

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLT HOUSE INFANT SCHOOL

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107026

Headteacher: Mrs Jane Clay

Reporting inspector: Tony Painter
21512

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th January 2001

Inspection number: 186354

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bannerdale Road Sheffield South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S7 2EW
Telephone number:	0114 255 3717
Fax number:	0114 255 3717
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Harrison
Date of previous inspection:	1 st November 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Tony Painter 21512	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Special educational needs English as an additional language	What kind of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed?
Mickie Jacobs 33808	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
John Good 1411	Team inspector	Science Physical education Art and design Design and technology The Foundation Stage	How well are pupils taught?
Ted Cox 25623	Team inspector	English History Geography Religious education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd
5 Lakeside
Werrington
Peterborough
PE4 6QZ

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holt House is a community infant school for pupils between four and seven years. It is a little smaller than the average size with 161 pupils currently on roll. Most pupils come from the residential areas around the school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average at 14 per cent. The attainment of children joining the school is below that expected of children of their age. Around 40 per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds, mostly of Pakistani origin, and 38 pupils have English as an additional language. However, few are at an early stage of learning English. Thirty-four pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and two have statements of special educational needs. These figures are around the average. The school has recently joined a local Education Action Zone to promote the achievement of pupils.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The effectiveness of the school is good, particularly in creating a positive atmosphere for learning that is beginning to raise standards. The headteacher has established a very clear direction for the school and analyses the strengths and weaknesses of provision well. Good management is improving the standards of teaching, particularly in English and mathematics. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching, particularly in English, mathematics and in the reception classes, is raising standards, notably in reading.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership that is steering the school well.
- Very effective teamwork between teachers and support staff creates a positive environment for learning. This results in pupils' very good attitudes and willingness to learn.
- The school is caring and makes very good provision for all aspects of pupils' personal development.
- Very good partnerships with parents contribute effectively to pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- Subject co-ordinators do not have a clear enough view of the standards and teaching in their subjects.
- Assessment systems are not used effectively enough to match work to pupils' needs, particularly higher-attaining pupils in science and writing.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Good improvements have been made since the school was last inspected in November 1995 with rapid pace of improvement since the appointment of the current headteacher. Effective action has been taken in all the weaknesses identified at that time, although further development in the use of assessment systems is needed. In particular, there have been big improvements in the quality of teaching, notably in teachers' planning. Much of this results from the effective implementation of the national Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school has maintained the good qualities outlined in the last report, for example in the provision for pupils with English as an additional language. Systems of assessment have been put in place, but their use is not yet sufficiently well established to raise standards further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	A	B	B	B
writing	B	C	C	D
mathematics	B	B	C	C

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

Variations in the school's results have been primarily due to the different abilities of the groups of pupils involved. However, the overall trend of results is maintaining the school's standards. Pupils' achievements in English and mathematics are in line with national averages and pupils' reading is strong, above that found in similar schools. Teachers' assessments of pupils' standards in science in 2000 were very low, but this does not reflect the standards found in the school.

The inspection finds a picture of improving standards through the school. Better analysis of results and other data is improving the focus of teachers' work, leading to higher standards seen in lessons. Children enter the school with attainment that is lower than expected nationally. In particular there are weaknesses in children's personal, social and emotional development. Language skills are also limited, particularly amongst those children for whom English is an additional language. All Foundation Stage children make good progress and most achieve the standards expected of pupils beginning the National Curriculum. Pupils make good gains and achieve higher than average standards in reading, art and design, music, physical education and religious education. Pupils achieve average standards in mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology, history and geography. Although attainment in science and writing is average overall, higher-attaining pupils could achieve better standards through more carefully planned work.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and are eager to please. They concentrate hard in their lessons and respond quickly to instructions.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good and there are no incidents of oppressive behaviour. Pupils understand right from wrong.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships underpin the work of the school. Pupils mix well, working and playing together in harmony.
Attendance	Attendance has improved significantly recently and is now good.

Pupils' very good levels of enthusiasm and interest are important factors in the improving standards in the school. Many good opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities are effective in developing pupils' independence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	good	good

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

In the 35 lessons observed, all were satisfactory or better with no unsatisfactory teaching. Seventeen per cent of lessons were graded very good or better. This represents an improvement since the last report. Teachers' planning is much improved, often making good use of advice in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and leading to good teaching in English and mathematics. Very effective teamwork between teachers and support staff ensures that all know what is expected and helps to raise achievement. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and know them well. Detailed systems of assessment have been introduced. However, beyond English and mathematics, teachers do not yet use these sufficiently to help them plan work for pupils of different abilities. Pupils' learning in science and writing across the school, for example, is limited by teachers' lack of challenge to the most able pupils. There are some variations in the effectiveness of marking throughout the school.

Teachers give pupils good opportunities to apply their developing literacy and numeracy skills in all parts of the curriculum. Teaching meets the needs of most pupils, although the needs of the most able could be more securely met. Those pupils with special educational needs are given good provision through effective support. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported very effectively to ensure they make good gains through the school. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught well and settle quickly and with confidence into the school's routines. They make good overall gains in their learning, particularly in their creative and their personal, social and emotional development.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good range of activities pays appropriate attention to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	These pupils are effectively identified and clear targets are set to ensure they make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils get good support to enable them to play a full part in all aspects of the life of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for all aspects of pupils' personal development. The school is particularly effective in celebrating and building upon the range of pupils' ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a warm, caring and supportive environment where children and pupils play and learn with confidence.

Partnerships with parents are a strength of the school. Parents are very supportive of the work that staff do and many actively help and support in school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives strong, direct and positive leadership in all aspects of the school. This is helping the school to make good improvements. Co-ordinators take increasingly active roles in developing their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors use their improving awareness and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses to support the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has very effective strategies for monitoring the work of the school. Very good analysis of test results and other data is helping to target developments and raise standards. Co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in monitoring standards and teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of all resources available to the school. Financial decisions are planned well.

The clear vision of the headteacher is steering the school effectively towards higher standards. The governing body has substantially improved its involvement with the school. It has better systems for sharing information and making decisions. Good efforts are made to ensure that financial decisions give good value to the school. Good levels of staffing effectively use the satisfactory accommodation and resources to provide good learning opportunities for pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Before the inspection, 12 parents attended a meeting. There were 43 replies to the parents' questionnaire (33 per cent) and inspectors held a number of informal discussions with parents.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils like the school.• The staff are approachable.• Teaching is good and pupils make good progress.• High standards of behaviour are encouraged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The information given to parents about their children's progress.• The range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with the positive points made by parents. Good information is given to parents through meetings and reports and the staff are very approachable. The range of extra-curricular activities is less than that generally found in infant schools. However, the school takes part in many community events and an after-school club operates each day in the school hall.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Pupils' overall standards are in line with national averages by the time they leave the school and this maintains the standards described in the last report. Results in the end of key stage National Curriculum tests have varied from year to year, primarily as a result of the different ability levels of the groups of pupils taking the tests. However, results have kept pace with the rising national trends and there are clear signs of improvement in pupils' standards in school now. These improvements will result in better results in the future. These improvements are the result of improved teaching throughout the school. In particular, effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is leading to more effectively focused teaching. The school is making more detailed and effective analysis of its results in order to focus developments in teaching and the curriculum. As a result of the analysis, the school is setting appropriately challenging targets to improve pupils' attainment. These measures are effective and are beginning to show in the improved standards seen in the inspection.
2. Results in English are average overall but pupils' attainment in reading is particularly strong, above that of similar schools. Effective teaching means that many pupils are very confident readers by the time they leave the school. However, pupils' writing is relatively weak and is below the standards found in similar schools. The school has identified this as a target area for development. Although teachers give good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills, they do not challenge higher-attaining pupils sufficiently to raise their attainment. Pupils' results in mathematics are average when compared nationally and with similar schools. However, many pupils show good levels of confidence in oral and mental mathematics. Pupils have good opportunities to use their mathematics skills in other subjects, such as collecting information and graphing results. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science in 2000 were very low and well below that found in similar schools. In particular, no pupils were judged to achieve the higher Level 3. However, this does not reflect the general levels of attainment in the school. Most pupils meet the national expectations for science by the time they leave the school but few show the higher levels of attainment they are capable of. This leads to overall attainment in the subject that is below that found in similar schools.
3. Children enter the reception classes with attainment that is below that found nationally. In particular, children have limited development of their personal, social and emotional skills. Increasing numbers of children for whom English is an additional language also reduce the overall level of communication, language and literature skills. Good attention is paid to developing children's skills in all the areas of learning¹ and by the time they begin Year 1, almost all pupils achieve the nationally expected standards. These findings are similar to those reported in the last report.
4. The inspection finds overall standards in English that are in line with national averages by the time pupils are seven. Reading is above average, although standards of writing are not as good. Pupils develop good speaking and listening skills despite the limited language experience of many pupils. They make good gains in their vocabulary and have good opportunities to use this in answers and discussions. Pupils enjoy books and recognise the difference between fiction and non-fiction when talking about the books they have read. By the time they leave the school, most pupils read fluently with good understanding. They recognise a wide range of common words by sight and have good strategies to identify new words they encounter. They are good at finding information using index and contents pages. Although writing is in line with national averages, not enough pupils reach the higher levels. Pupils write for a range of different people and purposes and their writing includes stories and factual accounts. Handwriting has improved since the last inspection. However, sentences are often short and do not extend pupils' thoughts fluently. Similarly, pupils do not often write long enough stories or accounts and this stops them developing their writing skills. This means that there is not enough challenge for higher-attaining pupils.

¹ These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also include knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

5. Pupils' standards in mathematics are in line with those found nationally, although pupils show good improvement, particularly in their mental arithmetic skills. They use a developing range of mathematical language when talking about their work and explaining their strategies. By the time they leave the school, pupils use numbers to 100 with understanding of tens and units. They confidently use numbers to 20 in addition and subtraction. Pupils collect data and draw graphs with understanding.
6. Attainment in science is in line with national expectations by the end of the key stage with almost all pupils achieving average standards. However, a number of pupils reach higher levels in aspects of the subject although this is not apparent in the teachers' assessments. Pupils use correct scientific terms when talking about their work, for example when discussing materials and their properties. They can describe an investigation into stretching and identify how the test was fair. Higher-attaining pupils are given too few opportunities to investigate for themselves or devise their own systems for recording and this restricts their attainment.
7. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with that expected nationally although few pupils show high levels of achievement. Provision and teachers' skills have improved since the last inspection and standards are rising. Pupils gain confidence when playing educational games, entering information using keyboard and mouse. They create pictures and simple writing, making changes and learning to save their work correctly.
8. Standards in religious education are above those described in the locally agreed syllabus, an improvement since the last inspection. They make good gains in their knowledge of a range of religions and this has a positive impact on their spiritual development. By the age of seven, pupils understand many symbols, festivals and traditions of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They understand the importance of prayer in religions and the wearing of special clothes. Pupils know the importance of fasting during Ramadan and the celebration of Eid.
9. Pupils' attainment in music is above that found nationally by the time they leave the school. They develop good understanding of musical notation and are very aware of beat and rhythm. They sing with enthusiasm and listen carefully to a wide range of music. Standards in art and design are above average and pupils begin to develop their own artistic styles. They express their ideas and feelings through a good range of media, tools and techniques. Artwork is often used to enhance pupils' learning throughout the curriculum. By the time they are seven, pupils achieve standards in physical education that above those typically found nationally. They use a good variety of movements in gymnastics with good levels of control. Their work in dance is good and pupils respond appropriately to music with good awareness of the pace and mood of music. Pupils' attainment in design and technology, history and geography is similar to that found nationally by the time they leave the school.
10. There are no significant differences in the achievement of pupils of different background or gender. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and reach levels of attainment in line with their assessed abilities. Individual education plans identify difficulties clearly and set out good programmes to help them make progress. Pupils receive good support from teachers or classroom assistants. Those pupils with English as an additional language are given any necessary support to ensure their full participation in the life of the school. They make good progress and achieve levels of attainment in line with their capabilities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils and children enjoy school. They work hard and are eager to please. They usually concentrate well and respond quickly to instructions. Children and pupils show real pleasure in physical education and dance. During an assembly given by a visitor, they listened with rapt attention and responded with delighted laughter to his humour. However, during the first assembly of the week, children and pupils were rather restless and many whispered to each other. Occasionally, pupils do not listen and concentrate fully and as a result need further explanation of the task they have been set.
12. Behaviour in and around school is good and parents agree with this. Pupils come in and out of assembly in their class groups and listen to music quietly. They move around school sensibly.

Even the youngest children know to move silently down the corridor to the hall for physical education lessons. In the playground, children and pupils mix well. They share and take turns and are mostly mindful of each other's safety. Behaviour in lessons is usually good, although on occasions classes become very noisy, particularly in group work. However, pupils do react quickly when reminded to work more quietly. No incident has been recorded in the bullying diary for over two years and there are no exclusions. Pupils come from a wonderful mix of social and ethnic backgrounds and work and play together in harmony.

13. Relationships in the school are very good, both amongst children and pupils and between children, pupils and all adults. At lunch time the dining room is sociable and on the playground lunch time supervisors actively play with pupils, for example turning skipping ropes for them. In physical education lessons, pupils work well together in pairs and small groups and evidently enjoy each other's company. In Year 2 science, they worked in groups to decide which foods belong together and how to label them. Pupils also work well individually, sometimes choosing this option rather than to work with a partner.
14. Children and pupils throughout the school take good responsibility for themselves and each other. They are given little jobs in the classroom and expected to tidy up at the end of lessons. They respond very well to these opportunities. In the reception classes, children are appointed monitor for the day. Year 2 pupils take messages and sometimes show visitors round the school. They made and sold items at the Easter market to their friends, parents and members of the community. Many reception children can undress and redress for physical education lessons. Even the youngest children are putting on their own coats to go outside and attempting to do up zips and fastenings. In Circle Time, children who have just joined the school are already beginning to understand that this is a special chance for everyone to speak in turn.
15. Attendance was below the national average for the last complete academic year. However, in the autumn term attendance improved significantly and is now good and above the national average. Punctuality is mostly good, but a few pupils are often brought to school late. Parents understand their responsibility to inform school of reasons for absence and usually do so promptly. There is little unauthorised absence and the statutory requirements for the recording and reporting of absence are met.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Overall the quality of teaching is good with little variation between year groups or classes. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. No teaching is unsatisfactory now and there has been a very significant increase in the percentage where teaching is good or very good. All of the 35 lessons, or part lessons, observed during the period of the inspection were judged to be satisfactory or better, 22 were of a good standard and six very good.
17. Since the appointment of the present headteacher, new systems have been introduced for curriculum planning and the monitoring of teaching and learning. These initiatives are the major factors that have improved the quality of teaching and learning. All teachers plan lessons thoroughly, which leads to good classroom organisation and effective use of the resources that are available to support pupils' learning. Learning objectives are clear and are discussed with pupils at the start of each lesson, thus ensuring that everyone knows what is expected of them. Year group teams co-operate well in planning the curriculum for the group activities. They make very effective use of the flexible timetable arrangements that allows each of them to teach her specialist subjects to the whole year group. The introduction of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy is also having a positive effect on the quality of teaching. Teachers have improved their knowledge and understanding of the subjects and use the strategies effectively to focus their teaching.
18. Teachers have friendly, supportive and encouraging teaching styles that lead to relationships in the classrooms being very good. They know their pupils well and are aware of their individual strengths and weaknesses. This enables them to plan tasks that meet the educational needs of almost all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, or English as a second language, are very well supported in the classrooms and this enables them to make good progress in their studies. The teamwork between the class teachers, the specialist teacher who supports pupils for whom English is a second language and the classroom assistants is very good. However, the planning of the support for the most able pupils is variable, being good in most aspects of literacy and numeracy,

but unsatisfactory in science. This has been recognised by the headteacher and strategies to raise standards in science are included in the school development plan.

19. Where teaching is very good, it most frequently results from a combination of the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject and their expertise, specialist knowledge and personal skills. They produce an environment in which pupils are eager to learn, acquire knowledge and develop skills. Introductory sessions build upon pupils' previous experiences, but contain sufficient mystery to arouse pupils' curiosity and enthusiasm. In a Year 2 geography lesson, for example, pupils were faced with the problem of carrying out simple tasks when wearing a blindfold. They talked sensibly about their feelings and give graphic accounts of the problems a blind person must encounter. In two lessons in the Foundation Stage the whole class activities were very well led. Question and answer sessions were used skilfully to check for pupils' depth of understanding of knowledge and to promote new learning. Positive feedback and constant praise from the teacher ensured that these young children tried hard and gave of their best. All activities were given just the right length of time and there was good use of action songs to give variety to the learning process. Very good teaching was observed in one numeracy and two literacy lessons in Key Stage 1.
20. All teachers keep detailed and comprehensive records of their pupils' achievements and levels of attainment. Very good use is made of these details in setting targets in English and mathematics and in preparing pupils' end of year reports. The use of assessment to inform future planning of tasks for groups and individuals is variable and requires further development. In many lessons, teachers do not take full advantage of the developing systems of assessment to pitch their lessons at just the right level. This is particularly apparent when teachers do not make sufficient effort to challenge the most able pupils, for example in science. Over time, this results in these pupils not achieving their full potential.
21. All teachers mark work but scrutiny of pupils' previous work revealed that it varies between subjects. It is good in English and mathematics, but variable in topic books where some work is not marked. Most teachers give very good oral feedback to pupils. For instance, the feedback given to a pupil for whom English is a second language was of a high quality. Having listened to the pupil read the teacher praised the things that had gone well and, in identifying areas that were less good, gave the pupil the confidence to continue to try hard.
22. Ninety-seven per cent of parents who responded to the parents' pre-inspection questionnaire agreed that the quality of teaching in the school is good. Nineteen per cent of parents indicated in their returns that they had concerns with regard to the extent of work their children are expected to complete as home study. In contrast, all of the parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting were completely satisfied with the range and extent of homework and none of them wanted the amount to be increased. The inspection team's view is that the school has adopted a sensible approach to the setting of tasks to complete at home and that the current arrangements are satisfactory.

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

23. The school provides a sufficiently broad and balanced curriculum to promote pupils' intellectual, physical and moral development effectively. Sufficient time is given to all groups of pupils in integrated activities. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Planning of work for children in the reception classes is good. Good provision is made for pupils in art and design, music, physical education, reading and religious education and this leads to above average standards in those subjects. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school is particularly effective in celebrating and building on the wide range of backgrounds within its community.
24. There are no written policies for personal and social education or health education. However, these aspects are taught very effectively through science, religious education and other subjects. All policies, with the exception of mathematics and information and communication technology, need bringing up to date to take account of the latest curriculum requirements. A timetable showing when policies will be re-written is included in the school development plan. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy was delayed but both it and the National Numeracy Strategy have now been introduced and are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The school has

good strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Numeracy skills are reinforced successfully in other subjects such as geography and information and communication technology. The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to the full curriculum. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with English as an additional language.

25. Inspection findings support some parents' views that the range of extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory. A recorder club is the only activity but a violin club is due to start later in the term. Arrangements for football training were made with a local team, which was unable to carry out its commitment. However, space for activities after school is restricted as the hall is used every night by a private out-of-school club.
26. Good use is made of visitors to school and visits to places of interest enhance pupils' learning. Visitors have included the school nurse, a visiting artist, musicians from ethnic minority groups, the vicar of the local church and other representatives from religious bodies. The school makes good use of voluntary helpers. Pupils visit places such as Western Park Museum, Abbeydale Hamlet, the Stone Centre and their local church. Reception children spend the day on activities at Sherwood Forest with their parents and return with a Christmas tree to decorate in school. A teddy bears' picnic is held in the school grounds.
27. The school is developing a good range of links with its community, which make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The local vicar and a representative from another church group contribute to assemblies and help promote spiritual values and moral understanding. Parishioners of the local church helped pupils make Christingles that were then used in a service at the church. Groups of pupils paraded a giant frog, made with help from the visiting artist, in the Children's Festival at the Lord Mayor's Parade in Sheffield and the multi-cultural parade at Sharrow.
28. There are good links with partner organisations. Useful contacts have been made with other schools through membership of the Education Action Zone. Links have been made with another local infant school, with the intention that pupils will write to each other and visit each other's schools.
29. Provision for spiritual development is very good and the school fully meets the requirements for acts of worship. In an assembly led by a visitor, the whole school laughed with joy at the antics of Goliath the puppet. They listened with rapt attention to the storyteller and thoroughly enjoyed the humorous way in which he delivered his message. Most pupils understand the moral that children need to obey their parents when they are asked or told to do something. Music is effectively used to create an atmosphere for reflection and contemplation in assemblies. The recent Christingle service was a joyous occasion shared by all. In the morning, parishioners came into school to help pupils make the Christingles and in the afternoon the whole school, their parents and the community shared the service in church. On their return to school at the beginning of term, the whole school participated in celebrations for Eid and enjoyed traditional music and food.
30. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Parents say that staff act as good role models in the way in which they work together and handle any difficult situations. Pupils know how they are expected to behave and mostly do so. Two pupils have individual behaviour plans, which are carefully adhered to by all staff. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate each other and to understand and celebrate their differences. In a Year 2 physical education lesson, for example, pupils commented honestly on each other's performances, whilst being sensitive to their feelings. The weekly Achievements Assembly recognises pupils' efforts in their work. It also celebrates those who have been written into the 'Thank You Book' for being especially caring and helpful. 'Holt House Stars' are also given stickers for achieving the behaviour target for the week. In the week of inspection this was to be good friends to the new reception children. This was an effective strategy in helping them settle quickly into the school.

31. Provision for social development is very good. The family ethos of the school is developed through assemblies. In Circle Time, even the youngest pupils are beginning to understand the principles of everybody having a turn to speak whilst everyone else listens. Pupils learn about the needs of others through charity fund raising. Representatives from charities such as Barnado's, the NSPCC and RSPCA talk to pupils in assembly to explain their work. Children and pupils enjoy working and playing together. They evidently enjoy each other's company, both in the classroom and on the playground. The Easter Market helps pupils learn about citizenship. Year 2 pupils make and sell items to the rest of the school and their parents.
32. The school delights in the diversity of its ethnic backgrounds and takes every opportunity to build on this, for example in celebrating festivals and special days. Displays around school feature Eid, carpet designs from around the world and Australian aboriginal bark painting. A museum display shows artefacts from bygone ages. Music from other countries is played in assembly. Visitors to school recently have included a group of Asian musicians. In the summer, an artist in residence worked with pupils to create a huge frog that they took to the city Children's Festival. Pupils' work is very well displayed, creating busy, vibrant classrooms. Drama, music and dance are promoted through the curriculum and creative workshops. In art, pupils learn about the work of artists, for example Year 1 pupils use the designs of William Morris. In Year 2, pupils paint portraits interpreting the styles of Van Gogh and Rembrandt.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school provides a warm, caring, secure environment in which children and pupils learn and play with confidence. Parents are particularly impressed with very good relationships that foster a caring and supportive atmosphere.
34. The school has very good systems for ensuring the care and well being of children and pupils. All staff know every child and understand their background, personality and needs. They use this knowledge astutely to guide and help children in their academic and personal development. All staff understand, for example, child protection procedures and how they are applied. Regular health and safety checks are carried out and risk assessments are being updated. The school is maintained to a high standard of safety. First aid is administered with sensitivity and care and there is very good knowledge of children with specific medical conditions.
35. The school carefully considers ensuring new children make the transition to school happily and confidently. All children are visited at the nursery or playgroup and come into the school on at least three occasions with their parents to become familiar with new teachers and the building. In the first week, they attend for some morning and some afternoon sessions before starting full time. Reception staff already know the new class exceptionally well and are very sensitive to their individual needs. Children who join the school at other times are made to feel welcome and quickly become happy, confident members of their class. All Year 2 pupils transfer to the nearby junior school. Close links exist to ensure pupils look forward to a natural progression. Pupils with individual behaviour plans, special education needs and English as additional language are particularly well supported.
36. Attendance improved significantly during the autumn term to above national average figures. It had been below for at least the past three academic years. This improvement is a result of the tight procedures that the school has introduced. Registers are checked closely and good systems are used to follow up with parents any absence that is not accounted for. The school also encourages good punctuality through its effective policy of welcoming parents to read with their children for ten minutes every morning. The Education Welfare Officer gives good support in any cases where attendance and punctuality are causing concern.
37. There is a very strong emphasis on positive behaviour that is effective in promoting high standards. Teachers and support staff constantly praise and encourage pupils for good work and behaviour.

Good behaviour is rewarded through the 'Thank You Book' and 'Holt House Star' mentions and awards. On the rare occasions that pupils do not behave towards each other kindly, assembly and registration are cleverly used to discuss what happened and remind pupils of how they are expected to behave. Individual behaviour plans have been well thought out and are carefully adhered to. No incidents have been recorded in the Critical Incident Book or Bullying Diary for a long time.

38. A key issue at the time of the last inspection was to establish procedures for monitoring standards of achievement. This has been successfully done, but although assessment has been introduced, its effective use is embryonic. It is not yet satisfactorily in place to identify strengths and weaknesses and to influence planning. Some questioning and good analysis of data are beginning to take place. Targets are set for pupils, which are shared with them and their parents. Formal assessment is in the development plans for all subjects. In English and mathematics, assessment is in place but is not yet firmly established. Reception staff make sound early assessments of children's attainment and track their progress. However, this is not yet used effectively to follow pupils' progress through the school. Local Education Authority assessment guidelines are just in place for some subjects such as history and geography. In science, teachers' assessment for end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum statutory attainment tests is weak. In the classroom, ongoing assessment is used satisfactorily and teachers adeptly change their planning to respond to pupils' needs. Good assessment systems identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The progress of these pupils is effectively monitored and this contributes to their good gains in learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Partnership with parents is a strength of the school. This fulfils a key issue from the last inspection, which was to maintain the positive ethos that promoted parental partnership. Parents are very supportive of the work that staff do with their children. Many parents actively help in school.
40. Good quality, interesting information keeps parents very well informed. There is a good pack for parents of children entering the school to support the initial visits and meetings. The prospectus contains some delightful illustrations and comments by last year's Year 2 that bring this useful handbook to life. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with what is happening in school, including curriculum information. Annual reports to parents are very well designed. They clearly tell parents what their children know, understand and can do and set targets for improvement. Written comments are highly individual, demonstrating just how well teachers know each child. Parents find all staff very approachable and are confident to ask about their children's progress at any time. Individual weekly targets for reading, writing and spelling are shared with parents. They are encouraged to come into school every morning to read with their child for 10 minutes. This gives a calm, happy start to the day.
41. Parents actively support the school and many help in classrooms and make resources. Twelve parents attended a reading partnership course last year. A further course is planned in which parents will develop games and other materials to develop pupils' reading. Parents who help feel what they do is valued and that teachers express their gratitude well. These parents feel involved and have open access to the staff room. The home school association is a small group who works very hard to put on a variety of social and fund-raising events. They aim to develop the community spirit in the school as well as to raise money. A recent disco for pupils and parents was completely sold out. The Christmas fair is always very popular. They have recently raised funds for playground equipment, physical education equipment and the library. They also provide Christmas trees, food and presents for Christmas parties. Parents hear their children read at home and support any homework. Year 2 pupils are asked to look at tins of food and list the ingredients with the help of their families for science.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The school has good leadership and management. The headteacher provides very strong and positive leadership giving the school very clear educational direction and purpose. There is greater involvement from the governing body than there was at the last inspection. A clearly defined school

development plan, which is effectively monitored and regularly evaluated, reinforces this direction. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. The overall quality of teaching has improved significantly as a result of new initiatives such as the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. More effective monitoring by the headteacher of all classes is supporting these improvements and giving her a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is leading to improving standards although the fruits of this are not yet apparent in the school's National Curriculum test results. The school's aims and values are wholly appropriate and the school promotes them carefully in all its work.

43. There is a shared commitment to improvement with some good structures and procedures in place to monitor standards, especially in English and mathematics. Subject co-ordinators have clearly defined areas of responsibility and play a greater role in the development of their subjects. All are involved in monitoring and supporting, planning and organising resources. Some effective monitoring of teaching has taken place, particularly in English and mathematics. In general, however, this aspect of the co-ordinators' role is not sufficiently developed. Few co-ordinators have a clear view of standards of achievement or teaching within their subjects. As a result they are not well placed to offer support or to raise standards further.
44. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs conforms fully to the Code of Practice². There are clear strategies to identify pupils' needs at an early stage. Targets relate well to identified needs and are set out in pupils' individual education plans. There are good systems for regularly reviewing and updating these. Parents are encouraged to be involved in this process and many attend the regular review meetings. Good systems are in place to ensure that pupils with English as an additional language are effectively supported to make progress with the other pupils. A clear strategy gives a range of support and good efforts are made to involve parents to develop pupils' learning.
45. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is satisfactory and improved through a more effective committee structure. There have been substantial recent changes in the membership of the governing body. Governors now have a growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have a strong commitment to the school and confidence in the headteacher to whom they give good support. The headteacher and her teaching staff give the governing body good information. The governors play an active role in monitoring standards within the school. For example, they monitor the impact of the literacy and numeracy strategies on the school and discuss pupils' annual performance in the national tests of attainment. As part of this process of monitoring some governors visit school and observe lessons. The chairperson of governors is a regular visitor to the school. The governing body monitors the performance of the headteacher. She is set targets that are reviewed annually. There is effective governor involvement in the strategic management of the school. Most governors are in a good position to make strategic decisions because they know and talk about relevant issues with confidence and good understanding. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities.
46. The schools' system for financial planning is good with the school managing its available resources well. Budget setting is guided by priorities outlined in the school development plan. Money is appropriately allocated and kept under constant review. This has been very effective in reducing the deficit budget in place when the headteacher joined the school to a small surplus. The school uses funds designated for particular purposes well. For example, effective use is made of support staff in all parts of the school. Governors evaluate the effect of the school's spending decisions on standards.
47. Effective routines are in place for the day-to-day running of the school. Administration staff are efficient and well organised, ensuring that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The school's accounts were last audited some while ago and all identified areas were appropriately addressed. Satisfactory use is made of information technology in the administration of the school and the process of developing this is proceeding at a good pace. The school has good procedures to ensure the cost effectiveness of the goods and services it purchases.

² Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

48. Teachers and support staff are well qualified, enthusiastic and committed. Some staff are new to the school this term and they have settled quickly into routines. The headteacher and all the staff are supporting them effectively and this makes the school a suitable place for new teachers to develop their skills. All teachers teach every subject competently and confidently and they use good strategies to make the best use of individual strengths. All staff attend courses to develop their individual needs and as defined in the school development plan. There is a good programme of staff development and staff meetings, which have been carefully planned to link in with the school's aims and priorities. Funds used for professional development contribute to an improvement in the quality of teaching. For example, focused training in English and mathematics has helped raise the quality of teaching in these two areas. This has been a contributory factor to the good implementation of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. Support staff are very well qualified and take active roles in the classrooms, often showing very good initiative with individual pupils. Teachers work very closely with their assistants, ensuring they are well briefed. Midday supervisors are well trained to interact with pupils and to follow the school's discipline code. The relief caretaker maintains the school to a high standard of safety and cleanliness.
49. The school is big enough for the number of pupils and available accommodation is used well. Classrooms are light, bright and airy and display is very well used to enhance the learning environment. The corridor is used as an extension to classrooms for activities such as role-play and individual support. The hall is large enough to easily take all the school for assembly and for whole class physical education and games to be taught in safety. The library is currently inadequate, but is part of the planned refurbishment for which the school now has funding. The headteacher has imaginative ideas to improve use of available space.
50. All subjects have adequate resources and these are often imaginatively used. Two parents spend a morning in school every week making useful resources. New computers have just arrived which have been purchased with Education Action Zone funding and will form part of the planned reference library and network of computers.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and standards are beginning to rise, particularly in English and mathematics. In order to maintain and extend this improvement, the headteacher, staff and governing body should now:

- (1) extend and make better use of assessment systems to match work to the ability levels of pupils throughout the curriculum, particularly higher attaining pupils in science and writing; (paragraphs 2, 4, 6, 18, 20, 38, 81-82, 101 and 103)
- (2) widen the monitoring role of subject co-ordinators to include observation and evaluation of teaching and standards to share good practice in teaching. (paragraphs 43, 84, 90, 96, 102 and 113)

Aspects of both of these issues are present in the school's current development planning. In addition, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- (a) improve the consistency of teachers' marking; (paragraph 21)
- (b) improve the range of extra-curricular activities. (paragraphs 25 and 112)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	17	63	20	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	161
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	34

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	38

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	25	22	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	19
	Girls	20	21	20
	Total	40	41	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (93)	87 (81)	83 (86)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	16	18
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	39	37	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (91)	79 (88)	83 (91)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	7
Indian	0
Pakistani	31
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
White	60
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.9
Average class size	26.8

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	327,313
Total expenditure	310,243
Expenditure per pupil	2,170
Balance brought forward from previous year	-14,741
Balance carried forward to next year	2,329

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 33%

Number of questionnaires sent out	132
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category ³

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	18	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	72	25	0	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	33	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	28	11	9	0
The teaching is good.	74	22	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	22	23	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	16	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	33	5	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	57	30	10	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	64	30	1	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	38	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	22	23	5	9

³ Percentages in each category may not add up to 100 due to rounding errors.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

51. Children whose fifth birthday is during the autumn term are admitted to the school in September. Those who are five during the spring and summer terms join the school in January. This means that some children experience only two of the terms of full-time education that are allocated nationally to the Foundation Stage. Analysis of assessment tests, carried out soon after the children start school, indicates that attainment on entry represents the whole ability range. However, most children have educational, personal and social skills that are below average. In recent years, the percentage of children for whom English is a second language has increased and it is now well above the national average. All children make good progress during their time in the reception class. They enjoy life at school and the good quality of the teaching enables them to become more independent learners and significantly improve their educational and personal skills. By the end of the Foundation Stage almost all children achieve satisfactory standards in communication, language and literature, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and in physical development. Most achieve good standards in personal, social and emotional development and in creative development. These findings are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection, but related only to children under the age of five.
52. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, but it is good overall. The teachers have a very good understanding of the developmental needs of this age group. Tasks are well planned and meet the educational and personal needs of the children. All adults in the classrooms are friendly, approachable and totally committed to caring for the children in their care. Children's attainments are monitored and assessments are used very well to set targets and plan future work. There is a purposeful and relaxed atmosphere in the reception classrooms, which reflects the very good teamwork between the teachers and their helpers. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and she has improved the links with pre-school providers and parents.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. The school makes very good provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development. The majority of children enter the reception classes with immature skills in personal and social development. They lack confidence to work independently and need considerable support from the teachers, classroom assistants and voluntary helpers. Children settle quickly into school life, gaining confidence and some degree of independence. They work well in groups and clearly enjoy one another's company. When engaged in whole-class discussions and activities they take turns and put up their hands when they wish to answer a question. For example, during the whole-class introductory sessions to literacy and numeracy lessons they eagerly await their turn to hold up cards, pictures, numbers and other visual aids. They show consideration for each other and are quick to help anyone who is upset. For instance, children in one of the classes are giving very good support and encouragement to the four new younger members of their class.
54. Relationships are very good and all adults provide good role models for the children. Teachers and their helpers value the contribution the children make and the children know that they are valued. The children enjoy being given responsibility for collecting resource materials for themselves at the beginning of lessons and helping to tidy up at the end. Most children are on line to achieve levels above those required for the early learning goals⁴.

Communication, language and literature

55. The provision for the development of communication, language and literature is good. On entry to the school most children have below average language skills and an increasing percentage have English as an additional language. Many children lack confidence in using language when speaking. The teachers and classroom assistants work together very effectively in improving children's language skills. They constantly give praise and encouragement in order to raise

⁴ These goals are based on the areas of learning during the Foundation Stage. They also help prepare children for future learning when they enter compulsory schooling at age five. Most children should achieve the early learning goals by the time they begin Year 1.

confidence and self-esteem. Children of all abilities make good progress and consequently by the time they leave the reception classes almost all are likely to achieve the nationally expected standards. During a practical session to make a cake similar to 'Kipper's', children retell the story and remember the unusual ingredients. When looking at pictures, most correctly recall events from a story and arrange the pictures in the correct order. The most able children can already write short sentences making correct use of capital letters. Less able children recognise and name initial letters and are increasing the number of common words that they can recognise and read.

56. All children develop an enjoyment of books and stories. Whole-class reading sessions are very well organised and lead. Teachers make very effective use of the large storybooks and build up an air of surprise and wonder when turning to the next page. The children join enthusiastically in reading the short sentences under the pictures. Teachers consolidate children's learning by talking to individuals about books, asking questions about the characters and giving them opportunities to predict what they think will happen next.
57. All children learn to hold their pencils correctly. They are provided with a good range of activities that encourages them to write. The tasks are never too long or demanding, but are well matched to individual needs and abilities. Teachers and their helpers encourage children to form letters correctly and they take every opportunity to praise and display good handwriting. Children with special educational needs are well supported and this enables them to make good progress. Staff work hard to improve children's communication skills and the improved standards being achieved reflect the good quality of the teaching.

Mathematical development

58. The provision for children's mathematical development is good and most of them are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. All children have a planned session of number work each day and the majority are making good progress in consolidating and developing number skills. Activities are well planned and those linked to practical activities capture the children's imagination and make them willing learners. For example, the activities linked to potato printing and the use of modelling clay are very popular. Children willingly make a model birthday cake and count out the correct number of wooden candles to match the number rolled on a die. Learning is fun and the children have secure understanding of numbers to 10.
59. Almost all children count confidently to 10 and many of them to 50 and beyond. The majority of the older group add pairs of numbers to make 10 and the most able children correctly add numbers to total 20. In conversation many children confidently add or subtract one to or from a given starting number. They can order a random set of numbers to 15 and give a running commentary whilst doing so. Teachers use assessment details very effectively in providing children with activities that build on and develop their early mathematical experiences.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. The school makes satisfactory provision for developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning and are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Through well planned topics they learn about their own environment and places close to school. They are developing their observational skills by using a magnifying glass to look at the structure of leaves. An educational visit to a wooded area in autumn helped to develop their observational skills and also their understanding of the seasons. Their artwork, following the visit, reflects the good progress being made in their powers of observation.
61. Through stories and pictures they learn about people who live far away and begin to appreciate the wider world. By looking at their own lives and families, they are beginning to develop an understanding of past and present. During topic work teachers are good at taking the opportunities that arise to develop language skills, particularly words that are relevant but new to the children. Most children can talk about where they live and other members of their family. They contribute considerably to one another's learning in this area of work.

Physical development

62. The provision for the physical development of children is satisfactory and they are on course to meet the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. Although there is no secure outdoor play area, the arrangements for the provision and supervision of this activity are good. There are always two adults on the hard play area when the children are using the tricycles, scooters, prams and games equipment. The teachers plan activities for these sessions that are linked to activities in the classrooms. During the inspection, children could use hockey sticks to pass a ball, linking to the topic on push and pull. Children share equipment sensibly and willingly take their turn with the most popular play items.
63. In the wide-open spaces of the school hall they are gaining confidence and increasing their control of body movements. Activities are well planned and designed to increase children's ability to use space. Most of them can run, hop, jump and respond quickly to instructions to change direction. They are developing hand and eye co-ordination by throwing and catching balls and beanbags. Children of all abilities are making satisfactory progress in using simple tools. They have access to pencils, crayons, paintbrushes, scissors and glue. Through a carefully structured range of activities children increase their control of pencils and other marking tools. In all activities they work safely and teachers and their assistants constantly praise good work.

Creative development

64. The school makes good provision for children's creative development and the majority of them are on line to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. In art and design activities children use a wide range of tools and materials. They learn the basic techniques of colour mixing and applying paint. Displays in the classrooms and corridors feature line drawings, collage and paintings that are of a good standard. Children select materials by colour and texture to make a collage. They cut materials and join them by sticking or sewing. Good quality teaching helps them to gain an awareness of shape, pattern and colour. Music and singing feature prominently during teaching and learning in the reception classes. Good use is made of rhyming songs in literacy and counting songs in numeracy. Children enjoy singing and they join in enthusiastically. In a literacy session the teacher made very effective use of singing to raise children's spirits when one member of the class arrived late and was a little upset. The words were skilfully adapted to fit the content of the activity.

ENGLISH

65. Standards achieved in reading by seven-year-olds in the national tests in 2000 are above those achieved nationally and by pupils at similar schools. Recent trends show that performance in reading has remained above the national average since 1996. Standards achieved in writing have fluctuated since 1996, but have shown a slight improvement. In the tests in 2000, pupils did about as well as pupils in schools nationally, but did less well than pupils in similar schools. This was because fewer pupils reached the higher standards in writing than in schools across the country. Girls do better than boys in both reading and writing. Teachers assessed pupils' speaking and listening skills at the age of seven and found them to be below average. Inspection findings are that standards have improved and are now above average.
66. Inspection evidence indicates that by the time pupils leave the school at the age of seven, standards in reading are above the national average. In writing, pupils' standards are in line with the national average. This represents a fall in standards reported in the previous inspection. However, many pupils now enter school with below average communication and literacy skills. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, make good progress during their time at the school.
67. Standards in speaking and listening are above national expectations by the time pupils reach the age of seven. However, many pupils enter school with limited experience of English as a spoken language. The weak background knowledge of some pupils is shown when pupils use words such as 'tunnel' and 'delicious' in the correct place but cannot explain what they mean. To counteract

this, the school places a great deal of emphasis on the acquisition of language skills. This leads to pupils making good progress in gaining skills that allow them to express themselves clearly by the time they are in the final year at the school. Provision for pupils for whom English is not their first language is good. Pupils learn letter sounds and use these, along with looking at pictures, to build new words to improve their reading. Teachers make good efforts to increase pupils' vocabulary. They provide lists of words connected to topics in subjects such as history and geography. This allows pupils to write and talk with confidence about events surrounding 'The Great Fire of London'. Teachers draw attention to words that sound the same but are spelled differently, for example 'white' and 'might'. Pupils listen carefully to questions and most understand the point of the question. In a discussion during a drama lesson, this enabled a pupil to say that emotions can be portrayed using 'facial expressions' as well as actions.

68. Standards in reading are above average. Higher than expected numbers of pupils reach the nationally expected standard and a significant number reach higher levels. Pupils show they enjoy books. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Many have large collections of books at home and some make use of local libraries to borrow books. Higher attaining pupils talk about the plots in books they enjoy reading by authors such as Jennifer Wilson and Roald Dahl, whose books are quite difficult for pupils of this age. The school makes good provision for pupils with English as an additional language and for others with reading difficulties. Groups of pupils are withdrawn from lessons for extra help and this helps raise standards in reading for these pupils. The majority of pupils read fluently from books in the school reading scheme and the most able pupils choose their own books when they finish the scheme. Better readers attempt to make stories more interesting by reading expressively. Most pupils recognise a large number of common words and make use of their knowledge of letter sounds and clues from pictures to work out less familiar words. Average and higher achieving pupils split words into groups of letters and recognise the root words, such as 'call' in 'calling'. Lower achieving pupils find this difficult. Most pupils understand the part played by authors and illustrators in producing books and can name several authors. Despite the limited number of non-fiction books in the library, pupils know how to find information using the index and table of contents.
69. Pupils in Year 2 are attaining standards in writing that are broadly in line with national averages, but not enough pupils reach higher levels. They write for a range of different people and purposes and their writing includes stories and factual accounts. They make lists and write instructions. Average and above average pupils spell many common words correctly. They use their knowledge of letter sounds and blends to help in spelling new words, which are recognisable if not always completely correct. Sentences are often separated with capital letters and full stops and some sentences are joined with conjunctions such as 'who' and 'but'. However, too often sentences are short and do not extend pupils' thoughts fluently. Similarly, pupils do not often write long enough stories or accounts and this stops pupils developing their writing skills. This means that there is not enough consistent challenge for above average pupils. Standards of handwriting have improved since the last inspection. Pupils write with increasing accuracy and consistency in size and the better writers are developing neat, well-formed handwriting.
70. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good and there is some very good teaching. There is improving match of tasks to pupils' ability and many opportunities are provided for pupils to practise their speaking and listening skills. Teachers encourage pupils to explain their ideas and there are planned opportunities for speaking through drama. The school gives priority to pupils taking books home to read and the reading diary provides a good method of communication between teachers and parents. Teachers provide labels and questions on classroom displays and this contributes well to the good provision for reading. Teachers make good use of the introduction of lessons to ensure that pupils understand what they have to do. They give clear instructions and explanations. Teachers use questions well to find out how well pupils are learning. They make good use of the last few minutes of lessons to find out how much pupils have understood. Teachers make very good use of support assistants to ensure that pupils work to the best of their ability. Pupils' work is marked regularly with some useful comments on what pupils need to do to improve.
71. Teachers and classroom assistants control pupils well, are friendly and use humour in reinforcing their high expectations of behaviour. This creates a pleasant and productive atmosphere in which most pupils work well. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and were very good in half the lessons seen. They are keen to learn and behave well in lessons. Pupils work well in

groups when the teacher is engaged with another group. They show good self-control when working in drama lessons in the hall.

72. The schools' literacy strategy has not been in place very long, but it is used well by teachers and there are signs that it is beginning to raise standards. The headteacher and local authority literacy consultants monitor teaching in lessons to ensure that the literacy strategy is taught correctly. Teachers are more confident as a result of the structured approach of the strategy and this contributes to the good quality of teaching seen in lessons. There is no subject leader at present, but the headteacher oversees the teaching of English effectively and makes sure that all aspects are covered. The school has satisfactory assessment procedures for English and teachers are now using assessments made in Year 1 to set targets for pupils in Year 2. However, these targets have not been used long enough to raise standards significantly. Short, achievable targets in spelling, reading and writing are sent home each week for parents to help pupils with their learning. The school has not made enough use of the analysis of results of national tests to improve pupils' learning. Resources generally are satisfactory, but the library is too small to be used by more than one or two pupils and contains only a small number of books. Plans are in hand to develop an area of the school to provide a larger library.

MATHEMATICS

73. Pupils' standards in mathematics are in line with those found nationally by the end of Year 2. However, pupils show clear improvement since the last inspection, particularly in their mental arithmetic skills. The standards seen in lessons and pupils' work are often higher than those shown in the most recent National Curriculum tests and suggest that attainment is rising. This is due to effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, which is having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and raising pupils' standards of achievement. There are no marked differences in the attainment of boys or girls. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in their lessons. Very effective use of support staff gives pupils purposeful questioning and promotes their enthusiasm and speed of response. Those pupils for who English is an additional language are given appropriate vocabulary and support to ensure they are able to make effective progress. Pupils use mathematics to help learning in other subjects. The use of information and communications technology to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding is being soundly developed. For example, pupils use computers to gather data and to create graphs of how they come to school.
74. Throughout the school pupils use a developing range of mathematical language when talking about their work and explaining their strategies. They improve their speed and accuracy in mental arithmetic through teachers' effective questioning. Teachers often pitch their questions well to promote the learning of pupils of different ability levels. Pupils respond readily to these sessions and take part with enthusiasm. By the time pupils leave the school, most use numbers to 100 with understanding of tens and units. They confidently use numbers to 20 in addition and subtraction and use simple multiplication tables to speed their calculations. Higher attaining pupils are confident with large numbers and have secure understanding of place value. They begin to apply their developing understanding to a range of investigations, for example in identifying repeating patterns. All pupils have secure knowledge of shapes and simple measurements. They collect data and draw graphs with understanding.
75. The quality of teaching is good because teachers make effective use of advice in the National Numeracy Strategy. Assessment systems are developing well and these are helping teachers to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' abilities. The main teaching activities are carefully selected tasks, chosen and amended to meet pupils' needs. This helps to give good levels of challenge that promote good gains in pupils' learning. Teachers' planning is often clear and includes well-judged statements of what pupils need to learn. These are usually shared with pupils and help to generate a sense of purpose in these lessons. They are frequently usefully used at the end of lessons to establish the extent to which the learning has been successful.
76. The very good relationships established throughout the school are a feature of all mathematics teaching. These help pupils to feel secure in their learning and to have confidence to have a go. In

the best lessons, teachers are enthusiastic and promote very effective pace to pupils' activities. They set good time targets, for example, and this sets a good atmosphere of challenge. Pupils respond well to these challenges and the rate of their learning improves. In many lessons, teachers make good use of praise to motivate pupils and promote pride in their learning. In some lessons, however, teachers allow pupils to make a bit too much noise. This detracts from the pace of learning as teachers need to establish quiet at intervals, although pupils invariably respond well and could work more quietly.

77. Co-ordination of the subject is good and effective support is given to teachers. Well-targeted training has supported teachers in gaining new skills and this is effective in improving the quality of teaching. New assessment systems are being introduced and increased analysis of school results is identifying appropriate areas for development. Systems of monitoring teaching have been established and these are proving effective in sharing the good practice in the school.

SCIENCE

78. Teacher assessments for 2000 show that pupils aged seven achieved standards that were well below national averages and no pupil was awarded Level 3. These standards are also well below those reached by pupils in similar schools. The results for 1998 and 1999 showed that pupils achieved standards that were in line with national averages. Pupils' current standards suggest that assessment in science is weak and teachers do not take full account of what pupils can do.
79. The inspection evidence indicates that attainment is in line with national expectations and almost all pupils are achieving average standards. However, in each Year 2 class there are pupils who are reaching higher levels in certain aspects of the science curriculum. These findings, which relate to the present group of pupils in the Year 2 classes, are broadly in agreement with those reported at the time of the previous inspection. There is no significant difference between the performances of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into normal classroom activities and they have good support in their learning.
80. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned with clear identification of the scientific skills and the vocabulary that are to be focused upon. This enables pupils of all abilities to make satisfactory progress in developing these two key areas of learning. In Year 2, pupils were studying types of food and the need for a balanced diet. They were provided with a basket that contained a wide variety of food items and they successfully classified each item into its correct group. Pupils worked very well in groups talking sensibly, but at times excitedly, about the names of the fruits and vegetables. They shared their knowledge of their own culture and life style and contributed a good deal to one another's learning. Noise levels at times were high, but generally consistent with the practical nature of the activity.
81. Teachers have friendly and supportive teaching styles that result in pupils having good attitudes and behaving well. Relationships are good and pupils know that the teachers value the contribution they make in lessons. All pupils enjoy science lessons, particularly when they are given opportunities to investigate and take some responsibility for their own learning. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work revealed that higher-attaining pupils are given too few of these opportunities. The majority of tasks are outlined on work sheets that do not give more able pupils enough space to write more than a few words or opportunity to devise their own recording system.
82. All teachers mark work conscientiously and keep detailed records of pupils' achievements. However, at the present time insufficient use is made of these records to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses or to inform future planning. At times the over-reliance upon work sheets results in teaching and learning opportunities being missed and tasks not being well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers make good use of the resources available to support pupils' learning and overall teaching is of a satisfactory standard.
83. Discussion with pupils from both year groups confirmed that there are pupils who are capable of achieving higher than average standards. They are able to hold interesting conversations using the correct scientific language. Most older pupils have good recall of work completed during the autumn term relating to materials and their properties, changes of state, dissolving and pond life. They describe accurately the investigation they carried

out on the stretching of materials and explain clearly why the tests are fair. Younger pupils accurately name parts of the body, explain the function of the heart and demonstrate how to check their pulse. They talk enthusiastically about the investigation involving push, pull, flick and blow. Some members of the group are able to explain their findings in terms of the size and weight of the objects. These pupils are making good progress in their learning, but, when all pupils in the key stage are considered, progress is satisfactory overall.

84. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership for the subject in terms of leading curriculum development, monitoring planning and managing resources. However, she has no input into the process to agree the award of teacher assessment grades at the end of the key stage. In addition she has no opportunity to work alongside colleagues or monitor teaching and learning. The policy statement is in need of revision to reflect the details in Curriculum 2000. The school has already recognised the need to develop the use of assessment and to ensure that the higher-attaining pupils achieve to their full potential. The school development plan contains details of in-service training that staff are to attend and of the specialist help requested from the local education authority.

ART AND DESIGN

85. The majority of pupils achieve standards that are above those expected for their age. Throughout the school, displays of pupils' work are used effectively to enhance the learning environment. The displays mounted along the full extent of the main corridor give ample evidence of the good standards being achieved by some pupils in all classes. Classroom observation, scrutiny of pupils' previous work and discussion with pupils indicate that standards have improved since the last inspection.
86. By the time they are seven, pupils are beginning to develop their own artistic style. They are given opportunities to express their ideas and feelings, using a range of materials, tools and techniques. Observational drawings reflect the good progress pupils make across the school in developing artistic skills. For example, some Year 2 pupils produce work of a good standard when drawing portraits in the style of Rembrandt and Van Gogh. They are using the styles of these famous artists to influence their own style. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when this area of work was criticised. Other members of this group produce work of a much lower standard, but they are still making satisfactory progress in relation to their artistic ability and previous levels of attainment.
87. Year 1 pupils explored the work of William Morris and looked at designs for fabrics and wallpaper. They framed a small section of the design and drew their own enlarged representation of the pattern. Some higher-attaining pupils produced work of a very good standard. They experimented with colours until they found an accurate match to those in the original pattern. All of the pupils worked enthusiastically and took pride in their completed picture. They enjoy art lessons and willingly take responsibility for collecting and returning resource materials.
88. All lessons are well planned and the work is often effectively linked to pupils' experiences in other subject areas. The quality of teaching is good and this has a direct impact upon the learning environment and pupils' levels of attainment. Across the school, pupils of all abilities are making good progress overall in gaining knowledge and developing skills. Teachers have friendly, supportive and encouraging teaching styles and this results in good relationships with the pupils. They have good subject knowledge and this enables them to give clear explanations to pupils' questions and queries. Learning is fun in art and design and pupils are given freedom to experiment with paint, pastel, chalk and crayon. The school gives pupils opportunities to mix powder paint for themselves and see the range and shades of colour that can be produced. Art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and cultural development.
89. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that they are experiencing the full range of activities required by the National Curriculum. Clay is used in Year 2 to make coil pots and in Year 1 to make teddy bears, the latter work being linked to a history topic. Other work for older pupils includes pastel drawings of Australian bark paintings and textile work linked to a topic in design and technology.

Younger pupils' paintings of 'A dark tale' are linked to a literacy topic. They successfully use dark colours to create the mood and feelings generated by the title. Many of these items feature in displays and most of them are of a good standard.

90. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and she provides good leadership for the subject. She collects work from all year groups and monitors pupils' levels of attainment. She does not have opportunity to observe teaching and learning, but she does give advice and support to colleagues on an informal basis. The school has a good range of resource materials and these are well used by all members of staff to support pupils' learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. Due to timetable arrangements, insufficient lessons were seen to make an overall secure judgement on the quality of teaching in the subject. However, conversations with pupils, scrutiny of their previous work and the teachers' records of assessment did make it possible to judge levels of attainment. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils attain standards that are expected for their age. In each Year 2 class there are pupils who achieve standards well above average. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection.
92. Teachers' planning of the curriculum is thorough and the documents show that pupils experience all areas of the statutory curriculum. Throughout the school, lesson plans show that a practical approach is adopted and that tasks are planned effectively. There is a good balance in the time allocated to sharing ideas, designing and making. In Year 2, pupils are investigating winding mechanisms and looking at the uses made of them in every day life. In an observed lesson the teacher made excellent use of a wide range of resource materials that included toys, kitchen tools and simple machines. The pupils listened carefully and were captivated by many of the toys. They responded enthusiastically to the teacher's questions and almost all of them explained the function of an axle and the need for a handle.
93. In this lesson, the group activities were carefully matched to the pupils' abilities and needs. Two groups work with the teacher doing further investigation as to how the toys and tools work. Another group had the support of a voluntary helper to make a model of a spider that can climb in and out of a drainpipe. The group of higher-attaining pupils worked independently, selecting their own tools and materials to make a crane that can raise a 100-gram weight. They worked in pairs and had very good attitudes. They talked sensibly, used the appropriate language, worked safely and explained what they were doing. They adapted their designs as necessary and by the end of the lesson two of the models were nearing completion and were of a good standard. During this lesson pupils of all abilities were provided with a good learning experience and made good progress in developing skills and gaining knowledge.
94. Pupils in Year 2 have previously used scraps of different coloured materials to design and make rag rugs and an impressive 'multi-coloured dream coat'. They have looked at Turkish carpets and used the ideas gained from them to design and make their own miniature carpets. These items feature in displays throughout the school and they are of a good standard. Pupils in Year 1 have investigated the use made of levers and sliders. They were challenged to design and make a clock that has two moving parts. These models form a display in a classroom and some of them are carefully made and are of a good standard. In conversation the pupils could explain how they made the model, which parts move and how the model could be improved. In other work, Year 1 pupils have made models of animals, birds and various objects using cones and cylinders. These models give evidence of good cross-curricular links to work in mathematics and art and design.
95. The staff work hard and provide pupils with a stimulating and interesting educational experience in design and technology. They are well supported by a group of parents and other voluntary helpers, who come into school and share their particular areas of expertise with the pupils. These experiences broaden the curriculum on offer to the pupils and strengthen the school's links with parents and the community.
96. The school has adopted national guidelines to support teachers' planning. These are being used effectively to ensure that new learning builds upon pupils' previous experience and knowledge. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of her role and she provides satisfactory leadership for the subject. She is aware that the policy document is in need of revision and that her role needs

extending to include monitoring of classroom practice. These items already feature in the school's plans for the future development of the subject

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

97. Standards in geography and history are typical of those reached by most seven-year-olds. This is similar to the situation at the previous inspection.
98. By the age of seven, pupils develop a sound knowledge of mapping skills through looking at their own locality. They draw simple maps of the route from school to the nearby supermarket. Pupils complete maps of the British Isles by colouring and naming the four countries and correctly placing London, Sheffield and seaside resorts such as Skegness. Pupils develop a sound idea of distance by making lists of places that are near, far or very far, comparing places such as the Meadowhall Shopping Centre, London and Spain. They describe the differences between their locality and places they have been to on holiday. In Year 1, pupils made good progress in drawing maps of an imaginary journey made by Red Riding Hood. They worked out how to use symbols to show features on the journey and explained the symbols in a key. However, some pupils did not fully understand the words they used. For instance, one boy included a tunnel on his map but could not explain what a tunnel was. Pupils in Year 2 study the human eye to explore its importance when looking at features in countries around the world. This supports work done in a science topic on the human body and enables pupils to show a good understanding of how the eye works by naming parts such as the iris and the optic nerve.
99. Pupils have a good understanding of what is meant by history and explain that comparatively recent events have historical meaning. Pupils in Year 2 have good knowledge of their latest topic on the Great Fire of London. They know the fire started in a baker's shop in Pudding Lane and give a sound explanation of how they think it might have started. Pupils suggest that the fire spread quickly because the wooden buildings were built too close together and methods of fire fighting in use at the time were unable to cope with the flames. They understand that the fire was prevented from spreading further when it reached the banks of the River Thames. Pupils suggest that the fire helped to end the Great Plague. Pupils in Year 1 are developing an idea of the differences between old and new objects. Following a visit to Western Park Museum, they make a comparison between teddy bears in the museum and those they have at home.
100. The small amount of teaching seen in geography lessons was good. Teachers make good links with other subjects. They use familiar stories from English lessons, such as the story of Red Riding Hood, to make lessons on drawing maps interesting. Teachers encourage pupils to use skills learned in mathematics lessons to collect information about ways of getting to school to produce graphs from a computer program. In a very good lesson about the human eye, the teacher used blindfolds effectively to promote learning. Pupils wore these while carrying out activities such as making jam sandwiches and pouring a glass of water. This excited them and made them eager to take part. They quickly gained a good understanding of the difficulties faced by blind people in carrying out everyday tasks and making sense of the world around them. Teachers use questions skilfully to assess pupils' learning. They make good use of classroom support assistants to help pupils with special educational needs. Because of the good teaching, pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their lessons. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. No history lessons were seen during the inspection. Inspection of pupils' work in books and on display, discussions with pupils and inspection of teachers' planning indicate that teaching is at least satisfactory.
101. The co-ordinators for geography and history work together to improve provision for their subjects. They have reviewed the topics taught to take account of the latest curriculum requirements. Because of this, resources need improving to support the new topics and the policy documents need bringing up to date. The co-ordinators have introduced an assessment scheme that will give teachers a clearer idea of standards reached by pupils. However, this has not been in use long enough to have an effect on the raising of standards. The range of software to help pupils' research in geography and history lessons is limited although plans to extend this area are in hand.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

102. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with that expected nationally, although few pupils show high levels of achievement. Provision and teachers' skills have improved since the last inspection and standards are rising. New computers have been introduced as a result of Education Action Zone funding and these have been effectively deployed. The provision for the subject is now satisfactory and many of the previous problems with machines have been removed. The new co-ordinator has made a good start to promoting the subject. Good plans have been established to continue to develop teachers' skills and an effective start has been made to tracking pupils' computer experiences. The co-ordinator has begun to collect and assess a range of pupils' work to establish clear standards for teachers to demand from pupils. However, there have been limited opportunities to monitor work through the school in order to share good practice.
103. Pupils throughout the school gain confidence when playing educational games, entering information and using the keyboard and mouse. They create pictures and simple writing, making changes and learning to save their work correctly. By the end of Year 2, pupils write text of some length, making good use of a range of fonts and sizes. They are able to change the format of their work and use controls such as the shift key with confidence. Many pupils use drawing programs to produce pictures of different forms. For example, some Christmas card pictures show confident control and co-ordination. However, pupils' development of skills is not consistent through the school and the assessment systems are not able to identify what pupils can do and need to learn next. This limits the extent of pupils' learning and restricts the achievement of the most able.
104. Although no direct teaching of information and communication technology was observed, it is clear from pupils' work and discussions that provision is satisfactory. Teachers make sound use of computers and other information technology devices in their lessons. They teach pupils to use simple machines such as tape players to listen to music and stories and these are used through the school. Some effective use of computers is made to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, Year 1 pupils collect information of how they come to school and produce graphs using a computer program. Other pupils classify hair and eye colour, producing graphs. Pupils respond well to opportunities to use computers and many show good levels of confidence. They often work together well, sharing knowledge and ideas. When they find themselves stuck, they have the confidence to ask the teacher or other pupils for support. When teachers support pupils' learning they question effectively to establish the extent of pupils' prior learning and to encourage them to think carefully. Pupils begin to develop independence, for example in printing out their own work.

MUSIC

105. Pupils' attainment in music is above that found nationally by the time they leave the school. This is an improvement on the standards found in the last report. The strengths identified in reading musical notation have been maintained effectively. An important factor in the school's continued effective work in this subject is the strong lead taken by the co-ordinator. She has very good understanding of the subject and has given staff clear guidelines for their teaching that make good use of national and local advice. This gives a clear framework for the subject that ensures that pupils are given appropriate provision to make effective gains in their learning.
106. Throughout the school, pupils sing with enthusiasm, often in songs relating to aspects of the curriculum. For example, some artwork is promoted through responses to pieces of music and songs are made up that relate to learning in literacy lessons. This reinforces pupils' learning well and is effective in promoting higher standards in music and other subjects. Pupils listen carefully to pieces of music, for example in assembly, and make appropriate comments about what they have heard. They begin to identify different types of music and respond with interest to music of other countries. This was developed effectively through a recent visit of some Indian musicians. By the time pupils leave the school, they have good understanding of musical notation and recognise how beats fit into different time signatures. They sound out the rhythms with enthusiasm by clapping or singing and recognise ways of changing the music. They use simple percussion instruments with confidence, naming them correctly and handling them with care. Less attention is paid to developing pupils' composition skills and developing appropriate notations to enable other pupils to pay their work. However, the co-ordinator is aware of this relative weakness and has plans to develop this aspect of the subject.

107. Teaching is good and teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. They plan lessons carefully making effective use of the school's useful guidance. There is clear attention to addressing the needs of pupils of different abilities in class and individual activities. This helps all pupils to make good gains in their learning. Very good relationships are established and these produce a purposeful atmosphere for learning. Pupils gain confidence and are keen to try ideas out. They enjoy, for example, correcting the teachers' deliberate 'mistakes' in what she has put on the board. Through these strategies, teachers encourage pupils to feel secure in their learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. By the time they are seven, most pupils achieve standards that are above those expected for their age. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection. There is no difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Across the key stage, pupils of all abilities make good progress in developing simple gymnastic skills.
109. Pupils work enthusiastically, behave well and contribute much to the lessons. In gymnastics, they travel in a good variety of ways and combine hops, rolls, jumps and balances to form a sequence involving three movements. A small, but significant, number of older pupils include well-controlled and executed cartwheels in their performances. Across the key stage, pupils have increasing control of their movements and they use apparatus safely and correctly. They enjoy working in pairs and small groups and they are developing the skills necessary to be an effective member of a team. They talk quietly and encourage one another to achieve higher standards. When given the opportunity to do so they comment sensibly on their own and other pupils' performances.
110. Standards achieved by pupils in dance are good. They listen well and almost all of them are able to respond appropriately to different types of music. For instance in a Year 1 lesson, pupils showed great awareness of changes of pace and mood and were able to reflect these in their movements. Pupils have good attitudes and physical education makes a significant contribution to their social and moral development.
111. In the lessons seen during the inspection the quality of teaching was consistently good. Teachers have a very good rapport with their pupils and this leads to very productive working during lessons. Pupils co-operate very well and they are always prepared to try hard and do their best to achieve high standards. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives and this ensures that the available time is used effectively and pupils build upon previous experiences. Teachers constantly challenge pupils to improve their levels of attainment and to acquire new skills. For example, in a Year 1 class pupils who successfully threw and caught a large ball were asked to throw the ball higher and further. When this was achieved they were given a smaller ball and asked to repeat the task.
112. The curriculum programme includes all of the elements required for Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. Swimming is not included, but in conversation with pupils many of them said that they go swimming with members of their family. At the time of the inspection there were no extra-curricular sporting activities or clubs, which is unusual when compared with similar schools.
113. The co-ordinators provide satisfactory leadership for the subject, but their role does not include responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning. The policy document needs updating, but this is already recognised in the school development plan. Accommodation is good with a spacious hall and extensive hard play areas. There is a good supply of resources that are used effectively in supporting pupils' learning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

114. Standards are above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus by the time pupils are seven years old. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
115. Pupils gain a good understanding in three of the world's major religions. They examine the significance of the Christmas story to Christians, learn how Muslims celebrate Eid and the importance of Hanukkah to Jews. Pupils make a good exploration of the importance of symbols to

religions through the study of the use of the sign of the cross and the giving of candles in christenings and the importance placed by Muslims on prayer and fasting.

116. By the age of seven, pupils have a good understanding of the traditions and symbolism surrounding the festivals of Christmas and Eid and of the Christian baptism service. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, make a good study of how children are received into the Christian faith through baptism. They learn how candidates for baptism are anointed with a cross of holy water and how the water is blessed by prayer. Pupils relate the use of the candle to represent Jesus as the Light of the World to the Christingle service they took part in before Christmas. In Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of the background to the Muslim celebration of Eid, which they celebrate with a party using traditional food. They understand the importance of prayer in both religions and the wearing of special clothes at Eid. Pupils know the importance of fasting during Ramadan.
117. No lessons were seen in Year 2 but teaching in Year 1 is generally good. The good attainment of pupils in Year 2, teachers' planning, the attractive displays arranged by teachers and the quality of pupils' work and knowledge, indicate that teaching in Year 2 is also good. Teachers share clear objectives with pupils at the start of lessons so that they know what they are to learn. They make good use of questions to draw information from pupils and to encourage them to think about the beliefs and traditions of different religions. Teachers use religious artefacts well in displays about Eid and prayer mats and clothing such as the topi cap are given prominence. They make use of Islamic art when pupils design and make their own prayer mats in art and design and technology lessons. A particular strength is the way teachers from minority ethnic groups are used to show pupils the significance of special clothing and celebrations.
118. Because of good teaching, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good gains in their understanding of spiritual issues. They develop an understanding of the ways in which families from different religions celebrate their main festivals. Pupils learn to respect the beliefs and customs of others. Their responses to teaching in religious education are good and these help them to learn effectively. Pupils behave well in lessons, listen carefully and are eager to talk about their experiences in church and mosque. Most concentrate well, are keen to answer questions and join in discussions willingly.
119. The scheme of work closely follows the Sheffield Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. The subject leader provides sound leadership. She arranges visits to the local Christian church, where pupils take part in a Christingle service, and local clergy and visitors from Christian groups take assemblies. Despite efforts by the subject leader, it has not been possible to obtain speakers or to arrange visits to places of worship of other religions in order to expand pupils' understanding.