about their work and showing others what they have achieved. They take care over presentation, for example of their artwork, and pride in their achievements. Their responses to the weekly awards given out in assembly reflect their genuine wish to improve themselves through being more independent, helpful and hard working. The high degree in independence reported among children under five by the last inspection is now well established throughout the school. Pupils look after their own belongings and organise themselves well, settle down quickly to their work and sustain concentration. They learn to look up information for themselves, from CD-ROMs, books and other sources, and enjoy undertaking individual investigations, for example finding ways of multiplying big numbers in mathematics.
2. Under fives in the nursery and reception classes begin to develop good attitudes to learning because the provision for the personal and social development of children is very good. By the time they are five, children have a growing awareness of the difference between right and wrong. Most are able to share toys and take turns. They understand class routines and show good levels of independence and responsibility in the choices they make, in their self-help skills and their care of tools and equipment.

Few, however, demonstrate initiative in their behaviour. The children are well behaved: because staff treat them with respect, they, in turn, learn to respect one another.

3. Behaviour in class and around the school is very good overall. There are a few pupils who find it difficult to behave well all the time but they gradually improve as a result of the consistent high expectations and sensitive handling by all members of staff. In the playground the pupils play together amicably and share equipment. At lunchtimes they maintain good behaviour in the dining hall and maintain the school's high expectations. Behaviour in the playground has improved to such an extent in response to recent improvements in the range and quality of playground equipment that the headteacher can now take the lunchtime choir practice without fear of being interrupted to resolve disputes. The pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour also enable teachers to maintain a good pace in lessons. For example, they move smoothly from whole-class teaching to group activities and back again in the literacy and numeracy hours.
4. Relationships are very good, both between pupils and between pupils and staff. Members of staff are relaxed and friendly with the pupils, but set very clear boundaries, which the pupils do not cross lightly. The pupils respond in a mature way. For example, they enjoy being on first-name terms with the adults in the school without being cheeky or disrespectful. If anything, mutual respect between the pupils and the staff is strengthened by this arrangement. The pupils have learned social confidence as well as the requirements of courtesy. They have good manners, say please and thank you, and know how to behave in the company of adults. In lessons the pupils show sensitivity to the needs of others, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is not the first language. They help one another where possible and come to appreciate the advantages of teamwork in group activities under consistent guidance from their teachers. There have been no exclusions in the school in the last twelve months.
5. The pupils undertake a range of routine jobs around the school, such as taking registers to the office. When given opportunities, they show initiative; for example, in suggesting areas for investigation in mathematics or further questions about artifacts in history lessons. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 1, the level of the pupils' personal development is more than adequate for the demands of the junior stage of their education. The school has the capacity to maintain and further build on the existing very high standards of behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.
6. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes towards their work. They are aware of their learning targets and work hard to achieve them. They relate well to their classroom support assistants and to other pupils. With very good management by the teachers and learning support assistants, those pupils with behavioural difficulties gradually improve their ability to control their reactions and to relate to the other pupils in the class without causing undue disruption to learning.

26.

## 26. **Attendance**

1. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory and result in missed opportunities for pupils. This is detrimental to their own progress and that of others with whom they work closely. There is considerable scope for improvements to attendance and punctuality, and the school has the will and capacity to raise its performance in this area.
2. Overall attendance is below the national and local education authority averages. Many pupils arrive several minutes after the beginning of the school day at 8.55 a.m. and a significant minority even later. Registers are taken promptly at the start of the morning session and again in the afternoon. They are marked accurately according to local authority guidelines and returned immediately to the school office.
3. Many absences are due to common childhood ailments. However, an increasing number of parents are removing their children for holidays during term time. Other recorded absences are for pupils whose parents have transferred them to other schools without informing the school. Clear details of attendance are given in the prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents and on the pupils' annual written



reports.

## 29. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### 29. Teaching

1. All teaching in the school is at least good. In three out of ten lessons teaching is very good and in a further one out of ten lessons teaching is excellent. The strong teaching in the school has a powerful impact on pupils' positive attitudes to learning, their good behaviour and the good progress they make. The school has maintained the positive features of teaching noted at the time of the last inspection and has successfully addressed the weaknesses. Teachers now have high expectations of their pupils and, as a result, pupils make good progress. Class organisation has improved; an appropriate number and range of activities is provided so that all pupils are working profitably even if not under the direct supervision of their teacher.
2. Teachers have a high commitment to ensuring that all pupils have equal access to learning opportunities, including to computers. The expression of this commitment is a distinctive feature of teaching in this school which has a high proportion of pupils and families who are learning English and which has a special educational needs provision linked to the Vale School. Staff work hard to ensure that all pupils are included and several learn a little of one the home languages of the pupils in order to communicate effectively. They co-operate effectively with teachers involved in the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant project and ensure that pupils who have only a limited understanding of English are included in class discussions at an appropriate level. In addition, teachers and their pupils learn sign language in order to improve communication with pupils with special educational needs who may have language difficulties.
3. Overall teaching of under fives is good. Staff are knowledgeable and have a very good understanding of the needs of under fives in this particular community. Their knowledge and understanding underpins the very good organisation of the early years department and is a strength of the provision for under fives. The day-to-day assessments of pupils are of very high quality and are well used to inform planning for the next stage of learning. Children are well managed and personal and social skills are nurtured so that by the time they are five pupils' skills are as they should be. Language and literacy skills are well promoted by staff in the nursery and reception classes, and mathematics teaching is good.
4. In Key Stage 1, teaching in mathematics, art and physical education is judged to be very good and as a result pupils make very good progress in these subjects. In mathematics and numeracy lessons, resources are utilised extremely well and teachers' clear explanations and probing questions are well judged to deepen pupils' understanding. For instance, in a Year 1 lesson on time, the teacher maintained a skilful balance between telling and asking pupils. Teachers have very good subject knowledge of art and the well-established, good, cross-curricular links with design and technology serve to enhance rather than dilute subject specific teaching. In lessons, teachers expertly demonstrate new techniques and with well focused questions extend the level of challenge thus enabling pupils to make very good progress. This was the case in a lesson during the week of the inspection, when a small-group of pupils using pastel chalks for their observational drawings responded well to the challenge to reduce or expand the scale of drawings. Teaching in physical education is often characterised by good pace and high level of challenge and this enables pupils to make very good progress in their agility levels and ability to devise movements with a sideways twist.
5. Throughout the school the teaching of English and literacy are good. Teachers' planning is good; they have clear learning objectives and the activities are effectively organised to enable pupils achieve the objectives set for them. Their lesson plans include targets for specific groups including pupils with special educational needs and those whose command of English is not well developed. In the best lessons, teachers model good practice. For instance, when writing on the whiteboard one teacher said, "I need to check my work now". Pupils are introduced to a good range of literature and in the reception

class are encouraged to join in the key sentences from the story “Peace at Last” while towards the end of the key stage they write about some of the events and characters in “Romeo and Juliet”. A weakness in teaching is that the books pupils are given to read are not always as well matched to their level of competence as they could be and a more systematic approach would enable these pupils to improve further the reading progress they make and raise their level of attainment.

6. Good subject knowledge is a characteristic of teaching throughout the school and in particular of the high quality science teaching seen. Science lessons have clear aims, are well organised and teachers have high expectations of their pupils; in consequence, pupils make good progress. A strength of the good information technology teaching, is the imaginative way in which teachers plan to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to work on computers in order to meet the individual targets set for them. Religious education teaching, which is judged to be consistently good, effectively motivates pupils because teachers have good communication skills and use questioning effectively. Teaching in geography and history is good and features methods which make lessons relevant to pupils’ interests and levels of maturity. This has a positive impact on the good progress they make.
7. Lesson planning is of a high standards. Always very detailed, planning includes assessment opportunities, as exemplified in science teaching. However, in parallel classes, more effective joint lesson planning would ensure greater consistency of experience for pupils. Pupil’s work is meticulously marked and positive comments are added to guide pupils on how they might improve. Day-to-day assessments are well used to track progress and to plan for the next stage of learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and work hard to promote positive attitudes to learning. As a result pupils make good progress. Higher attaining pupils reach above average standards and an increasing proportion of pupils attains the expected standards. Teachers have very good class management skills and, as a result, the school is an orderly and calm environment where pupils get on with the business of learning. Support staff are well deployed and effective communication ensures that staff, who may join a class half way through a lesson, are well briefed. Common objectives pervade and members of staff collaborate well to ensure objectives are met. For instance, during the week of the inspection, while a Year 1 class teacher took the literacy hour whole-class teaching session, the special needs co-ordinator sat in on the session observing the responses of a small-group of pupils in order to identify their future learning needs. In a Year 2 class, the special educational needs assistant modelled the expected behaviour by putting up her hand to speak during class discussion time. Individual education plans are of a high standard and specify sharp targets and include specific activities with details of frequency and duration and teachers’ planning indicates how these are integrated into planning in each class
8. The high standard of teaching is strength of the school. The talented and hard working members of staff are a key factor in the good progress made by the pupils. The headteacher monitors teaching and leads staff in a programme of improvements. Teachers are self-critical and have the ability to evaluate and improve current practice. This is a characteristic which has a significant impact on the consistently high quality of teaching in the school and which is likely to lead to further improvement, a development which is well within the school’s capacity.

### 37. **The curriculum and assessment**

1. The school provides a broad, relevant and interesting curriculum, which is appropriately balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the local education authority agreed syllabus for religious education. A highly relevant and well matched curriculum, based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children under five, provides very good continuity in the nursery and the reception classes and leads well into Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. Throughout the school, English and mathematics are given key roles at the centre of the curriculum and the development of literacy and numeracy are given due weight. Good links established between the subjects, particularly evident in the carefully chosen topics, add meaning to the whole curriculum. Considerable importance is placed on the development of the pupils’ personal, social and health education, including drug awareness. The governors have a sex education programme and questions are answered sensitively when they arise. Curriculum planning and organisation reflect the school’s commitment to making all pupils feel highly valued, to its practice of embracing diversity and the importance it places on helping pupils to develop a

picture of themselves as learners who can achieve.

2. There has been considerable improvement in curriculum provision since the last inspection. The schemes of work, completed in almost all subjects, provide the desired continuity and progression in skills and concepts. High quality planning is now used consistently throughout the school and all attainment targets are given appropriate attention. Plans now identify specific learning intentions and outcomes are regularly and carefully assessed and usefully inform future planning. Parents play an important and welcome role in the learning process as they are provided with the targets for their children. They share these targets, meet teachers to discuss them and support their children's learning at home. The effect of these carefully considered improvements, put into place with the support of the governing body, is to raise standards and improve the quality of learning.
3. There are highly effective systems for ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all its pupils begins in the nursery, where the well designed nursery building enhances the inclusive approach for pupils with special educational needs. The system of inclusion and genuine and excellent valuing of the languages and cultures of all pupils in school contributes positively to them as learners and to their making good progress. The school makes very good provision for all pupils with special educational needs and fulfils the requirements of the nationally laid down Code of Practice. Individual education plans are well linked into lesson plans and all teachers and support staff ensure that class work is appropriate to the pupils' needs and attainment levels. Appropriately identified and specific targets are reviewed and parents are fully involved in the process. These pupils make very good progress towards the targets set for them. The governing body sees this area of the school's provision as important. Specialist support from outside agencies is very well utilised. Good provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language includes support from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant project and this enables pupils to make good progress.
4. The curriculum for children under five provides well for their physical, social, emotional and intellectual development. Good planning, based on the Desirable Learning Outcomes is detailed, ensures continuity and progression in learning in the early years and forms an integral part of the whole-school planning. Teachers regularly evaluate the planned learning opportunities provided and build on these. Specific and clearly matched learning intentions are built into the activities which the children undertake, providing a good basis for assessing their progress. The high quality assessments made of the pupils' learning are an important factor in the good progress made. Details of the activities for the nursery and reception class children are clearly communicated to parents by means of shared learning targets which are reviewed regularly. This process is valued by all parents.
5. In Key Stage 1, an effective curriculum framework ensures coverage of the National Curriculum through a combination of discrete subjects and integrated topic areas. It provides detailed coverage of subjects and useful links between them. Policy statements are in place for all subjects and these are reviewed and updated when necessary. There are sound schemes of work for all subjects, except religious education, where guidelines lack sufficient detail to ensure the progressive development of skills and concepts. Nevertheless, the personal and social elements of the religious education curriculum are very well developed. Medium-term planning provides a clear, systematic and consistent structure for teaching the curriculum. Short-term planning is clear and detailed. However, a relative weakness is that work planned for parallel classes does not always have the same content or lead to similar attainment levels because teachers do not liaise closely enough when interpreting medium-term plans. Despite this, the overall planning structure is impressive and planning for different levels of attainment and for the needs of pupils with differing levels of English language acquisition is consistently strong.
6. There are co-ordinators for all subjects and they effectively monitor teachers' planning and the pupils' work. The headteacher and her deputy regularly and systematically monitor the delivery of the curriculum. The governing body places considerable importance on curriculum development and there is a commitment to higher achievement from all those involved in the work of the school. The governors monitor the curriculum and some are closely involved in work in the classrooms. Governors visit the school to monitor the implementation of the national literacy and national numeracy strategies.

7. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum. Visitors to the school include theatre and dance groups and pupils visit places of interest, for example, London Zoo, Coram Fields and the nearby Bruce Castle Museum. The skills, crafts and talents of the local community are incorporated into the school curriculum and, linked to National Curriculum subjects, they add a relevance and richness to the quality of education experienced by the pupils. The headteacher and governors have expanded the partnership between home and school and the curriculum has been enhanced by the introduction of homework, which almost all pupils return to school on time. Homework, which is now well established, was introduced following analysis of the school's 1998 SAT results in order to involve parents more fully in their children's education and thus improve performance.
8. Assessment procedures in the school are good and are well used to inform future planning. Assessment procedures for under fives are very good. In the nursery an entry profile provides initial information on pupils' prior attainment and tracks progress. Local education authority baseline assessment tests are carried out shortly after pupils enter the reception class. The school builds well on the information gathered to plan pupils' progress through the school. It complies with statutory requirements for assessing pupils' achievements in the core areas of English, mathematics and science, and regularly analyses the results of these and other standardised assessments to monitor teaching and learning and to improve standards. Assessment for pupils with special educational needs fulfils the statutory requirements and pupils with statements have individual action plans that contribute positively to their progress.
9. Assessment opportunities are identified in the teachers' planning. Teachers make assessments of pupils' learning in individual lessons and draw upon this knowledge when planning further lessons. There is a manageable system for the assessment and recording of important learning activities and this enables the progress of individual pupils to be followed successfully. There are effective systems to monitor progress in literacy, numeracy, science and information technology. The quality of teacher assessment is good and is effectively used when planning the next stage of learning. A relative weakness is that there are no formal assessment procedures in religious education or the non-core subjects. Nevertheless, it is well within the school's capacity to bring about the necessary improvements.
10. Teachers know their pupils well and the regular assessment of pupils' learning is a feature of all lessons. Marking is impressive; it is positive, thorough and indicates to the pupils how they can improve their work. Much assessment of pupils' work is completed while they are present. The teachers involve pupils sensitively in evaluating their own work, which they do readily, becoming appreciative of the progress they are making.
11. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good in all respects. They enjoy full and equal access to the whole curriculum. The support they are given enables them to develop fully as members of the school community and prepares them very well for the junior stage of their education. Pupils who have English as an additional language are well supported by Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant project teachers and class teachers and this enables them to gain increasing access the curriculum. Teachers from the project monitor pupils' acquisition of English rigorously using the five stages of learning English as an additional language.

#### 48. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

1. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There has been a marked improvement in provision for spiritual development since the last inspection when the school was criticised for giving the pupils too few opportunities for reflection. Weaknesses in daily assembly have been remedied. The act of worship now fully meets the required criteria and goes far beyond requirements in the quality of worship the pupils experience. Morning assembly now has a profound spiritual element and is at the heart of the school's excellent ethos. The school's strong provision for the arts makes a significant and positive impact on pupils' spiritual and cultural development. There is every expectation that the school will maintain, and even improve upon, this very

high standard because of its commitment to, and capacity for, improving the quality of provision for its pupils.

2. The very good provision for spiritual development hinges on the whole-school reflection in assemblies. There is a real sense of stillness when a pupil is chosen to hold the lighted candle while everyone reflects on the theme of the day. Stories are chosen that introduce the pupils to a range of ideas and experiences beyond their own immediate world. The teachers, following the excellent example set by the headteacher, guide the pupils' reflections skilfully to develop an awareness of their own feelings and a sense of awe and wonder at the world in which they live. During the Christmas period, teachers effectively highlight the real meaning of Christmas by presenting a range of stories about how people in different parts of the world have developed the idea of a star as a guiding light. One story, told by the deputy headteacher, emphasises the importance of simple gifts of love and affection at a time when other forces in the outside world pull the pupils in a more material direction. The very good quality displays around the school reinforce this specific message, as well as enhancing a general sense of beauty and mystery. The school is particularly effective at promoting spiritual awareness independently of particular religious beliefs so that all pupils can feel equally valued. This sense of valuing and nurturing the pupils' varied feelings, ideas and beliefs permeates all aspects of the work of the school, reflecting one of its central aims. It is evident in some excellent displays which incorporate the pupils' wishes for the world including "that everyone may have a home", their thoughts on what friendship means and advent messages such as "let people live how they want to". The curriculum is also used effectively to widen the pupils' perspectives. For example, in studying the lives of famous people in history, such as Nelson Mandela, the pupils become aware of how commitment to an ideal or belief can positively affect the way in which people choose to live their lives. The religious education curriculum also contributes to the pupils' spiritual development by giving them an insight into how religious beliefs can influence how they and others view the world.
3. The school sets a very good moral tone, rooted in equal respect for all and consistent expectations of fair treatment and consideration for others. The pupils are taught to distinguish clearly between right and wrong on the basis of the values that the school advocates. Good moral values are promoted in a way that the pupils understand; for instance, by the "I can" board on which pupils demonstrating a growing awareness of the moral choices open to them. The pupils strive to improve themselves in ways that are recognised by the school; for example, by increasing their independence. However, effort and good behaviour do not depend on this recognition. There are clear codes of behaviour posted around the school to remind the pupils of what is expected and these are consistently applied from the earliest days in the nursery. As a result, positive attitudes and relationships, as well as good behaviour are promoted and achieved throughout the school.
4. These positive relationships provide the basis for the school's very good provision for social development. The pupils grow in confidence as they are given increasing opportunities to play an active part in the life of the school and to learn more about the wider society in which they live. Adults in the school provide good role models of tolerance, co-operation and respect. The school provides a wide range of visits in the locality and builds purposeful relationships with local businesses. For example, the pupils visit the local museum to learn about how local transport has changed and visit a local bakery as part of their study of bread. Overall, the pupils develop a very good sense of citizenship for their age. The inclusion into the school of pupils with physical disabilities and those from troubled parts of the world encourages all the pupils to develop positive attitudes and to be socially open and accepting. In addition, their studies of the environment give them a sense of responsibility for the world they live in. For example, the information they present from their research using CD-ROMs includes judgements about the effect of rainforest depletion on the air that we breathe.
5. The school has maintained the very high standard of provision for cultural development described in the last inspection report. The visual images, works of art and artifacts on display, the selection of reading material available and the wide range of music played for the pupils to listen to all contribute to the positive presentation of the variety of cultures that are represented in society at large. The library contains books written in a selection of languages represented in the school and important notices are posted in the main first languages. Teachers are careful to achieve a balance between coverage of the different cultures in their planning. For example, they follow a study of the development of transport

locally with a worldwide perspective brought through the study of the lives of famous people. The pupils' cultural experiences are enlivened and enriched through a wide variety of first-hand experiences, from acting out stories for Shakespeare to taking part in an African Drum and Dance workshop. The school's ethos and curriculum reflect the cultural context of the pupils' lives and society at large in a most positive way.

53.

**53. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

1. The good provision for pupils' support, guidance and well being reported in the last inspection has been sustained. Parents speak highly of the excellent level of pastoral support provided by the school and inspection evidence fully justifies this view. All staff know the children well and value them. Care, consideration and mutual respect are pervasive elements of the school ethos. Pupils feel happy and secure and this is reflected in the confidence with which they approach staff, their very positive attitudes towards learning and the good progress they make.
2. The extremely effective admission arrangements to the nursery and reception class ensure children quickly adjust to school and make early progress. Similarly the transfer of Year 2 pupils to Key Stage 2 is done with sensitivity and understanding. The academic progress and personal development of pupils, including those who have special educational needs or who have only a limited understanding of English, are monitored carefully and this enables staff to respond appropriately to individual needs. The school's good working relationships with the Vale School, the junior school and various support agencies, such as the speech therapy service, provide an effective network of advice and support which the school puts to good use.
3. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are broadly satisfactory, but have weaknesses. Some procedures have not been in place long enough to have achieved the desired result and others are not fully effective. The school is concerned about the unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality of many of its pupils and has begun to take greater steps to promote good attendance. Some information has been provided for parents, for instance in the Home/School agreement but it is not specific or full enough to ensure that parents are fully aware of what the school expects of them. Ways of promoting good attendance and punctuality have yet to be fully explored. No systematic analysis of individual and whole-school attendance is made and, in view of concerns about attendance levels, this is a weakness.
4. The parents' praise for the school's highly effective measures for promoting high standards of behaviour is well founded. The development of positive attitudes and the pupils' self-esteem are central to the school's behaviour policy which is consistently and effectively implemented. Staff praise good work and behaviour and make judicious use of rewards; stickers are awarded and pupils' names written in the "Happy Book" in recognition of achievement and effort. Staff respect the pupils, are kind to them and apply discipline firmly but fairly. Poor behaviour is effectively managed using strategies outlined in the policy. If necessary the headteacher and specialist agencies are involved and the pupil concerned is given special needs support. Bullying is rare at the school and any incidents that do occur are dealt with speedily and effectively. As a result of the school's effective and consistently applied procedures, the standard of behaviour in the school is very high.
5. The school makes good arrangements for pupils at break times. The last inspection reported lack of purposeful activity amongst pupils at break times and the school has successfully tackled this issue by improving the playground environment. Games such as hopscotch have been clearly marked out, a playhouse and 'musical instruments' have been installed. Pupils are now constructively engaged at playtimes and the school reports consequent improvements in behaviour. Observation during the inspection confirmed that break time behaviour is as good as throughout the rest of the school day.
6. Overall provision for ensuring the pupils' well being, health and safety is very good. Child protection procedures are good and are well understood by staff. The school has a medical room and appropriately trained staff provide first aid should an accident occur. Fire alarms and emergency lighting are

regularly checked and fire drills are held regularly, recorded and evaluated. The outdoor play area is safe for all pupils; the playground surface is in good condition and pupils are well supervised at break times. The school is aware that it needs to ensure that furniture is in safe condition and that fire notices and fire extinguishers are clearly visible. A whole-site health and safety policy is now in place and regular safety checks of the site now need to be re-introduced to comply with the policy. This school has a good capacity to bring about improvements to this and other elements related to pupils' well being.

#### 59. **Partnership with parents and the community**

1. The school has successfully established a good partnership with parents and the community. The previous inspection reported a partnership which had many positive features and these have now been extended and strengthened. The school greatly values its parents and actively encourages them to become partners in their children's education. In turn the vast majority of parents express high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of its work.
2. Parents are kept well informed by the good quality information provided by the school. Parents new to the school are effectively introduced to it through home visits and induction meetings. Information about what is taught is provided at the start of each half term and includes suggestions for activities that can be done at home. Curriculum meetings on topics such as the literacy and numeracy strategies are held. Parents are kept regularly informed about events and day-to-day matters via newsletters and prominent notices in the school entrance hall. There are also daily opportunities for a more informal exchange of information between parents and teachers. The prospectus and governors' annual report contain much useful information but the school is aware that a few essential details are omitted. The school does its best to ensure that parents receive information in community languages as appropriate and most parents are satisfied with the arrangements.
3. The school makes good arrangements to keep parents informed of their children's work and progress. An informative annual report is provided and parents can consult teachers at formally arranged meetings in the spring and summer terms. Any parent who wishes to, may see a teacher formally in the autumn term as well. In addition, parents are encouraged to approach staff at any other time to share concerns about their child's education. Most feel able to do so as they find staff very approachable. Pupils' individual half-termly targets are shared with parents via homework files. If a pupil is thought to have special educational needs, parents are informed at the earliest opportunity. Parents are kept informed and involved at all the various stages and are included in meetings to draw up the individual education plan so that they are fully aware of the learning targets. The plans contain suggestions for how the parents can help their child in specific areas.
4. Over a year ago the school initiated several projects designed to help parents become more actively and effectively involved in their children's learning, to provide home/school continuity and to raise standards. Family Literacy, mathematics and craft courses have been held and interpreters have been made more widely available. A one-stop shop advice and information service is also held at the school on a monthly basis. The initiatives have been well received by parents and are already having a positive impact on the progress pupils make. For instance, parents just finishing the literacy course speak positively about it both in terms of their own confidence and their children's achievements. The home/school reading scheme has also been reviewed and extended. The scheme is well described in the prospectus and parents are encouraged to listen to their children reading at home. Despite this, a few parents express doubts about the efficacy of the scheme. They say books are not always matched to the children's ability and comments in reading/homework diaries are not always useful.
5. Parents and local people feel very welcome at the school and are highly supportive of it. Many enjoy attending assemblies, festivals and concerts with the children. A significant minority has become more actively involved in school life. Several give valuable classroom support by helping with reading, cooking, art, design and information technology. They also help on visits and in the library whilst a few give special interest talks on musical instruments or aspects of faiths. The chair of governors plays

the piano for concerts and some assemblies. A small but highly committed group of parents run the active parent-school association and organise well supported social and fund-raising events such as fayres, bazaars, cake stalls and international evenings.

6. Good links with the local community have been established and are well used by the school to promote pupils' personal development and to support the curriculum. Visits to local shops, the adjacent park and nearby cemetery and visiting speakers such as a local fire officer are all used well to enhance pupils' work across a range of curriculum areas. Local people share craft skills such as batik and felt making thus enriching the creative element of the school curriculum. Pupils' social awareness and a concern for others are fostered effectively through the inclusion of children from the Vale School, by collecting harvest gifts for the elderly and homeless and by fund-raising for charities such as Childline and Action Aid. There are effective links with a local printing firm through the auspices of the Haringey Business Education Partnership.
7. Parents are supportive of their children and of what the school is doing. Relationships are good. The inclusion of pupils from the Vale Special School strengthens the school's relationships with the local community generally. The school has set out to strengthen its partnership with parents and has the commitment and unquestionable capacity for improving its performance still further in this aspect of its work.

## **66. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and Management**

1. The school's leadership and management are of a very high quality and the school's ethos is excellent. The school provides a secure, loving and stimulating haven in a busy inner city setting. The ethos permeates the entire school and creates a climate in which pupils, parents and staff know they are valued members of a learning community. The ethos is underpinned by the school's values that are made explicit in the school's celebration of diversity, in the quality of relationships and in pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. Through the common use of sign language and gesture in morning assembly, the school conveys a powerful message about its values and aims for all pupils. This is a school where all are welcome. The school's ethos is clearly communicated to pupils by the headteacher in assembly, when pupils join in saying, "I am a special child" and, "Today is a day for learning". These statements mirror the head's personal commitment to affirming and valuing every child and to promoting high standards.
2. The headteacher and deputy work well together to support and monitor teaching and learning. The deputy gives the headteacher very good support by taking main responsibility for curricular organisation. She and the headteacher monitor planning and give colleagues good support. The headteacher closely monitors teaching and learning through a clearly understood programme which involves staff in reflecting on and evaluating their effectiveness. This process leads to continued improvements, as a result of which the quality of teaching in the school is of a consistently high quality. Learning targets for pupils are set and their progress is well tracked. Subject co-ordinators have the opportunity to monitor planning and play an increasing role in the management of the school. Clear action plans have been drawn up for different areas of the curriculum and these provide good management tools for co-ordinators. The special educational needs co-ordinator gives very good leadership and manages the provision competently. She successfully ensures that all pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. Pupils in wheelchairs and with a wide range of physical support equipment are included in all classroom activities. Provision for ethnic minority pupils is well managed and well supported by a development plan. The school is aware that in order to comply fully with statutory requirements it needs to address some omissions in the information provided for parents.
3. Weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection have been fully remedied. Curriculum planning and assessment procedures are now good and very good for under fives, lessons are well organised and standards of attainment are being raised. The daily act of worship is now a core element of school life. It



makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual development, reinforces the values of the school and inspires pupils and adults.

4. The school development planning is good. Appropriate targets are identified, success criteria are set, target dates, resource implications and responsibilities are all identified. Dates for completion and for monitoring and review are set. Governors effectively monitor the implementation of the school development plan but have not been involved in identifying priorities for development at an early enough stage and plan to make a more robust input into the next school development plan.
5. Governors play a full role in the life of the school and make a good contribution to its management. This is an improvement on the last inspection when governors were found not to be sufficiently involved in the strategic planning and financial management of the school. The chair of governors is a daily visitor. She gives good practical support to the school, is an effective critical friend to the headteacher and has a good overview of the work of the school. Governors' working groups are well led and effectively exercise responsibility for aspects of the school governance including finance, the curriculum and premises. The governors have a good strategic overview of school and are well placed to meet the challenge of proposed changes. At present the school shares a governing body with the Lancasterian Junior School. However, a decision has been made to give each school its own separate governing body and this becomes operational in January 2000. Currently those involved in the joint school governance are endeavouring to ensure that the new arrangements give both schools the benefit of governors with experience and expertise. The governors with special responsibility for literacy, numeracy and information technology observe work in the classrooms to monitor the implementation of national and school strategies.
1. The school has entirely appropriate aims, values and policies and these are implemented in an excellent manner by the headteacher who has been in post for less than two years. Since coming into post she has analysed the school's performance and identified its strengths and weaknesses. Her clear vision for the future direction of the school and its potential for further improvement is shared with staff and governors. The leadership of the school is clear about what needs to be done to bring about improvements and has strategies in place to do so. Building on existing strengths and stimulated by its own positive culture of review and self-evaluation, the school is moving forward. Led by the head and governors and with the continued commitment and hard work of staff, the school has very good prospects and capacity for improvement.

72.

#### 72. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

1. The good overall provision for these aspects, which was noted in the previous inspection, has been maintained and has a positive impact on the progress made by pupils. There are sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced teachers, nursery nurses and classroom assistants to meet the needs of young children, including those with special needs, and to teach the curriculum. The administrative assistant and school meals' supervisory staff all make a valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school and the pupils' education. The staff are highly committed and hardworking; they work well as a team and are united in the aim to provide the best education for every pupil and to improve standards. Annually reviewed, clear job descriptions are in place which, for the majority of teachers, include details of assigned areas of responsibility. There are sufficient well-qualified and experienced teachers and classroom assistants to provide for the needs of all pupils with special educational needs. Some of these are employed by the local authority and some by the school itself. In addition, the members of staff accompanying the pupils from the Vale School who join the school for the full curriculum make a very good contribution to the overall support. The joint training of the school and Vale staff enhances the quality of provision for all the pupils. Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant project staff are appropriately qualified and experienced and despite their small number, make a good contribution to providing direct support for pupils who have English as an additional language and for their parents. They also make a significant contribution to supporting and extending the skills of other members of staff.
2. Induction arrangements are good. New teachers are assigned a colleague mentor and receive a useful

handbook detailing the school's requirements vis-à-vis classroom organisation and management. In addition newly qualified teachers are provided with extra support and are released to attend local authority courses. Official staff appraisal has been suspended pending the outcome of the performance related pay talks. Despite this, teachers are keen to evaluate constantly and improve their practice and they enthusiastically participate in the school's own arrangements to monitor teaching. The school views the staff as its most valuable resource and good professional development is a priority. In-service training is closely related to the needs identified in the school development plan and, after attending courses, subject co-ordinators play a key role in disseminating good practice.

3. The school's accommodation provides a pleasant and stimulating environment for young children and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The nursery is spacious and well designed and other classrooms are adequate in size. The resources and parents' rooms are sometimes used for individual or small-group work. The hall provides sufficient space for whole-school assemblies and other activities such as concerts. It has adequate equipment for indoor physical education but, when seven-year-olds have their lessons, space is limited. Outside there are attractive hard surface play areas, which can also be used for outdoor physical education. The building and grounds are fully accessible to disabled pupils from the Vale. This is one of the school's many strengths.
4. The nursery and reception rooms are in a good state of repair and the hall has recently been redecorated through the generosity of the parent-school association. Governors have a rolling programme of repair and redecoration but maintaining the fabric of the school in a satisfactory condition is a constant concern. Nevertheless, because of the imaginative and high quality of displays throughout the building, the school is a vibrant and stimulating environment. A significant contribution to the quality of the environment is made by the very good standards of cleaning provided by the caretaker and his staff.
5. Overall, resources are satisfactory and meet the demands of the curriculum. The library is well stocked with a good range of fiction, non-fiction and reference books. It is open throughout the 'school day' allowing pupils access at all times.

#### 77. **The efficiency of the school**

1. Efficiency is good. The governing body is closely involved in agreeing spending priorities with the school and in monitoring their implementation. It is also actively exploring ways of measuring the success of particular initiatives so that it can evaluate the cost effectiveness of each item of budget spending. The school development plan has long-term as well as medium-term objectives so that the governors can place particular spending decisions in a general context. These are significant improvements since the last inspection, when the governors were not sufficiently involved in financial planning, which was at that time too short-term.
2. The finance committee meets regularly to review the budget, providing the full governing body with information that is as up-to date as possible within the restraints of local government time-scales. Budget decisions are taken in the light of the priorities set out in the school development plan, which give clear spending implications for each proposal. The governing body takes its financial responsibilities seriously and ensures that the headteacher, on behalf of the school, justifies all spending decisions on the basis of school improvement. For example, recent improvements to the playground led to immediate improvements in behaviour, which in turn led to the headteacher being able to take the lunchtime choir practice without hindrance. The budget surplus varies; for reasons related to the school's admissions policy, every fourth year (including this inspection year) the infant department has six, rather than the usual seven, classes. The headteacher wisely guards the school's finances to maintain its staffing complement in the face of the predictable fluctuations to the school roll. Generally, the school management team maintains a good balance in spending between staffing, resources and maintenance.
3. The school makes efficient use of the resources available to it. Teachers and classroom assistants work together effectively as a teaching team. The teachers deploy extra support effectively so that adults

supporting pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language also give good quality support to a number of additional pupils in the course of their duties. The equipment and materials purchased to support lessons in all subjects are accessible, clearly labelled and used effectively. The school spends the money it receives for the inclusion of pupils with physical disabilities sensibly in maintaining a high level of good quality support. The local education authority funds the support for pupils with statements of special educational needs directly, so the school has no financial accountability in this matter. Nevertheless, support is efficiently deployed and effectively used and enables pupils to make very good progress towards their learning targets.

4. The quality of financial control of the school's budget is very good. The governors set clear limits on the spending of budget re-allocations that the headteacher can make and take appropriate steps to monitor the school's spending. The school secretary is most efficient. She keeps clear, detailed personal records for all the pupils on computer so that the headteacher can be supplied with any required information, for example about attendance rates, very quickly and easily. She also keeps the school's day-to-day finances in very good order. Invoices and receipts are tallied to keep track of the ordering and receipt of goods and all the information computerised and backed up to guard against loss of or damage to the computer. As of yet the school's computer is not directly linked to the local education authority's computer in such a way as to allow the school to print out up-to-date balances. The governors therefore have to wait some time before they are fully aware of the money they have to spend at any given time and this imposes some planning constraints.
5. Taking into account: the poor educational standards of many of the children on entry to the nursery; the relatively poor social and economic circumstances of many of their families; the good teaching; the good progress; the very positive attitudes achieved and the average unit costs, the school gives good value for money. This maintains the very good financial position reported by the last inspection.

## **82. PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **82. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

1. Provision for under fives is very good. The previous inspection reported that the children in the nursery showed a high level of independence and initiative, that the school valued the languages and cultures of all children and the imaginative provision in the nursery ensured that children made progress. In 1995, admission procedures were found to be good but the systems for assessment were found to be unsatisfactory. There has been a tremendous improvement in children's assessment in both the nursery and reception classes. It is now detailed, highly relevant and manageable because all staff are involved in an exceedingly rigorous system. The other strengths identified have been maintained and in some cases extended even though the majority of children, on entering the nursery, have poor skills in most areas of learning. There is a good capacity to improve further the provision for under fives because of the skill and commitment of staff. A wide range of cultures and home languages are represented in the school and these are extremely highly valued in the nursery and reception classes. All staff working with children under five are extremely caring and professional in their approach. They learn phrases in all the languages spoken and make excellent efforts to involve parents in order that they become confident and active in their children's education. Parents feel welcome and highly valued in this environment and this is reflected in their smiles and confidence in approaching the staff.
2. Children are admitted to the nursery in the autumn or spring term following their third birthday and the majority of children are admitted to the reception classes during the autumn term of the school year in which they are five. There are two teachers and two nursery nurses in the nursery and two teachers and two nursery nurses in the reception classes. On entry to the nursery, children have poor levels of attainment in all areas of learning. Most have a severely limited vocabulary and many speak languages other than English, predominantly Somali, Bengali, Turkish and Kurdish and often do not communicate at all in English. Their knowledge and understanding of mathematics is restricted and the majority cannot count beyond two with any certainty. They have very little skill and experience in using and sharing equipment and concentrating for reasonable amounts of time compared to many three-year-old children. The nursery works successfully in enabling children to settle to the routines of school and to develop personal and social skills. The nursery and reception classes provide well for children's physical, intellectual, social and emotional development through a programme of work which is based on the required learning objectives laid down for children under five and which leads smoothly into Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.
3. The school's mission statement and philosophy for inclusion of the pupils from the Vale Special School is highly successfully introduced and developed in the Nursery and Reception classes. The purpose-built nature of the nursery allows for the total inclusion of the Vale pupils and this is planned in detail for two afternoons a week where the children from Lancasterian Nursery learn and play alongside pupils from the Vale School. Nursery children who have special educational needs are well accommodated in terms of appropriate activities and therapeutic exercises when necessary. Definite, positive steps are taken to ensure that equality of opportunity pervades all aspects of the school's provision. Positive images of girls in the construction area and boys in the home corner reflect one of the many features that enhance this aspect. Children work in mixed groups. Awe and wonder in learning is enhanced by the lighting of a candle during moments for reflection during circle time.
4. The provision and teaching, for the personal and social development of children is very good and, by the time they are five, children have levels of responsibility and independence expected of children in this age group. Children are settled into the nursery thoughtfully and successfully. Most have an appropriate understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They begin to develop good attitudes to learning because staff are successful in establishing good relationships and creating a warm, caring and stimulating learning environment. The children show growing independence, especially in terms of making choices and good collaborative skills because of the very good planning which ensures they have opportunities for working together. For instance, during the inspection week, children took part in the shared painting of a purple cat and this enabled them to identify and name the colour and to develop further their social skills through working on a joint project. They enjoyed the cookery activity when making gingerbread people and understood the importance of taking turns. However, at this stage, little

initiative is shown. The children listen well and are beginning to understand set routines. They are well behaved and form good relationships with other children and with adults. These aspects are developed and extended in the reception classes and, by the time they are five, most children have reached the desirable outcomes in this area of learning.

5. The way in which nursery staff promote the development of skills in language and literacy and the overall quality of teaching in this area of learning are good. By the age of five, however, the large majority of children do not reach the required standard in language and literacy. Nevertheless, they make good progress from entry into the nursery. They listen well to stories and songs but lack confidence and often the essential vocabulary when sharing their experiences. Through skilful questioning, the adults encourage them to express their ideas and increase their vocabulary. This is one of the many areas in which the teachers' sensitive learning of a few phrases in each of the home languages is beneficial. Children have positive attitudes to learning and treat equipment with care. They handle books carefully and know that print carries meaning. Most of them can tell the story by following the pictures and by memorising the story told by the teachers. The higher attaining children, however, read fluently and accurately and discuss the wide range of books that they have read. Children make good advances in learning to write, progressing from making uncontrolled marks on paper to the early stages of writing. The focus on colour is effectively planned into the language and literacy area of development by the effective use of the available range of books on colour.
6. In mathematics, the opportunities for learning and teaching are good and the majority of children make good progress. However, they do not reach the expected standard by the time they are five. In the nursery, the majority count and order numbers to four, sometimes with support. A few can count beyond this and children are learning to compare, sort and match everyday objects. This is extended during the nursery and reception classes to children sequencing pictures, ordering objects according to size and continuing repeating patterns. They appropriately employ mathematical language such as 'more' or 'less' and are familiar with number rhymes that reinforce their knowledge and understanding. They respond well to mathematical activities and enjoy singing number songs and rhymes. Teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes. Teachers plan carefully and make good use of day-to-day assessment as a tool to aid planning. Children are very well managed and are keen to learn.
7. Teaching to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Children make good progress and a small number come close to reaching the required standard in a few areas by the time they are five. In the reception class children know that certain materials repel water while others absorb it; they utilise this knowledge when designing waterproof hats. Children are given many effective opportunities to observe the changes that occur around them, including autumnal weather change and its impact on leaf colours and human activity. Good opportunities are provided for the children to assemble and disassemble construction kits and to try out ideas. They gain appropriate skills in information technology and can control the mouse on the computer. These skills are extended in the reception classes as children learn to operate a wider range of programs including picture making. They understand that shadows are formed by the absence of light and during the week of the inspection experimented with torchlight and drew round the shadows their friends created. However, their low levels of language skills prevented the majority from discussing their findings. Children enjoy the activities organised; they delight in using torches in the "dark caves" and gain confidence developing keyboard skills, side by side with their friends. Teachers use resources well to enhance children's knowledge of the world and this is often well linked to the many opportunities for imaginative play. In both the reception and nursery classes there are caves for experimenting with torches and understanding how shadows are formed. Day and night is a focus in the home corner that is equipped with dressing up clothes similar to clothes worn in children's homes. A sweet shop serving Diwali sweets made from salt dough builds on children's knowledge of the locality and recent festivals.
8. Children make good progress in the creative area of learning but the majority do not reach the standards set for children in this age group. Many opportunities for drawing and painting are provided. The children learn to print, create collage pictures and model with clay or dough; they develop independence when practising their new skills. Their cutting and sticking skills are extended when making stained glass windows and also when creating designs in a range of colours. Children start from a very low level of attainment as the majority, when they are admitted to the nursery, can neither name nor match

colours accurately. They make masks for characters from the story about “Brown Bear” and this enhances both their manipulative skills and their understanding of the story. Their musical skills increase as they identify percussion instruments by the sounds they make and become aware of the differences between music which is loud or quiet, fast or slow. Children enjoy making and playing their own musical instruments. The quality of teaching to support this work is based on a thorough knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and is good and has some very good features. The provision for role-play is good and equipment and resources for creative activities are well organised and accessible.

9. Teachers make very good provision for children’s physical development. The majority of children reach the expected standards by the time they are five in the control and manipulation of pencils, construction apparatus, modelling tools and paintbrushes. They have many opportunities to cut, stick and join objects. They develop good hand and eye co-ordination through controlling the mouse on the computer. The excellent outdoor provision for physical education helps to promote the very good progress children make in throwing, catching, balancing, jumping and moving in a wide variety of ways. Large wheeled toys are ridden with a high degree of skill; children confidently pedal forwards, backwards, accelerate, slow down and change direction. As a result of these activities children attain very good levels of control and co-ordination and a well developed awareness of space. They develop confidence in their own ability to master skills and to move and use equipment with confidence indoors and outside. Children in the reception classes continue to enjoy these facilities because of carefully planned liaison between all staff.
  
10. The quality of teaching in the nursery is very good and ranges from good to excellent in all six areas of learning. In the reception classes it is good. Very good knowledge of the needs of under fives is a strong feature of nursery teaching. This is particularly evident in the consistent approach to promoting good behaviour and in the steps taken to reinforce good habits. Reception and nursery teachers have a secure understanding of how young children learn and provide a rich learning environment in which they can develop. Excellent planning which is clear and detailed takes into consideration the national guidance for children under five and the level of English of the children and the parents’ involvement. The pace of the lessons is brisk and clear challenges are set. Activities are well organised, showing very good preparation to stimulate language and learning and motivate children to try harder. A very good feature is the inclusive involvement of children with special educational needs both within the classes and from Vale School, especially their involvement in physical development activities. Other positive features include very good control and very good relationships which are established between adults and children. All teachers and nursery nurses are equally involved in all planning and are secure in their areas of responsibility. The teaching of language and literacy and numeracy is well organised to meet the varying needs of different groups of children. One excellent feature in the nursery organisation is that each day a member of staff has responsibility for maintaining an overview, for engaging children who are reluctant to take part and for supporting teachers should too many children may join one activity. This is a key point of the planning and a very good strategy for all aspects of monitoring.
  
11. The planning and organisation of the curriculum is excellent and highly relevant to all children. Children are very well managed and highly involved both in the nursery and reception classes. Co-ordinators in the nursery and reception classes plan effectively and there are highly effective systems for assessing children’s progress and ensuring continuity of learning. Well thought out systems successfully ensure that children are secure and happy in the nursery and reception classes and prepare them for the transition from the nursery to reception by a regular pattern of staged visits during the summer term. The purpose-built nursery accommodation, is a highly attractive recent construction, with excellent secure outdoor areas and an imaginative range of markings and large play equipment. This resource is shared with the reception classes. Another excellent feature is the way in which the nursery accommodates children’s choices but ensures equality of opportunity to an extremely high degree. This is because children are allowed free choice but most of the activities which are planned for inside are also accommodated outside and the activities which enhance knowledge and understanding of the world are planned for children both in the nursery and reception classes. Another strength of the provision is the gradual introduction of a more formal curriculum in line with the children’s developing levels of maturity. In the nursery, children have a free choice of activities and this develops into a more tightly controlled curricular pattern in the reception classes. Short half-hour periods for literacy and numeracy are included with a particular focus on the shared class activities in the beginning of each lesson and

plenary sessions at the end.

12. In the nursery, clear records are kept to monitor children's participation in the activities and assess their levels of achievement. Early years staff work well together and collaborate closely in planning and assessing children's needs. A baseline assessment of each child's prior attainment is begun in the first half term of children joining the nursery and ongoing, relevant, key assessments are made every week. This baseline assessment is continued every half term, in addition to the individual education plans for children with special educational needs and records of children's language needs. The local education authority baseline assessment is given to children in the reception classes very early in the first half term. Following this, assessment procedures in the reception classes and throughout the school follow the pattern of those in the nursery. A strength of the assessment procedures for under fives is that, whilst thorough, they are manageable. In the nursery each member of staff has a focus group of children for recording any significant learning or behavioural development and this is incorporated into the main recording system. Assessment positively informs planning and also the planning is suitably detailed to enable records to be made of skills acquired or difficulties encountered. There are excellent procedures for transition from home to nursery because of the high quality and staged home visits where children's records begin. All teachers and support staff, especially in the nursery but also in the reception classes develop exceedingly caring and constructive relationships with parents and carers and involve them at the earliest possible stage in their children's education. Parents are welcomed into the school at the start of each session in the nursery and have time to settle their children in and communicate with teachers on any issues. There are end-of-year reports and very good arrangements are made for interpreters on these occasions using either additional support from the local education authority or the highly valued support of a Somali parent.

#### **94. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

##### **94. English**

1. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 test the school's results in reading and writing were well below average compared to the average points scored by all schools nationally. In comparisons with similar schools and taking into account the high proportion of pupils who enter school with a severely limited acquisition of English, the school's results in reading are above average and in writing are average. Compared with similar schools the proportions of seven-year-olds attaining the expected reading standards and the higher level (level 3) are broadly average. In writing the proportion reaching the expected level for seven-year-olds is below average and the proportion reaching the higher level (level 3) is above average. The results of the 1999 tests showed an improvement in reading and writing standards and reversed a three-year decline in performance. In 1995 inspectors reported that standards were "below average for the country as a whole but the pupils' achievements represent sound progress and a few pupils achieve high standards". The findings of the 1999 inspection confirm that compared with other schools in the country, attainment is below average in reading and writing and that a few pupils achieve high standards. However, in view of the significant proportion of pupils who enter the school with a limited acquisition of English and the number of pupils who join the school during the school year, there has been an improvement in the progress that pupils make which inspectors now judge to be good. This is because the school has:
  - successfully introduced the national literacy strategy which now leads to year on year improvements in the progress pupils make;
  - analysed its performance and set targets for improvement;
  - started teaching about letters and sounds at an earlier stage;
  - successfully established an ethos which promotes very positive attitudes to learning;
  - made good provision for pupils whose home language is not English.
1. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in speaking and listening are below average. By the time they leave the school, most pupils have listening skills, which are average or better. They listen carefully in assembly, in class discussions and in group work. Speaking skills are less well developed. A few pupils

have a well-developed ability to articulate their ideas and they express their feelings fluently. The majority are limited because they do not have a wide enough vocabulary. Nevertheless, throughout the key stage pupils make good progress in speaking and listening because of the high expectations teachers have of them and because what they have to say is listened to with respect. In assembly they listen intently, hanging on to every word of the story read by the headteacher and make good progress because the spoken word is enhanced, particularly for those whose grasp of English is tenuous, by sign language, gesture and action. Five-year-olds in the reception class have good opportunities to discuss their ideas with adults on a one-to-one basis. In Year 1, during a circle time session seen in the week of the inspection, the majority made good progress in describing their feelings for people who had shown them kindness. In literacy sessions pupils who are learning English make good progress in identifying the initial letter sounds of words.

2. Reading standards are below average; nevertheless pupils make good progress. By the end of the key stage a few attain high standards, read with enjoyment and tackle unfamiliar texts with confidence. They enjoy paperback novels and talk about favourite authors. These higher attaining pupils understand what a glossary is and can use an index; they are keen to demonstrate that they can also locate information in a reference book by scanning through the pages. The majority attain average standards; their reading is accurate and often fluent. A significant proportion of pupils, including many who have English as their second language, have reading standards which are below or well below average. Nevertheless they make good use of their phonic skills to sound out the words they do not immediately recognise. This is an improvement on the 1995 inspection when weaknesses in the use made of phonics were reported. Five-year-olds in the reception class know some initial letter sounds, understand that text carries meaning and join in some familiar stories. Higher attaining pupils read simple picture books. Their good progress continues in Year 1 and the majority develop a growing range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. A few, independently, and others with adult help, successfully employ their knowledge of sounds to build up simple words. They make good progress in reading to an audience because of the good opportunities they are given. For instance, during the week of the inspection, when reading stories to the whole class, pupils learned to read more expressively and adjust their voice levels so that the audience could hear them. In their final year in the school, the majority learn to recognise and use patterns of vowels and consonants and draw well on their language knowledge in predicting what the text might say. However, in Key Stage 1, the progress of many average ability pupils is not as rapid as it might be because the books they are given to read do not always help them systematically to increase their reading skills.
3. Overall standards in writing are below average but a few pupils write in an organised and imaginative manner and attain high standards in their extended story writing. Standards of punctuation have improved since the last inspection and most pupils now incorporate simple punctuation accurately and consistently in their writing. Many spell simple common words accurately and a few attain high standards in spelling. However, the writing skills of a substantial minority of pupils are less well developed and their ability to demarcate sentences with a full stop and capital letter is not securely established. Pupils make good progress in writing. By the end of their reception year the vast majority understand that script carries meaning and make good use of their knowledge of letter shapes and sounds in the stories and captions they write. A few write simple sentences independently and accurately. The progress of five-year-olds in the reception class has been further hastened this year because pupils have been taught the sounds of the alphabet at an earlier stage and have responded well to the increased level of challenge. As they move through the school, most can construct and write simple sentences. They write book reviews and stories with increasingly accurate spelling. Higher attaining pupils have good spelling skills and their writing often contains interesting and appropriate vocabulary.
4. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and respond well in their literacy lessons. They are attentive, listening well to their teachers and to others. For instance, in a Year 1 class during the week of the inspection, when a few pupils read stories aloud, other class members listened intently even when the pace of the reading slackened. Most are keen to answer questions and to contribute their ideas. Most are well motivated and concentrate well. They all believe they work hard and they are right. On the whole, behaviour in class is very good; this is in response to the high expectations of teachers and the school's good strategies to promote good behaviour. Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous. They have a confident approach to learning and, when given an unfamiliar book, use their knowledge of sounds and



other reading skills positively and persistently to make sense of the text. Most work well in groups, often co-operate effectively and help one another. They behave responsibly and show a considerable degree of independence during group work activities in the literacy hour.

5. Teaching is good and, as a result of this, pupils make good progress. All the teaching observed during the course of the inspection was at least good and about a sixth was very good. Teachers' planning is good; learning objectives are clear and activities are effectively organised to help pupils achieve the objectives set for them. For instance, during the inspection, to aid understanding of the term "glossary", activities included a game in which pupils matched terms to definitions and an activity in which pupils created their own glossary of words associated with transport. Work is modified to match the needs of pupils with special educational needs and of pupils who do not have a fluent command of English. Support staff are often well deployed to help, observe and assess the progress these pupils make and, as a result, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their targets and pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress. Good class management is a consistent feature of teaching and contributes significantly to the calm learning environment and the pupils' positive approach to learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and as a result pupils respond well to the literary challenges presented by work such as "The Owl and the Pussycat" and "Romeo and Juliet". Lessons are well organised, resources carefully prepared and the methods used by teachers are often good. However, one weakness is that the books some pupils are given to read are not well matched enough to their developing levels of skill to enable them to build on what they already know, understand and can do. A more systematic approach is called for. Nevertheless, under the leadership of the co-ordinator, there is a good capacity for addressing this weakness and improving the rate of progress and standards attained by the pupils.
  
  6. The school has a good policy and has successfully introduced the national literacy strategy. The literacy programme is gradually and appropriately introduced in the reception class and this year has been improved by the earlier introduction of phonics. The headteacher, who co-ordinates this subject, gives good leadership, monitors teaching and learning, evaluates performance and sets clear action plans for continuing improvement. Assessments are well carried out and are used to inform future planning. Appropriate targets are set. In response to the disappointing 1998 assessments, the school decided to involve parents more actively in their children's learning and initiated a Family Literacy scheme that has had a positive impact on the progress made by pupils. Teachers set appropriate homework and encourage pupils read at home and this has a beneficial effect on learning. However, there is no shared diary to record parents' and teachers' comments on pupils reading progress and this is a relative weakness. Teachers work hard to create an environment which stimulates interest in literacy and there are good links with other curriculum areas including history and geography. Books are given a high profile and the school library is an exceptionally inviting area. Overall, resources are satisfactory.
- 101.

### **Mathematics**

1. There have been many improvements since the last inspection. Although standards are still below the national average, the pupils make very good progress throughout the school. The introduction of the national numeracy strategy has helped to improve the standard of teaching, which is now very good. Teachers make more efficient use of time and resources and effectively engage the pupils in good investigations and practical applications of their learning.
  
2. The school's results in the national tests in 1999 show that attainment is well below average compared to the average points scored by all schools nationally but in line with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for seven-year-olds is well below average compared to all schools but in line with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (level 3) is below the national average but higher than in similar schools. Standards fell steadily from 1996 to 1998. The improvement in 1999 brought them up towards the 1996 level. In some years, girls have performed better than boys but boys have performed better in other years so that over time there is no significant difference between the two groups.

3. The inspection evidence confirms the improving trend in test results. Attainment is still below the national average overall but this is because there are more pupils with below average attainment for reasons beyond the school's control than is normally found. Many pupils come into the school with very little English, for example, and although many of them make rapid progress in mathematics, they do not always reach the expected level by the end of Key Stage 1. Also, the proportion of pupils that have special educational needs is greater than in many schools. The proportion of pupils with higher than average attainment is as high as in many schools and higher than in most similar schools. These pupils have very good number skills. They use their knowledge of addition and multiplication facts to work out problems mentally and follow the patterns that they discover to extend their solutions to bigger numbers. For example, when a Year 2 class worked out multiples of three within one hundred, these pupils discovered that 99,000 is a multiple of three. In another Year 2 class, the higher attainers worked out how to calculate  $6 \times 27$  in order to find the total weight in a food box. The ability of the average and above average attaining pupils' to apply their knowledge to practical situations in this way is at least in line with expectations. Similarly, the pupils' understanding of shape and measure reflects the improving trend. Higher attaining pupils can identify all the regular polyhedrons and know the number and shape of the faces they have. The work on display and in the pupils' books shows that the pupils also have good measuring and weighing skills overall. They measure length in meters and centimetres and weight in grams and kilograms. There is also plenty of evidence that the pupils know how to collect, record, present and interpret data. For example, Year 1 pupils make a bar chart to show how many in the class have particular animals as pets, and demonstrate in their discussion of it that they understand what the graph means. Indications are that pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to obtain even better results than last year's in the national tests.
4. Pupils make very good progress in lessons. Those who have little English or special educational needs are extremely effectively supported so that they make very good progress towards their individual targets. Higher attaining pupils make very good progress because they are given challenging extension tasks and investigations to do. The pupils in the middle benefit from the high expectations set for the higher attainers and the stimulating learning environment generally and also make very good progress. Progress is particularly good in the whole-class mental and oral sessions because the teachers pay attention to the needs of individuals when they ask questions to make the pupils think about and explain the mental strategies that they employ. The rapid progress is sustained in the group activities through tasks that are closely matched to the pupils' needs and each lesson ends with a recap of what has been learned so that the pupils continually build up their knowledge, understanding and skills. Five-year-olds in the reception class experience a wide variety of activities that enable them to develop their mathematical language and thinking. They measure out the correct amount of milk and powder to make enough milk-shakes for everyone in their group and practise their counting on and counting back skills to work out how many children are present and absent at registration time. Pupils in Year 1 learn to tell the time quickly and effectively when they are all provided with a clock face and given very good direct teaching. They make very good progress over the term in ordering numbers, learning about tens and units, applying this knowledge to money problems and in learning the names and properties of shapes. Higher attaining pupils learn to use numbers past one hundred. In Year 2, the pupils extend their understanding of place value and apply their newly learned number skills to practical weighing and measuring tasks.
1. Pupils make good use of their numeracy skills across the curriculum. During registration sessions, the number of absent pupils is mentally deducted from the total in the class to find out how many are present. In science, pupils employ their numeracy skill when they record their experimental findings. In geography they are aware of the shapes in the local environment. Their mathematical development is enhanced by the provision of number games and interesting shapes in the playground.
1. Pupils' attitudes to learning have improved since the last inspection when they were described as largely sound and sometimes good. In all the lessons seen this time, the pupils' responses were very good. They are very enthusiastic about their learning, attend well to lessons, take turns to speak and show confidence when explaining their mental strategies. Their behaviour is generally very good, largely because of the high expectations set by the teachers and the calm, consistent application of the code of conduct. The children enjoy good relationships with the teachers and with each other. Any friction between individual pupils is astutely managed so as to cause minimal disruption and, by and large, the pupils co-operate amicably when working in pairs or groups. They show good initiative when thinking

up their own ways of solving problems and take pride in their achievements. When given the opportunities to do so, they extend their own learning through individual investigations; for example, exploring larger numbers when finding multiples. The standard of presentation in the displays of work is very good, reflecting individuality and attention to detail.

2. The quality of the pupils' response reflects the consistently high quality teaching they receive which, in two thirds of lessons seen was very good, and was never less than good. Teachers plan their lessons most thoroughly. They present clear learning targets to the pupils and successfully structure their teaching to achieve them. Each lesson begins with a brisk mental warm-up to sharpen the pupils' ability to recall and use number facts in a structured way. The teachers show good skills in getting the pupils to think of the best ways to solve different problems and to explain their thinking so as to deepen their understanding. Their own enthusiasm for the subject enlivens lessons and helps to keep the pupils motivated. They provide practical tasks through which the pupils consolidate and apply their learning. The tasks are well matched to the attainment levels of all groups of pupils and appropriate support is provided for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils with high attainment are given extension tasks so that, by and large, pupils all receive appropriate challenge. Occasionally the tasks that they set are not quite at the right level for one or more of the groups but the teachers know when this happens and make appropriate adjustments. They evaluate their lessons effectively, acknowledge when things can be improved and seek advice and support to do so. Resources, such as the hundred squares, are utilised effectively as learning aids. Teachers make good extra resources for specific tasks; for instance, paper-plate clocks for individual pupils learning how to tell the time. The teachers keep all the classroom assistants fully aware of what is being taught and work closely with them to build effective teaching teams. They enjoy very good relationships with the pupils and manage them very well to achieve good discipline within a friendly and co-operative atmosphere. Their classroom organisation is very good, lessons move with a brisk pace and not a minute is wasted. They keep good records of what the pupils have learned and incorporate information from these assessments into their half-termly planning. The extensive good quality displays of pupils' work and of important mathematical vocabulary and concepts transform the walls and air space into a teaching resource and help to provide a stimulating learning environment.
3. The national numeracy strategy has only recently been introduced. The teachers have all had initial training in implementing the strategy and, even at this early stage, do so effectively because they are already familiar with the teaching strategies and methods, which are similar to those already employed in the school. A sensible decision has been taken to suspend monitoring of teaching until the strategy has been in place for a full term, giving the teachers time to become fully conversant with it and to see for themselves where improvements can be made. Currently teachers plan together in year groups for each half term and then plan weekly and daily lessons separately. This ensures broadly similar coverage but at present there is no way of ensuring that the most successful methods and lessons from one class is adopted in the parallel class. This is an area for development. There are extensive systems for assessing and recording what pupils learn and this information is taken account of in planning. However, the school plans to review the whole process to try and make the paperwork more manageable. The current system of planning does not yet identifying specific targets for those pupils who are learning at a faster rate than the rest of the class. The subject benefits from very good leadership and management, and the numeracy action plan is a useful document to guide monitoring and evaluation. There is an excellent ethos for learning and the capacity for further improvement is very good.

#### 109. **Science**

1. In the 1999 National Curriculum Teacher Assessments pupils attained standards which were average for seven-year-olds nationally and above average in comparison with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected level (level 2) was higher than in the previous year and the proportion achieving level 3 was the same.
2. The results are confirmed by the findings of this inspection and also broadly reflect the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils in the present Year 2 are well placed to achieve similar results. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils show a secure understanding of forces and can explain the effect of pushes and

pulls. They know that different forces can result in objects travelling further, slowing down or changing direction. In one class, pupils experimented by changing the shape of modelling material and identifying the pushes and pulls involved. Other Year 2 pupils extended their scientific knowledge to a high level by measuring improvements in performance and investigating the effects of alterations made to blow rockets which they had previously designed and made. This activity resulted in pupils understanding the idea of a fair test, measuring the distance travelled by the improved rockets and comparing that with the previous result. These pupils also understand the effect of gravity on their rockets and explain why certain materials are suitable for manufacturing rockets. Pupils name the main parts of the human body and know that humans have senses and need food and water in order to stay alive. They understand the need for a healthy lifestyle and the effect of exercise and a healthy diet. Most pupils describe a wide range of animals and plants found in the local area and some animals from other countries. Pupils make good use of numeracy and mathematics when recording the outcome of their investigations. Because the work is practically based and new vocabulary is sensitively introduced and often repeated, pupils acquire and use scientific language accurately and with secure understanding.

3. Most pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in all attainment targets and pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Pupils' previous knowledge and understanding are extended through challenging activities which place a high level of responsibility on pupils to listen, observe and record. In the best lessons they are constantly encouraged to explain, predict, reason and draw conclusions in terms of scientific knowledge and understanding. There were good examples of this during the inspection when pupils in Year 1 explained how sounds were heard and made a model telephone and explained how it worked. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils predicted which direction air expelled from a deflating balloon would move a model vehicle and appreciated there could be only one variable in a fair test.
4. Nearly all pupils have very positive attitudes. They are well behaved, listen attentively and use high levels of initiative and confidence in predicting, testing and constructing. Throughout the school an outstanding feature is the pupils' ability to work co-operatively in small-groups, sharing ideas and equipment and this aspect enhances their learning and progress.
5. The quality of teaching is good and there are examples of very good and excellent teaching. Throughout the school, teachers have good subject knowledge; objectives are clearly identified and reflect the curricular planning. Another strength is the teachers' day-to-day assessment and the effective reference to previous learning at the beginning of lessons. Teachers organise resources well and give pupils appropriate support. Their commitment to high standards and secure understanding has a significant impact on the good progress pupils make. One relative weakness in planning, however, is the fact that, while the teachers in parallel classes plan for the half term together, they plan weekly lessons individually. During the inspection this resulted in different activities undertaken by different classes and variations in the quality of investigations and levels of progress.
6. The subject is well led; the co-ordinator effectively supports teachers, monitors planning and ensures that resources are satisfactory. The scheme of work is detailed and gives teachers excellent guidance. The curriculum is broad and balanced, incorporates good cross-curricular elements for health education and environmental awareness and is enhanced by a wealth of visits and school activities. The systems for assessment of all pupils are extremely detailed and inform the planning for the next stage of learning and enables pupils to make good progress. The capacity for improvement is very good.

115.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **115. Information technology**

1. Pupils attain the standards expected normally for seven-year-olds and make good progress. At the time of the last inspection attainment was judged above average. On the basis of the first-hand evidence available for this inspection, attainment is now average because the school is not able to devote as much

time as it previously did to teaching the subject. Nevertheless, in view of their prior attainment when they enter the school, pupils make good progress. About one in five have above average skills in word-processing for their age. They type in text and use the mouse or keyboard arrows to position the cursor to delete or correct mistakes. Most pupils have average attainment. They type in text independently and know how to store and retrieve their work with support from adults. Their skills are well applied to access information from CD-ROMs in order to further their studies in other subjects such as science and history. The school is on-line and many of the pupils know how to send e-mail messages once the system has been set up. The school aims to teach all pupils to do this by the time they reach the end of Year 2. There are plenty of examples of pictures created on-screen; pupils have the appropriate mouse and keyboard skills to allow them to control line, shape and colour on-screen. With help, the pupils can put data into the computer in order to create graphs and charts but the system does not allow them to print their work out and this limits the full development of their skills. Pupils can use computer programs to explore and make decisions in an imaginary world and are aware of some of the uses that computers can be put to in the real world.

2. As they move through Key Stage 1, pupils, including those who have English as an additional language, make good progress in developing keyboard, mouse and general computer skills which they employ well to facilitate their progress in other subjects. The amount of time they spend doing this has decreased since the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategy but teachers are now looking at ways of increasing the relevant use of computers in these lessons. The pupils make good progress in developing their Internet skills because of the good provision and the enthusiasm and support of the staff. For example, they enjoy sending messages to the headteacher and a few pupils have sent e-mails to their parents. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress developing their mathematical skills because they have regular access to a structured programme, including during supervised lunchtime sessions. Pupils with special educational needs develop good computer skills relative to their general attainment and this helps them to make good progress in other subjects. For example, a Year 1 pupil with a statement of special educational needs operates a program to practise and improve her number recognition under the skilled guidance of her classroom support assistant.
3. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning. They are confident and relaxed in their approach to using computers and handle all the equipment sensibly. When they are observed working in pairs at computers, they take turns and help each other out. The willingness of those pupils with the necessary skills to teach others greatly assists the teachers in their quest to develop all the pupils' skills across the subject. They behave well and follow instructions carefully. The work on the walls and in the subject portfolio includes examples of pupils developing their personal study skills. For example, they access and print information and illustrations from a CD-ROM to refer to when describing different animals in their science lessons.
4. Little direct teaching was observed during the inspection. Nevertheless evidence from teachers' planning, the work on display and in the portfolio, and the way the teachers set-up and organise access to the computers, clearly indicates that they provide good instruction and opportunities for the pupils to make good progress overall. Teachers are at pains to ensure that all pupils have equal access to computers, teaching and support and employ a good range of strategies to achieve this, including small-group and paired access and lunchtime teaching, keeping good records of the pupils' access and progress. Pupils' targets are regularly reviewed in the light of day-to-day assessment.
5. The curriculum is well organised to reflect the latest government guidelines, with a high priority given to developing skills of accessing the Internet for learning. Appropriate training has been arranged as part of the subject action plan to give the teachers the information and skills they will need to do this. A sensible decision has also been taken to develop a scheme of work for the school that reflects how it is teaching the different strands of the curriculum. The level of resource is good and computers are well-maintained, but some software that the school would like to use, for example to support pupils with special educational needs, will not run on the available computers. The school is taking appropriate steps to address this problem. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and gives good support and guidance to the staff and the school has a good potential for making improvement. Recent developments include the provision of opportunities for adults to experience using laptop computers as part of the Family Literacy project. Overall, the subject makes a good contribution to the school's literacy and

numeracy projects.

#### 120. **Religious education**

1. Pupils' attainment in religious education at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The majority of pupils have an appropriate knowledge of important facts, people, gods and festivals of the major religions they are studying, especially Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They understand that God is the most important element of all religions and that there are various ways of worshipping God. They understand the significance of particular festivals and events such as Ramadan, Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha, know the importance of harvest and thanks giving and our familiar with the Christian festivals of Christmas, Lent and Easter. Pupils have recently celebrated the Hindu festival of Diwali and their knowledge of the world faiths that they study is appropriate to their age group.
2. The majority of pupils make good progress in understanding the importance of Christmas to Christians. During the week of the inspection, pupils in a Year 1 class discussed the variety of ways in which Christians celebrated the birth of Christ and also considered how non-Christians might spend Christmas day. Pupils learn to identify and explain personal qualities such as 'kindness' or listening carefully in the context of the 'Happy Book' and the 'Golden Book'. Older pupils are consolidating their grasp of moral and religious teachings of Bible stories and sharing their personal achievements. A key significant element in pupils' understanding of religious education is the different levels of language skills.
3. Pupils throughout the school respond well to activities in lessons and assemblies. The majority are interested and make appropriate contributions to discussions according to their levels of understanding in English. Their progress is good because teachers, being aware of differences in language levels, make good use of pictures and illustrations to promote knowledge and understanding. Pupils from different cultures are receptive to one another's views, work together and behave well, while enjoying good relationships.
4. Teaching is consistently good and occasionally very good and, as a result, pupils are very well motivated and make good progress. Teachers' effective questioning reflects their secure subject knowledge, ensures pupils' participation, and deepens their understanding. The best teaching is appropriately resourced and enables pupils to grasp the important aspects of the faiths being studied. Class management skills are of a high quality throughout the school and consequently, pupils are responsive and well behaved. Teaching is, however, primarily focused on oral work and day-to-day planning lacks consistency.
5. The curriculum is based on the locally agreed syllabus, personal and social aspects of which are very well handled. The content of collective worship contributes well to pupils' general knowledge of religious education, especially of festivals, events and people associated with the world faiths being studied. However, the lack of a detailed scheme of work means that teachers do not have all the guidance they need in their medium-term planning of this core subject. In addition, assessment procedures are not well enough developed. However, the school has a good capacity to rectify these areas of relative weakness and the subject has already been identified as an area for development when the new subject co-ordinator comes into post in April.

#### 125. **Art and Design and Technology**

1. During the course of the inspection it was not possible to see any design and technology lessons and because of exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the school, only a few pupils were at school when art was taught. Nevertheless, evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work, photographs, planning documents, conversations with teachers and observations of small-groups being taught art indicates that pupils make very good progress in art and good progress in design and technology.

2. Very good progress in art is made throughout the key stage. Five-year-olds in the reception class learn to print on fabric and paper, paint pictures and shape and mould malleable materials including clay. They make collage pictures and use a range of materials appropriately to express their ideas. Very good progress in observational skills and control of line is seen in Year 1 pupils' white on black drawings of musical instruments. These skills are well built on in Year 2, when pupils paint and draw fruit and are further developed in excellent mask drawings and in imaginative pastel work inspired by a collection of bicycle parts. Clay work is of a very high quality; pupils make very good progress in Year 1 with their insect embellished tiles and, in Year 2, with exquisite face tiles. Good progress in developing printing skills is seen in the many printed stars decorating the school hall and in Year 2's carefully arranged leaf prints in the form of a poinsettia. In the Christmas and millennium pictures that decorate the school hall, pupils' high level of creativity is evident in the words, images and models which express their ideas based on the theme of "stars". The very high standard of presentation of this work is a clear indication of the value and importance that the school places on pupils' creativity and this has a significant impact on the good progress made in art.
3. In design and technology, pupils learn to work with a wide range of materials and make good progress in building up the key skills identified by the school. Five-year-olds in the reception class have developed basic cutting and sticking skills. They learn threading techniques and have experience of cooking. In Year 1, they make wind-powered windmills and learn a range of techniques for joining card and paper. In their textile work, they stitch pictures, sew felt toys and make threaded hangings. In Year 2, they make good progress in labelling technical drawings of bicycles. A strength in the school is the wide range of techniques and materials that pupils have access to. They learn how to make felt and combine their pieces of felt to make a beautiful wall hanging. They learn knotting and fringing techniques, which are effectively combined with appliqué and fabric painting in work displayed in the school library. Good progress is made in designing and planning, however evaluation skills are relatively weak. When a wood artist was commissioned to work in the school, pupils were involved in designing, making and painting the large finished structure, which now has a permanent place in the school courtyard. As a result of this planning for real experience, the progress they made in designing and making was enhanced.
4. In the small-group lessons seen, pupils responded very well. Full advantage was taken of the very good opportunities they had to talk about their work, to discuss their ideas and explain their choices. They co-operate well; a pupils' comment " We're working as a team" accurately summed up the situation in which one held some art straws tightly in a bundle whilst another bound them together with tape. Materials and tools are sensibly and carefully used. Pupils work confidently and have clear ideas, for instance, about which colours might look good together. They enjoy art activities, expressing delight when they see a wet on wet painting technique demonstrated and pleasure and satisfaction in their own successful efforts to master the technique. Although it was not possible to see pupils at work on design and technology tasks, the evidence from pupil's work is that they work with care and imagination.
5. Teaching in art is very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and plan carefully to advance pupils' skills and to provide opportunities for them to express their ideas and feeling through a wide range of materials. A characteristic of very good teaching is the expert demonstrations, for instance, of wet on wet techniques. Teachers' expositions and explanations support and often inspire learning. Time is well used and lessons are well organised. As a stimulus for their lessons, teachers often provide well-chosen objects, such bicycle parts, which effectively challenge and motivate pupils. Teachers have high expectations and these are reflected in the care with which pupils' finished works are displayed. No direct teaching was seen in design and technology. However, the evidence available points to good teaching which ensures that pupils have access to a wide range of materials and techniques. Teachers draw most effectively on the craft skills, including felt making and batik work, within the local community to enhance the provision for pupils.
6. Art and design and technology are very well managed by the curriculum leader who has responsibility for these two subjects, which are taught separately. However, learning in both subjects is enhanced by the intelligent and thoughtful cross-curricular links which have been established between the two curriculum areas. Schemes of work are good and focus effectively on skills' development; progression is

mapped throughout the school. At present there are no formal assessment procedures. The curriculum leader monitors planning and completed work. Resources are good; the school has made the decision to provide good quality materials for art and this has a positive impact on the very good progress pupils make. A design and technology resource base has been established and materials and tools are easily accessible to teachers and pupils. The school's recent experience of having a wood artist in residence has had a positive impact. This, together with the craft sessions organised for parents, provides pupils with good role models of adults as artists and craftworkers. Art and design and technology make a significant contribution to the very good provision that the school makes for pupils' social and cultural development. The school is alert to new opportunities and has a good capacity for further improvement.

### 131. **Geography and History**

1. During the week of the inspection it was only possible to see one geography lesson and judgements are largely based on a scrutiny of pupils' past and current work, examination of planning documents and a conversation with the subject co-ordinator. In geography and history, pupils make good progress throughout the school.
2. In geography, five-year-olds in the reception class make good progress in learning about their locality by finding out about local shops, looking at street signs and discovering where telephone kiosks are located. They learn about travel and go on a train journey. In Year 1, they plan routes around the playground and incorporate positional language into descriptions of real and imaginary journeys. Pupils begin map making by drawing pictorial maps of the area around the school and some higher attaining pupils add annotations and label various features. They make very good progress in further developing mapping skills in Year 2 as they begin to use co-ordinates. Skills are developed as pupils make weather observations and investigate and evaluate land use in the vicinity of the school. They have a good understanding of the impact which heavy traffic has on the environment and know that bicycle travel is environmentally friendly. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in developing geographical skills because the curriculum is made relevant to their needs and interests.
3. In history, five-year-olds in the reception class learn to sequence events in their own lives, such as the stages of getting ready for school, and to talk about their own family in terms of past events. In Year 1, they learn to refer to a variety of sources to obtain information about how people lived. For instance, they examine Victorian kitchen utensils and compare them with the utensils that are available today in order to appreciate the impact that electricity has had on everyday life. In Year 2, the pupils extend their awareness of historical changes to a much wider field. Good skills of historical enquiry are developed, for instance, through gathering information and evidence about transport in the past from a range of sources including books, CD-ROMs and photographs. They compare transport today with transport in past times, learning to pay attention to important details. For example, they can say that a vehicle must be old because the wheels do not have rubber tyres. Especially good progress is made when their studies are enlivened by handling real objects, whether in the classroom or on visits. The drawings they made of a Penny-Farthing bicycle, for example, reflect the fact that they had been very close to a real one at the local museum. Their sequencing of the development of bicycles on a time line reflects a good level of historical awareness.
4. The pupils have very good attitudes to work in geography and history. They enjoy the subjects, taking a lively interest in practical activities and discussions. Many put forward their own ideas confidently, and are also willing to listen to the ideas expressed by others. A few pupils do not find it easy to work as part of a team, for example when sequencing photographs but, under the skilled guidance of their teachers, they gradually learn to co-operate effectively. Behaviour in lessons is good. The pupils are keen to answer questions but take turns to speak. They are lively when working in groups and come to order very quickly when the teacher asks them to. When working individually or as part of a group, they are conscientious and can be trusted to look after the artifacts, books and other sources of evidence that they handle. They show a good sense of independence; for example, when undertaking research at home for their topics.



5. The standard of teaching in both subjects is good throughout the school. The teachers plan their lessons extremely thoroughly, taking into account the requirements of the National Curriculum for history and for geography. Teachers focus on helping pupils develop the appropriate skills for the subjects. In history they teach the pupils about the past while at the same time giving them the skills to find out things for themselves. In geography they help pupils to gain mapping and other skills through their field work in the local area. Teachers use a good range of teaching strategies, from direct teaching of the whole class to group discussions, and keep the lessons going at a lively pace. Subject knowledge in geography is good and, in history, knowledge of the subject and how to teach it is very good. In both subjects, teachers set high expectations for the pupils, both for learning and for attitudes and behaviour. By giving the pupils plenty of first-hand experiences and relating so much of what they teach to the pupils' lives and to the locality, they sustain interest and achieve good progress. Teachers use a good variety of resources effectively. For example, in history, a video of "The Railway Children" keeps the pupils' interest as they discuss the differences between their lives and the lives of the children in the film. They keep track of individual pupils' understanding through skilled questioning and continually challenge them to improve their skills and knowledge.
6. Management for the two subjects is the responsibility of the co-ordinator for humanities who has recently taken over this responsibility and who has produced a well-focused development plan for geography and history. She gives good leadership; improvements are already taking shape and the capacity for further improvement is good. The curriculum is well organised, schemes of work provide continuity and progression in pupils' learning, but there are no whole-school, agreed assessment procedures. Good planning ensures that the pupils gradually improve their geographic and historical skills as they move through the school, gaining a widening picture of the past and a more secure sense of place. Both subjects make a good contribution to the school's literacy and numeracy strategies, for example through descriptive writing, a heightened awareness of print in the environment and the use of time lines. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced through the sensitive teaching of these subjects. For example, teachers balance studies of local history with discussion of the life and work of famous people such as Martin Luther King. In geography, they give pupils opportunities to talk about and plot journeys they or members of their families have made. Resources for humanities are good and include videos and CD-ROM, to support all learning.

137.

### Music

1. Pupils make good progress in music and particularly in singing. They sing with a good sense of pitch, precise rhythms and clear articulation. In the challenging songs they have recently learned in preparation for their Christmas Concert, their singing is lively, tuneful and expressive. Those pupils who attend the choir sing to a high standard and include two-part rounds in their repertoire. Progress is also good when pupils respond to music through movement and dance in PE lessons. The pupils identify high and low sounds and describe the changes in speed and volume during a piece of music. From the reception class onwards, the pupils learn to listen carefully to music and to distinguish between the sounds made by different instruments. They have made their own instruments, for example Pan Pipes from straws and guitars from boxes and elastic bands, to illustrate how the sounds are produced. They also learn to recall sounds they have heard on a walk and to think of ways of representing the sounds on paper in order to recreate them later. There was no evidence available to make a judgement about the pupils' progress in composing and performing music.
2. The pupils love singing. They sing enthusiastically in assemblies, with even the youngest children making an effort to learn the words. The piano accompaniment provided by the chair of governors makes a good contribution to pupils' enjoyment of singing and the progress they make. The only teaching that was observed was either indirect in other lessons or as part of extra-curricular activities. However, the pupils' good progress in singing and in listening carefully to music indicates that teaching is good. Teachers' planning includes attention to some aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study for music, but there is no clear picture of how the pupils are to be taught to develop their skills systematically as they move through the school. A newly appointed teacher is due to take on the responsibility for co-ordinating music throughout the school in order to address this relative weakness and the school has a good capacity to respond positively to initiatives designed to bring about

improvement. The school provides a good range of experiences for the pupils, introducing them to music from a variety of cultures. For example, they have participated in an African drum and dance workshop and a number of pupils attend extra-curricular dance sessions in which Eastern European bagpipe music is used. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development through the quality of the pupils' singing, the enthusiasm of the staff and the range of musical experiences provided.

139.

### **Physical education**

1. Pupils make very good progress in this subject and, in one lesson observed, pupils made excellent progress. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set and this reflects the benefits of the school's excellent commitment to inclusion.
2. During the inspection pupils were observed during gymnastics and dance lessons. The very good features of dance include pupils' mature awareness of space, body shapes and the combination of extremely agile yet well controlled movements that reflect the mood and pace of the music. Pupils show an excellent awareness of others and this contributes to the high quality of their performance. Excellent progress is made in the development from individual to group and eventually to class performance. Their movements are well co-ordinated with the music and they respond well to changes in style; their appreciation of music is enhanced. In gymnastics, pupils move with high levels of agility and creativity. Their floor movements and sequences are transferred to the apparatus where most pupils put together a wide variety of body twists and changes in direction combined with stretches and pulls. They observe each other critically, incorporating ideas into their own movements. Pupils have very positive attitudes and enjoy the opportunity to take part in challenging activities. They listen carefully and collaborate well in developing a creative and exciting combination of movements. Thus their confidence in their own capabilities is increased. All pupils understand the need for safety procedures and move the apparatus carefully and safely. They are correctly dressed for lessons and understand the reasons for 'warming up' and 'calming' activities.
3. The quality of teaching is very good with one lesson being excellent. Teachers have a very secure knowledge of the requirements of the subject and all safety issues. The very high quality of pupil management, brisk pace and thoughtful resource planning found in most lessons contributes to pupils' attainment and progress. Day-to-day assessment is effectively used. Teachers and support staff are appropriately dressed and this gives pupils good examples. The quality of teaching and the enthusiasm and ability of the co-ordinator contribute to the good progress made. The school's policy of inclusion was seen effectively in practice during a lesson where good reference was made to the individual education plans and this resulted in very good progress being made towards the planned targets. Although there is year group planning, the individual lesson plans result in different content and different levels of progress.
4. The co-ordinator is extremely resourceful and gives good advice and support. The curriculum planning for all aspects of physical education is good. However, formal systems of assessment are not fully in place. Nevertheless, the school has the capacity to address this weakness and to further improve its performance. The unsatisfactory accommodation – the long narrow hall – and satisfactory resources are effectively and efficiently used. Physical education makes a positive contribution to pupils' cross-curricular learning through aspects of health education, recreation and use of specific language.

143.  
**INSPECTION DATA**

**PART C:**

143.  
**INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

**SUMMARY OF**

1. The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors including a lay inspector who between them spent a total of thirteen days in the school. Thirty nine lessons or parts of lessons were observed and work in all areas of the school curriculum including the nursery was inspected. In addition the provision for pupils who have a limited acquisition of English, part of the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant (EMAG) project was inspected. The impact of the school's partnership with the Vale Special School was taken into consideration.
2. During the inspection over 25 hours were spent observing pupils at work, talking to them, hearing them read and examining their work. In addition, discussions were held with staff, parents and governors. Consultations were held with EMAG teachers, Family Literacy tutors and the deputy head of the Vale Special School. Inspectors scrutinised the school's documents including its policies, curriculum plans, school development plans and minutes of governors' meetings. The previous inspection report was studied together with the governors' action plan. Teachers' plans and records were examined. Children's records were scrutinised and special needs documentation including the register of SEN and pupils' individual education plans were studied. The EMAG documents and records were examined. Over forty parents attended a meeting with the registered inspector and a member of the Turkish/Kurdish community interpreted. Questionnaires containing parents' views about the school were analysed.
3. On the second day of the inspection, for reasons beyond the control of the school, the nursery was closed and fewer than ten pupils attended the entire school.

146.

146.  
**INDICATORS**

**DATA AND**

147. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y2	172	6	57	98
Nursery Unit/School	40.5	0	0	0

148. **Teachers and classes**

148. **Qualified teachers (YR - Y2)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	20.2

148. **Education support staff (YR - Y2)**

Total number of education support staff:	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	100

148.	<b>Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)</b>	
	Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	2
	Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	20.25

148.	<b>Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)</b>	
	Total number of education support staff:	2
	Total aggregate hours worked each week:	65
	Average class size:	28

149. **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	519,661
Total Expenditure	489,228
Expenditure per pupil	2,025
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,635
Balance carried forward to next year	38,068

150. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	230
Number of questionnaires returned:	76

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	58	38	4	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	65	30	4	1	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	38	46	16	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	46	45	5	4	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	55	31	9	5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	42	46	12	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	28	58	12	2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	42	41	13	4	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect	51	45	4	0	0

on my child(ren)					
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	50	41	8	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	73	25	1	1	0