

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SOUTH FARNBOROUGH INFANT SCHOOL**

Farnborough

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116144

Headteacher: Miss H Fletcher Davies

Reporting inspector: Mrs Christine Huard  
27290

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2001

Inspection number: 186849

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Queens Road Farnborough Hampshire
Postcode:	GU14 6JU
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Helen Holmes
Date of previous inspection:	19 <sup>th</sup> November 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
27290	Mrs Christine Huard	Registered inspector	Science Art and design	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed Special educational needs
19664	Mr John Bayliss	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes values and personal development. How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
25074	Mrs Joyce Cox	Team inspector	English Information communication technology History Religious education English as an additional language	The quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils Equal opportunities
21904	Mrs Diane Gale	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. Mathematics Design and technology Geography Physical education	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

South Farnborough Infant School is situated in an area of Farnborough, close to the local military establishment and most pupils live in the immediate area. The school has a high, and somewhat unpredictable, level of pupils entering and leaving the school each year. Pupils are from a very broad range of socio-economic backgrounds that are average overall. It is a slightly smaller than average infant school and provides education for 188 boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 7. There are a few more boys than girls in the school with nearly all the imbalance being in Reception and Year 2. Only a small proportion of pupils, 5.2 per cent, are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Nearly all pupils are of a white ethnic background and only seven pupils come from a home where English is not the first language. None of these pupils is at an early stage of learning English. Fifteen per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is similar to the national average. The majority of special needs relate to moderate learning difficulties, with a small percentage of pupils having behavioural difficulties. No pupils have a Statement of special educational need. When children start school, their levels of attainment are below average, particularly in respect of social and personal skills, and language, literacy and communication.

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

South Farnborough Infant School is a very good school with a great many strengths. Standards have risen significantly in recent years and this progress has been maintained with a further improvement in the results of this summer's national tests. Pupils' work is of a consistently good standard and they learn very effectively and make very good progress. This is due to the high quality teaching, which provides very good opportunities for the development of independent learning skills and creative thinking on the part of all the pupils, regardless of their ability. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher has set a clear direction for the development of the school and has empowered her staff to implement any changes necessary to effect improvements and raise standards further. All staff share the commitment to development and improvement. The school provides very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The leadership provided by the headteacher is outstanding. She receives very good support from a strong senior management team and capable governors.
- Standards achieved by pupils in English, mathematics, science, physical education and music are above average and well above average in art.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is very good overall.
- The school provides a particularly exciting and stimulating curriculum, which embraces all subject areas and which enables all pupils to learn highly effectively.
- The personal development of pupils, their attitudes towards their work, and relationships with each other and those between pupils and staff are all very good.
- The procedures for assessing how well pupils are achieving are excellent and enable the school to make very good plans for its short and long term development.
- The school provides very good care for its pupils and maintains very strong relationships with parents and the local community.

#### **What could be improved**

- On very few occasions, the behaviour of a small number of pupils exceeds the boundaries of what is acceptable during lessons.
- There is a very slight imbalance in the areas of study covered in the science curriculum with a little too much emphasis on the areas dealing with life and living processes.
- School reports are too impersonal and do not contain enough information about the progress of the individual pupil.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils in the school.*

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

The school was last inspected in December 1995. Since then very good improvements have been made and the school has successfully addressed all the key issues raised. Standards in design and technology are now well in line with what is expected and food technology takes place in an appropriately hygienic area. The curriculum is exciting and is firmly based on all the requirements of National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Schemes of work are now in place for each subject. That for science requires some monitoring in order to ensure that an appropriate balance between all the areas of study is maintained. The role of

the governors has been extended. As a body, they are more organised and appropriate committees have been set up to more effectively share the burden of responsibility. Good quality training has been provided and governors are now more knowledgeable and aware of their role in relation to the school. In addition there has been a steady improvement in standards achieved by pupils and the quality of teaching has improved considerably. The school has a very good capacity for further improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools <sup>1</sup>
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	B	C	B	C
Writing	A	B	B	C
Mathematics	A	A	A	B

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E
Very low	E*

The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 showed standards in reading and writing to be above the national average whilst those in mathematics were well above average. There has been a steady gain in the results, since 1995, in reading, writing and mathematics with the improvement being in excess of the trend shown nationally. Results in the teachers' assessments in science were shown to be well above average. When compared with similar schools, results in reading and writing were average whilst those in mathematics were above average. The results of national tests are adversely affected from time to time by the high level of pupils entering and leaving the school during the year. This is unavoidable when providing for service families. The school does very well to maintain a steady improvement in the standards it achieves.

The provisional test results for 2001 show a considerable improvement over those of the previous year in both reading and mathematics, and particularly in writing. The school has considerably exceeded the challenging targets it set for itself and this illustrates the effectiveness of the school's monitoring and assessment systems, which highlighted appropriate areas for development. Inspection evidence confirms that, by the age of seven, pupils achieve standards, which are very good in relation to their attainment when they first enter the school. Pupils achieve standards above average in English, mathematics, science, music and physical education. Standards are well above average in art and design, which is vibrant, exciting and highly original. In geography, history, design and technology, and information and communication technology, standards are in line with what is expected, although all contain particular strengths and show a significant improvement since the last inspection. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. By the time children leave Reception, most have achieved the Early Learning Goals<sup>2</sup> and many have exceeded them in mathematics and physical development.

Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because their needs are identified early during their time in Reception and are provided with highly individual education plans which are regularly reviewed. When appropriate, outside agencies are consulted at an early stage to help ensure that pupils make the best possible progress. There are no pupils who are currently at an early stage of learning English. Gifted and talented pupils make very good progress and are challenged appropriately, not only in class, but also through a special rolling programme of lessons taken by different teachers, which are designed to stretch and challenge them in a range of areas.

<sup>1</sup> 'Similar schools' are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

<sup>2</sup> The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year in primary school.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show a zest for learning and respond eagerly and enthusiastically during lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. The behaviour of the great majority is very good. However, on a very few occasions, when class management is not firm enough and pupils fail to understand its importance, the behaviour of a small minority is unacceptable.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is very good as are the relationships they have with each other and all the adults in the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. It is affected by holidays taken by military families between postings, which is unavoidable. Punctuality is generally good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very 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.*

During the inspection 41 lessons were observed. Of these, 47 per cent were very good or better, including 20 per cent that were excellent. Forty-one per cent were good, 10 per cent were satisfactory, and two per cent were unsatisfactory. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. Teachers are confident, have very good subject knowledge and present this in a way that stimulates and excites the pupils. They challenge their pupils by providing interesting and original tasks, at an appropriate level, to match the abilities of all the pupils. They encourage pupils to research independently in order to increase their knowledge and, from the start, teachers show respect for pupils' opinions and ideas and listen carefully to what they have to say. Pupils learn very effectively because they are truly interested, are trusted to work sensibly, collaborate efficiently and listen to each other. They take a pride in their work, at whatever level they are achieving, and their teachers celebrate with them. Pupils are valued for themselves, which raises their self-esteem. English and mathematics are taught very well and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are consolidated very effectively across the whole curriculum. Teaching is matched very well to the needs of pupils of all abilities and the lessons planned are exciting and challenging to all pupils. Unsatisfactory teaching occurred when the management of pupils' behaviour was not firm enough and prevented them from learning effectively. There is very good teaching in the Foundation Stage<sup>3</sup>, that prepares children very well for their future learning. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and the support they receive contributes significantly to the good progress they make in all aspects of their learning.

<sup>3</sup> The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school's curriculum comprehensively embraces all subject areas as well as elements such as thinking skills and citizenship.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils are identified at an early stage and appropriate individual education action plans drawn up. These are reviewed on a regular basis. Outside agencies are consulted as appropriate.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for the development of pupils' spiritual, social and moral development are very good, that for their cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school has very good procedures for monitoring the academic and personal development of its pupils and cares for them very effectively.

The school has built up and maintained very strong links with parents. It provides good quality information about curriculum matters and school events. However, pupils' annual reports are too general and contain insufficient information about the progress of each pupil.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding and provides clear direction for the school. The support provided by the deputy headteacher and senior management team is very good. They share the head's vision for the school and all are committed to achieving it.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a good understanding of their role. They are actively involved in the school and support its development. They are beginning to question sensibly what it does and are aware of its strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its results, teaching and curriculum very effectively and takes action to improve. It consults widely on its further development. The written development plans outline current priorities well as well as communicating the long-term vision.
The strategic use of resources	Very good overall. Funds are directed to priority areas and their use is controlled and monitored very well.

Staff are dedicated and very well deployed. There is a good range of learning resources, which are used well across the curriculum. The accommodation is used imaginatively and to great benefit of the pupils. The management of the school is effective in seeking to ensure best value in its spending decisions by questioning what it does and ensuring that funds are spent wisely.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children make very good progress because the teaching is inspiring.</li> <li>• The behaviour is good even though rules are not displayed around the school.</li> <li>• All children are cared for, respected and valued for themselves. No one group is more important than another.</li> <li>• The parents recognise the tremendous dedication of the headteacher and staff.</li> <li>• Children's needs are met 'beyond all expectations'.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significant number of parents, who responded to the questionnaire, thought that the school did not provide enough extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The parents are extremely positive about nearly all aspects of school life. The inspection team shares these views. The school does not currently provide any activities outside of lessons but does undertake a wide range of visits and supporting activities, such as recorder groups, that operate during the school day. The school has provided after-school clubs in the past and the response has been too small to make them viable. The staff spend a good deal of time out of school hours in planning the school's rich and varied curriculum and the inspection team thinks that this may well be compromised if time is spent on after school clubs. On balance, the team feels that it is more important to maintain the highly individual and exciting nature and quality of the day-to-day curriculum.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The assessments made when children enter Reception show that the general level of attainment on entry is below average, particularly in their personal, social and emotional skills, and in their skills for communication, language and literacy. In their mathematics and physical development, the children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1. They learn to co-operate well, wait their turn and work independently. Most know numbers to ten and can count and match and sequence numbers competently. Some work confidently with larger numbers and all display a lively interest in mathematics. In their physical development they show co-ordination and control. The children are on course to meet the expected standards of the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy. They listen carefully to teachers and each other, and use the new language they are learning when discussing their work and engaging in role-play. They enjoy listening to stories and rhymes and are gaining in confidence and maturity in reading and writing. Standards are also as expected in their personal and social development, their knowledge and understanding of the world, and their creative development.
2. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds, in 2000, pupils' results in reading and writing were above the national average, whilst those in mathematics were well above average. There has been a steady gain in the results in reading, writing and mathematics, since 1995, with the improvement being in excess of the trends shown nationally. Results in the teachers' assessments in science were shown to be well above average. When compared to similar schools, pupils' results in reading and writing were average whilst those in mathematics were above average.
3. Test results are affected by the number of pupils with special educational needs and in the group taking the tests last year there were a considerable number of pupils with specific learning difficulties. However, the inspection team was able to analyse data from the previous year and establish that the results achieved by pupils with special needs were in excess of what might have been expected given their prior attainment. Because of its close proximity to a military establishment, a comparatively high number of pupils leave and join the school other than at the normal times. For example, in the last school year, 27 left the school and 15 joined. This makes overall comparison between pupils' attainment on entry to Reception and measured against their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 a little unreliable. However, through examining all the considerable and comprehensive data kept by the school on pupils' achievements as they move through the school, the inspection team was able to establish that pupils make very good progress, overall, in relation to their initial assessment when starting in Reception, or when joining later.
4. In the National Curriculum tests carried out in the summer term 2001, it is evident that the school has considerably exceeded the challenging targets it set for itself, and provisional results show that pupils have attained standards that, again, show a significant improvement over previous years.
5. The test results and the school's own observations show that girls and boys achieve equally well. Higher-attaining pupils benefit from challenging group sessions, which are taught by a number of teachers on a rolling programme basis. The teachers provide activities, which stretch and challenge these pupils' abilities still further, whilst making learning exciting and fun. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. They are identified very early on in the reception class. Individual education plans are devised for them, which are regularly reviewed and revised in order that pupils learn effectively from an early stage, through a series of well

planned activities closely matched to individual needs. There are currently no pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.

6. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' attainment in English is above average by the age of seven. This shows an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. The school has successfully targeted writing for improvement over the last year by providing opportunities for writing for a range of purposes, across all subject areas, in order to raise standards. Reading has improved considerably and pupils read with enjoyment, are fluent, and enjoy discussing a range of books both fiction and non-fiction. Standards in speaking and listening are well above those expected. This is because pupils are expected to listen carefully to each other and adults from the time they enter the school. They are encouraged to use the correct terminology from the start in all subjects, and are taught to debate topics of interest, both personal and national, from an early stage.
7. In mathematics pupils' attainment is above average by the age of seven, with considerable strengths in all areas. This is because pupils learn basic facts and skills from the start and are taught how these can be applied to solve problems. The inter-relationship of all mathematical areas is appropriately stressed. This, again, shows an overall improvement since the last inspection. The good practice observed then, with the emphasis on investigative work and the development of pupils' ability to use and apply what they have learned, continues. Provisional test results for this summer confirm the inspection findings and show that all pupils attained the level expected and a high percentage of pupils achieved well above average results in mathematics.
8. Pupils' attainment in science is above average by the age of seven. There is a particularly strong emphasis on scientific enquiry and observation; and pupils are encouraged to research independently using CD-ROMs and relevant reference books. The curriculum is slightly unbalanced and weighted towards the area of study on life and living processes, although all areas are covered well and both recorded and practical work in all areas is of a high standard.
9. Pupil's attainment in information and communications technology meets expectations by the age of seven, and the standards achieved at the last inspection have been maintained. The expertise of the staff has improved considerably, which enables them to teach the subject more confidently and allows the pupils to use the equipment independently and responsibly.
10. Pupils' attainment in art and design is well above average and their work is of a high standard, vibrant and exciting. They experiment with a wide range of materials as well as having opportunities to examine the work of other artists. In music and physical education, standards are above those expected, whilst pupils attain standards in design and technology, geography and history that are appropriate to their age. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
11. Taking all factors into account, pupils' current overall achievement is very good in relation to their attainment when they started school. Pupils make very good progress as they move through the school with sustained high quality teaching being maintained in all year groups, which enables pupils to learn very effectively.

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

12. Pupils' attitudes to learning, their personal development and their relationships are very good. Pupil's behaviour is good. The school has further developed the situation found at the time of the previous inspection when behaviour was said to be good, with positive attitudes to learning displayed. The school achieves its aim to encourage all pupils to behave in a disciplined manner and show respect for their school and all members of the community.
13. Children in Reception and the pupils elsewhere in the school are polite, friendly and well behaved. They are confident and relate easily to adults. They are keen to come to school and

show a high level of interest in whatever they are doing. They apply themselves well in the classroom and they sustain their concentration. These features promote pupils' learning. Inspectors confirm the view of almost all parents that the school helps their children become mature and responsible individuals.

14. Children in the reception classes settle quickly into school routines and build up very good relationships with adults and with each other. They behave very well and are co-operative with each other, amicably sharing resources and taking turns. They are stimulated by the activities that are offered to them and, as a result, are keen and eager to learn. They are attentive and are beginning to follow instructions well.
15. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils have very good attitudes to learning and are well motivated. In lessons they listen politely and attentively to the teacher and to each other and they try to do their best at all times. Stimulating teaching inspires the pupils and they find their lessons exciting. The pupils are courteous and helpful to each other, to staff and to visitors. They respond appropriately to instructions from teachers and settle quickly to work. They work well together and individually and show an interest in their work. Almost all are keen to participate in question and answer sessions and do so in a sensible and mature way. They readily take turns and show a willingness to apply themselves to whatever task is presented to them. They are keen to collect rewards for good behaviour and good work. The attitudes displayed by the very large majority of pupils create positive opportunities for learning to take place even when, very occasionally, teaching is not fully effective.
16. Inspection evidence supports the views of parents that behaviour is good. Nearly all members of the school community understand the importance of good behaviour and its contribution to learning. When, however, pupils' understanding was insufficient it led to a little inappropriate behaviour because classroom management was not firm enough for pupils to make sufficient progress. No formal exclusions of any sort have been necessary during the past year. Outside the classroom, in the playground, when moving to the hall for assembly or physical education, and when having lunch, behaviour is rarely less than good and is frequently very good. All pupils behave well during break times and they work and play well together at all times. There are harmonious relationships within the school. The ethos of good behaviour within the school encourages learning to take place.
17. Relationships are very good, both among pupils and between pupils and adults and there is very good provision for the pupils' personal development. The pupils mature as they move through their school life, developing their social skills and learning to become responsible members of society. The pupils are given frequent opportunities to assume responsibility, which steadily increases, as they grow older. Classroom and school responsibilities are undertaken conscientiously and with enthusiasm. The pupils respect the values and beliefs of others, and this is apparent in the way they relate to each other both in lessons and elsewhere. Older pupils readily take responsibility for those younger or less able than themselves or those needing help and support. Pupils are frequently expected to work in small groups and they show that they get on well together at such times, for example, when taking part in role-play, or playing together outside.
18. Overall, the levels of attendance are satisfactory, being broadly in line with the national average. The figures are affected by the particular holiday needs of service families over which the school has no control. Unauthorised absence, which is the result of a small number of parents having a relaxed attitude to the importance of school attendance and to the need to respond to the school's procedures, is very low. Punctuality in the morning is generally good. When instances of lateness occur they are of a minor nature and are not disruptive to lessons. Timekeeping throughout the day is good

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

19. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. During the inspection 41 lessons were observed. Of these, 47 per cent were very good or better and 20 per cent of these were excellent, 41 per cent were good, 10 per cent were satisfactory, and two per cent were unsatisfactory. Excellent and very good teaching occurred in all year groups. The only example of unsatisfactory teaching occurred when classroom management was not firm enough and the pupils made insufficient progress. The overall quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection, when nearly one in four lessons was judged to be less than satisfactory.
20. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is of a consistently high quality and very good overall. In the lessons observed, the teaching ranged from good to excellent. Teachers provide the children with high-quality learning experiences, and have high expectations for children's learning. The successful planning ensures balanced development in each of the six areas of learning, with effective and interesting links between subjects. Teachers take account of children's ability in their planning so that work matches their needs. Activities are well structured, appropriate and ensure the consolidation and development of children's skills. Teachers ensure that they provide challenging tasks in a stimulating environment. Lessons include a rich variety of tasks. Some tasks develop independence and others need adult support. Teachers make very effective use of support staff, who are well prepared and who provide unobtrusive and useful help.
21. Pupils with special educational needs are taught very well. Well-qualified and experienced support staff, who are managed very effectively by the special needs co-ordinator, provide specialised support which meets the particular needs of individual pupils, or small groups. Work is planned well, based on careful assessment of pupils' achievements and matched appropriately to pupils' individual education plans and the demands of the curriculum. This enables pupils to learn very effectively and make good gains in their learning. Higher-attaining and gifted pupils receive teaching, which meets their particular needs, covering a range of subjects and provided by all staff on a rolling programme basis. Tasks are designed to be challenging, but fun, and extend the pupils thinking. This was particularly evident during a session when a higher-attaining group was discussing the purpose of the imminent general election. Through skilful questioning the teacher ensured that they understood the basic principles, and then encouraged them to discuss between themselves providing just enough focused guidance to encourage good articulation and careful reasoning. Pupils showed a good general knowledge about current affairs and could speak and present their ideas maturely and confidently.
22. The great majority of teaching is highly motivating, exciting and imbues the pupils with a real zest for learning. The teachers convince the pupils that it is fun to learn because the approach is lively, vivacious and highly convincing. This was particularly evident during a Year 2 science lesson. Firm discipline, mixed with considerable humour, created a relaxed and enjoyable working atmosphere. Through skilful questioning, which involved all pupils initially, pupils were keen to show what they already knew about the workings of the eye, were fascinated by the teacher's well-made simple model, and enjoyed the challenge of trying to find out more. They responded well to the demands of carrying out research, independently, using an appropriate CD-ROM in order to find out as many facts as they could.
23. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum is very good. This is due in part to the school's policy of moving teachers and support staff between year groups, on a regular basis, every one or two years. This ensures that all staff have a detailed knowledge of what is covered in all subjects in each year and have a very good understanding of the abilities and achievements of pupils at every stage of their development. Because teachers can consistently display high levels of competence, it enables pupils to acquire skills and knowledge and skills at a rapid rate. For example, in a numeracy lesson pupils estimated and measured the lengths of straws. Through skilful questioning they were able to explain how to calculate the difference in length, and worked out which straws put together would make a given length. These skilful questions encouraged the pupils to make use of previous knowledge, enabled them to organise and chart their results successfully and ensured accuracy in the pupils' responses. The pupils responded eagerly and clearly found the lesson fun as well as challenging. Throughout the lesson the

teacher and pupils use the correct mathematical terminology, such as *data*, *chart*, *table* and *multiple*.

24. The teaching of the basic skills of numeracy and literacy is very good. Correct terminology is used throughout. Literacy and numeracy are reinforced effectively through their use in other subjects, For example, pupils write a diary in history, based on that of Samuel Pepys, and they measure accurately in science and record the results in a range of graphs.
25. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' achievements. Teaching methods are effective and highly appropriate and involve a range of different strategies. Wherever possible first-hand experience is provided. For example, in Year 1, when pupils were making maps, the teacher decided to take them out to the wild life area so that they could identify where specific features were placed and could reproduce them accurately. Teachers challenge and probe the extent of pupils' knowledge continuously. They encourage them to think for themselves and expect them to research independently when they are not sure about a piece of information. Pupils are directed carefully to where the appropriate information they require may be found, and all the displays around the school have a wide range of books to enable them to do this. However, pupils' learning is more successful because teachers always check to establish whether the pupil's quest for information has been successful, and if there is a problem they will give further guidance.
26. Time is used very well and not a minute is wasted. The good use of time, resulting in a brisk pace to pupils' learning, was a strong feature in nearly all lessons. Even during the time spent tidying away, pupils sing their tables, count in twos, or recite their spellings. Leaving the classroom often means having to complete some small reinforcing task from the lesson that has just finished, for example, by asking pupils to provide a synonym for a given word. The pupils are so attuned to this that it takes them only a little more time than it would to leave straightaway.
27. Class management is good overall. There is a generally a very good balance of firmness and praise. However, because pupils are encouraged to be so involved in their own learning there is a requirement for a high degree of understanding of the need for self-discipline. This is taught well from an early stage and managed very sensitively by teachers. For teachers new to the school or profession, before they are totally confident with exercising this regime, it can pose some difficulty and when this finely balanced discipline falters it can result in pupils making insufficient progress during the lesson.
28. The quality of day-to-day assessment is high. Teachers constantly assess pupils' learning during lessons, as do classroom assistants with their own groups. Feedback from assistants is immediate and feeds into the planning for subsequent lessons. Marking is used effectively and ensures that pupils understand how successful they have been. Whole-class sessions at the end of each lesson give the teacher a very good overview of pupils' understanding of what has been learned.
29. Homework is set on a regular basis. Pupils know what is set and it is consistently used between all classes. It supports class work well and involves parents effectively in their children's learning.
30. The high quality of teaching is evident in all subjects. The timetable is planned and managed so effectively that all areas are well linked, which ensures detailed coverage of all subjects. Planning is performed on a daily basis to ensure that on-going assessments can be taken into account when carrying out future planning. Areas of uncertainty in pupils' knowledge and understanding are revisited, and tasks are planned carefully to provide for the individual needs of all pupils.

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

31. The overall quality of the curriculum is one of the school's many strengths. This is a considerable improvement on the sound quality of education provided during the previous inspection. All the shortcomings identified in the last report have been significantly improved.
32. The pupils are offered a very good, broad and balanced curriculum, which is imaginatively planned. It successfully, and very skilfully, integrates all subjects. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. It is broad and balanced and matched to the six areas of learning appropriate to the age group. It ensures a rich and varied curriculum that promotes learning, and makes good provision for children to make positive progress in all areas of their development. Careful planning ensures a smooth transition for children in the Foundation Stage to the requirements of the National Curriculum.
33. In Years 1 and 2, the curriculum builds very effectively on the stimulating and exciting provision for children in the Foundation Stage and prepares pupils very well for their learning in the junior school. Statutory requirements are met and interpreted in stimulating ways, providing for high achievement, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Considerable development and refinement of the curriculum provision has taken place since the last inspection. For instance, there are now very clear and highly innovative plans, policies and schemes of work for all subjects, which ensure very good learning opportunities. There is a slight imbalance in the science planning, as pupils learn a great deal about life processes and living things, but not so much about materials and physical processes. Overall, the very good planning ensures a rich and dynamic curriculum, which coupled with very good teaching, results in all pupils make very good progress. Parents at the pre-inspection parents' meeting appreciated the broad curriculum and were impressed by the way in which the school taught all subjects, and had not just focused on literacy, numeracy and science.
34. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy very well. It has carefully considered and successfully devised the best ways to teach the Literacy Hour. This has had a considerable impact on raising English standards, particularly in writing, to increasingly higher levels and improving the quality of learning. Teachers are also extremely adept at using pupils' learning from the Literacy Hour in other subjects, such as history and geography.
35. Provision for equality of opportunity and access for all pupils is very good. The seven pupils, who speak English as an additional language, are provided for very well by a whole-school focus on the development of spoken English, through questioning and discussion. Although these pupils are not at an early stage of learning English, expert additional help is provided if there are any pupils who are at an early stage in learning the language. Boys and girls are sensitively encouraged to develop confidence in their abilities. There is no difference in attainment levels between boys and girls and this is unusual, as girls nationally outperform boys, especially in English tests.
36. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the school meets the needs of these pupils very successfully. They are identified soon after entry and a good-quality programme is put in place for those pupils in need of extra help, after which individual education plans are established for them. Support staff work very closely with teachers and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
37. Gifted and talented pupils are catered for very well. The school has a register of 'higher attainers' and these pupils receive additional lessons in literacy and numeracy, which accelerates their progress and ensures that they reach their full potential. Pupils who are gifted and talented are identified and receive very good additional support, for example in singing and gymnastics. The school currently has 30 pupils whose parents are in the Armed Forces. This number varies considerably from year to year. The headteacher and staff are very aware of the potential impact of this mobility on pupils' learning. The school has many appropriate strategies in place to try to compensate for this transience and minimise the disruption.



38. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted very effectively, through numerous opportunities for pupils to take significant responsibilities and initiative, from an early age. All pupils undertake responsibilities in classes, such as taking registers to the office and tidying up. In addition, pupils in Year 2 have a special list of responsibilities to carry out around the school. They take these very seriously, for example, they enjoy watering the plants and helping teachers. All teachers provide very good chances for pupils to take responsibilities for their own learning and to use their initiative. For instance, in Year 2, pupils showed considerable maturity and independence when re-enacting the events of the Great Fire of London, during a history lesson. They organised themselves very efficiently, with sensible negotiation and discussion about characters and dialogue. 'Circle time'<sup>4</sup> takes place in all classes, when pupils confidently and maturely discuss how to deal with emotions and the reasons why there are rules. Health education, healthy eating and drug education is included in the science curriculum and pupils have a good understanding of these issues. Governors have a statement regarding their policy on sex education. The community policeman runs the 'Getting it Right' scheme in school, which further extends and enriches the school's very good personal and social provision.
39. Although some parents think otherwise, the school's provision of extra-curricular activities, though limited, is satisfactory. School staff are very sensitive to the educational needs of the pupils in their charge. As a result, they are heavily committed to assessing the results of the day's teaching and preparing for the following day's work. Without the support of parents their time for extra-curricular activities is limited. The school does provide opportunities to learn the recorder and actively supports a local after-school club.
40. The school has very good links with the local community and with partner institutions. The school welcomes visitors, including the community policeman, representatives of the local clergy, fire fighters and librarians. These links make a good contribution to the pupils' personal development, as well as to their overall learning. They extend the pupils' knowledge and appreciation of activities outside school and support the curricular opportunities it provides. There are links with some local businesses that contribute very positively to the effectiveness of the school's provision for its pupils. Particularly close links exist with the Army who has supported the school in a number of ways, not least by providing a variety of play equipment in the school grounds. Links with pre-school groups and with local junior schools ensure that children entering school and the pupils leaving it, can move onto the next phase of their education successfully and happily.
41. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. A range of relevant and explicit policies ensures that this aspect of pupils' development is securely embedded in the daily life of the school.
42. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. It is implicit in lessons, registration periods and interwoven well into assembly themes and stories. Pupils' sense of wonder and curiosity is continually and carefully fostered. For example, younger children are curious and excited when examining photographs from a memory box or when exploring pond areas. The feelings of joy and pleasure in singing and working together are captured in pupils' regular sing-a-long time, and this provides an uplifting experience for all. Regular and thoughtful assemblies further enhance the provision for pupils' spiritual development. The music and themes for assemblies are thought through carefully, and linked together, or to the curriculum, effectively. Assemblies are a special time, providing good opportunities for pupils to learn and reflect on their own and others' experiences. They frequently allow opportunities for pupils to consider their own thoughts for prayers and to share these with others. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to explore values and beliefs, for example through discussion on what is happening in the world around them or through their religious education and assemblies.

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<sup>4</sup> Circle time is an activity where pupils are able to discuss certain matters as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

43. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, and carefully underpinned by the school's ethos and teaching. Frequently, assemblies carry a strong moral and social message. Personal and social education lessons provide good explicit teaching in social behaviour within a group and the wider community. It also allows for the consideration of wider issues such as caring for the environment. Opportunities for discussion and debate for higher attaining pupils allow them to consider how they would make improvements in the world around them. All staff, including teachers and helpers, consistently provide good role models in promoting harmonious relationships and a caring atmosphere. School routines foster a calm and receptive atmosphere. No rules are to be seen around the school, as self-discipline and care for others is effectively seen to be an essential part of on-going development. Pupils are challenged to consider the effect of their actions on others, and so develop a good understanding of the principles of right and wrong.
44. From an early age, pupils are helped to develop a sense of responsibility and initiative. Each day pupils in Year 2 have specific responsibilities and they sensibly ensure that these duties are carried out. Lessons provide opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and groups, and there are very good opportunities for them to undertake independent learning. They are encouraged to consider and support each other when applying themselves to their tasks in the classroom. Pupils' social skills and interaction are fostered through regular visits and visitors. Wider social and moral issues are addressed through the school's support of charities. The charities supported are frequently those that are meaningful to pupils and within their experience, so that they fully understand the need to help others.
45. The provision for pupils' cultural education is good. Their knowledge of their own culture and western culture is strongly developed through aspects of the curriculum such as art, music and literacy. Visiting groups, such as theatre companies, add a further dimension, and a range of visits to places of local interest contributes positively to their knowledge. The languages and cultures of all pupils in the school are valued and celebrated. Pupils are made aware of the important festivals and celebrations of others, and their understanding is further enhanced by what they learn in religious education, in assemblies and other areas of the curriculum.

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

46. The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils is very good. It is a very caring school that looks after its pupils very well. Many of the positive features found at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained and others have been developed even further. The weakness that was reported in respect of unhygienic food technology arrangements has been effectively remedied. The very effective support provided by the school enhances the quality of education it provides. The school aims to offer a happy and secure setting, where each pupil feels valued and, in this, it is successful. Led by the very caring headteacher, who puts the interests of the pupils before everything else, all members of the school community work together to provide surroundings in which the pupils feel well cared for and secure. There is an emphasis on the whole child, with all pupils' needs being recognised so that they are given support appropriate to them. This positive emphasis on care and support allows all pupils, whatever their personal situation, to grow and develop to the best of their ability. All staff have a good knowledge of the pupils as individuals and this enables them to respond sensitively to their specific needs. The pupils are happy at school. They turn to adults when they need help or advice confidently, secure in the knowledge that their needs will be met sympathetically.
47. The school's procedures for dealing with accidents are sound. First-aid and fire safety arrangements are good. There is very caring support for pupils who feel unwell. Pupils who suffer minor accidents are dealt with sensitively, such as when the clerical assistant attended to a pupil's grazed knee. Not only was first aid efficiently applied but also the pupil was comforted so

effectively that he went back out to play happily, displaying the plaster as a badge of courage. Lunchtime supervisors are organised well. They are very caring providing good support to the pupils. Overall, the school provides a safe and supportive environment in classrooms and public areas that facilitates learning. No health and safety hazards were observed during the inspection and there is no recent recorded evidence of any particular problems.

48. The school's procedures for child protection are very good and meet statutory requirements. The designated member of staff has received relevant training and is suitably experienced to properly undertake her responsibilities. Class teachers and support staff, who receive regular training, are attentive and conscientious in their approach to the proper support of the pupils in their charge.
49. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The inconsistency in approach to registration, found at the time of the previous inspection, no longer exists. Records for attendance are properly maintained and comply with statutory requirements. Procedures for recording unauthorised absence are rigorous.
50. The teachers have very effective strategies for classroom management that ensure that the majority of pupils understand and respect the importance of behaving properly. It is a school policy to allow the pupils a degree of freedom in being responsible for their actions and this generally works well. However, at times a very small number of the pupils forget their responsibility and some teachers are not always immediately aware of the disruption this causes. The result is that, very occasionally, the behaviour of a very few disrupts the majority and prevents sufficient progress being made. Overall, however, teachers have a very good awareness of the pupils' individual circumstances, some with recognised behavioural problems, and their behaviour management strategies are sensitive to these. Rewards and sanctions are fair and are well understood and accepted by pupils. The effective implementation of the school's procedures allow the pupils to take advantage of the opportunities for learning presented to them in an environment in which there is a complete absence of oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism.
51. The school's formal arrangements for the monitoring and support of pupils' personal development are very good. A variety of ways of recording non-academic development are used. These include references in the pupils' annual reports, comments in the 'good work' book, photographic recording of presentations and special events, individual portfolios maintained by teachers, and class books that celebrate individual successes. These formal records are complemented by informal arrangements, which benefit from teachers' knowledge of pupils as individuals. There is regular discussion amongst staff about the personal needs of individual pupils that is very helpful in ensuring that these are met.
52. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are excellent. Since the previous inspection, considerable work has been undertaken to develop effective means of assessing pupils' attainment and progress, which is now one of the school's many strengths. All the staff know the pupils well and have very precise information to tell them what the pupils have done well or where they need help. As a consequence, support is directed effectively to the pupils who need it most.
53. The assessment co-ordinator has devised a very useful entry record form, which is completed by the feeder the pre-school groups and nurseries attended by the children prior to starting school. This ensures that the information received by the school is useful and relevant and is presented in the same way. The school's initial assessment of children provides a very accurate picture of their attainment when they start school and this is used to group children for different aspects of the curriculum, according to their ability. Teachers are then able to match teaching and learning to pupils' needs. There are excellent procedures for assessing children in the reception classes. They are assessed carefully through daily observations and regular formal assessments through the year. The school has initiated a good system, whereby information from playgroups attended

by the children can be scrutinised as they enter the school, together with the results of the initial assessment. During their time in Reception, the children are assessed regularly on their achievement in reading, writing and mathematics and other areas of their development. Clear records are kept. All these ensure that teachers have a good overall picture of each child's progress and are able to plan work to match children's needs appropriately. These records are used efficiently to direct curriculum planning, to guide children, and to ensure their positive progress.

54. Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2, have individual assessment booklets, which clearly indicate what they can do in all subjects. This detailed assessment is impressive. It gives all staff very accurate information on all pupils' attainment levels and enables work to be planned to meet the needs of all pupils. In addition, there are portfolios of pupils' work in English, mathematics and science. These provide very useful guidance for all staff, and for newly qualified teachers in particular, on how to assess pupils' work.
55. The school monitors assessment results very carefully and analyses them rigorously, so that they can predict the likely National Curriculum test results for future years. Indeed, because the assessment procedures are excellent, they can be used, very successfully, to target pupils who require additional support to increase their potential test scores. For instance, in the most recent writing tests, this summer, the margin of improvement was increased dramatically due to accurate assessment and intervention.
56. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are excellent. The school has straightforward systems, which enable staff to monitor the progress of different year groups, boys and girls, and different ability groups, so that no pupil's needs are overlooked when planning future work.
57. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is monitored on a regular basis. Although the requirement is for only a yearly revision, the school frequently monitors on a half termly basis and amends targets and the requirements of the individual education plans as and when required. Pupils are tested at appropriate intervals to establish both the extent of help needed and the amount of progress made. The stages at which pupils are entered on the Register of Special Educational Need are regularly reviewed. A good number of pupils are removed, or moved down the register, as a result of making very good progress due to the well-matched support they receive.

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

58. The school has highly effective links with parents. It has further developed the very positive situation found at the time of the previous inspection.
59. From the time their children join the school in the reception class, parents are welcomed and encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. Teachers meet with parents before the children start school and, when children enter the school, parents are invited to share the early morning activities with them. They are informed of topics termly, and are kept well informed regarding the nature of homework and home reading.
60. Parents responding to the pre-inspection parents' questionnaire have very positive views about almost all aspects of the school's provision for their children. The only area of concern, indicated by a significant, though still small number of parents, was the school's provision for activities outside lessons. Other than this, parents expressed no significant negative views either at the pre-inspection meeting with parents, either when responding to the parents' questionnaire, or when meeting inspectors during the inspection. Parents see the strengths of the school as promoting good progress and behaviour, an appropriate amount of homework, and good teaching with high expectations. The school is thought to work closely with parents, who are comfortable

when approaching the school with questions or problems. Parents feel that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible and that it is well led and managed. Inspection evidence supports these views. Inspection evidence does not support the concern about a lack of extra-curricular activities. These are judged to be appropriate, given the size of the school and the age of the pupils in its care.

61. The school has very good links with parents and these enrich pupils' learning experiences considerably. Home-school links are supported by a home-school agreement that recognises the important contribution made by parents. Parents and other helpers are warmly welcomed into school and are encouraged to participate in its work. They help with classroom activities, computer work, the library, hearing readers and with cookery. The involvement of parents, and pupils, in social and fund raising activities organised by the 'Friends' of the school is very good.
62. The quality of information provided formally by the school is very good. Newsletters, other documentation, and information evenings, keep parents very well informed about school activities. The school's prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are well produced and provide parents with much useful information in a clearly presented way. They meet statutory requirements, although some details about the school's financial position and on the professional development of teachers are brief. Parents are informed of their child's progress and development on a regular basis, through consultation evenings, and annually through a written report. The pupils' annual reports have some deficiencies, though they are satisfactory overall. There is a satisfactory review of what has been done but too little comment about the progress made by the individual pupil in each subject. A good feature of the reports is the section reviewing personal and social development that provides information on pupils' non-academic progress. However, the reports also contain targets for improvement that bear little resemblance to weaknesses identified in the body of the report.
63. In addition to the formal arrangements for parents to discuss their child's attainment and progress, there are regular opportunities for informal discussion with staff. The headteacher is very anxious to ensure that parents are comfortable with what the school is doing and she makes herself available at any time to meet with parents. Teachers are happy to meet with parents informally, before or after school, or by appointment to ensure availability due to teaching commitments. As a result of the very good partnership established with parents when their children begin school, pupils settle quickly and happily into school life.
64. The school supports parents of pupils with special needs very well. The co-ordinator meets with them regularly and helps explain the relevant forms and how they should be completed when required. Parents receive good information from the school, are involved in their child's individual education action plan, and they play an active part in helping their children achieve their targets.

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

65. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She has managed the school's response to the last inspection purposefully, by adopting appropriate management strategies to ensure that all key issues have been successfully addressed. Academic standards have risen to the extent that they are now above what is expected by the time pupils leave the school. The areas identified then, as needing improvement, have been tackled systematically, and other priorities have been addressed. The headteacher has a clear vision for the further development of the school and has successfully blended the staff into a cohesive team so they have a shared commitment to raising the quality of education still further. All staff work very hard to achieve this. As a result, the school has made a very good improvement, overall, during the last six years. The school's commitment to and capacity for further improvement are also very good.

66. There is a very successful and comprehensive programme of monitoring. This includes examining teachers' planning, regular lesson observations, and the regular examination of pupils' written work. These activities have contributed to the on-going improvements in the curriculum, and quality of teaching and learning, as well as enabling the school to identify priorities for future development. Teachers receive quality feedback on their work and are able to develop their practice. The curriculum is now planned very well, and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced successfully. The headteacher has a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and uses monitoring effectively to target action plans for development. There is a shared desire for pupils to achieve high standards, but this does not compromise the broad curriculum and wide range of learning opportunities provided by the school, and the development of all pupils as individuals. A highly positive environment has been developed and maintained. This, combined with pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour, makes a significant contribution to their learning. The headteacher receives very good support from the deputy headteacher, who carries significant responsibilities for the management of the school. Since joining the staff nearly two years ago, she has been responsible for several useful initiatives, particularly with regard to assessment procedures and behaviour management.
67. All teachers with management responsibilities are involved in the monitoring programme, and their roles have been further developed and extended. The senior management team work closely together to ensure that very good communication exists between all staff, and procedures are followed consistently. They provide very good role models for less experienced teachers. Co-ordinators have a very good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their subject. They use monitoring activities well, to identify what needs to be improved, and draw up action plans for their subject with a view to raising standards. The professional development of staff is well supported by termly interviews. Performance management procedures have been implemented effectively, with agreed targets linked to both personal development and school priorities. There are very good systems in place for the induction of all new staff. Newly qualified teachers receive very good support and guidance from their mentors and have become effective members of the team. The whole staff exhibits a true commitment to their work and the school's aims and values. The aims provide the basis of learning for the whole school community and are generally very well reflected in all the work carried out.
68. The governing body is strongly supportive of the school, and fulfils all its statutory duties effectively. There are many new members since the last inspection and many governors are comparatively inexperienced. However, despite this they have become considerably more involved since the last inspection and now have a much better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They receive good information about the curriculum, through reports from the headteacher and presentations from teachers. They operate in effective committees that deal with issues relating to staffing, finance, curriculum and premises. There is a useful termly rota to cover governors' visits to the school and they are beginning to carry out this monitoring role well. As well as governors responsible for literacy, numeracy and special needs, other governors have a special interest in other subject areas, such as music or information and communication technology. They meet with the relevant co-ordinators to discuss standards and other developments. However, this arrangement is a little ad-hoc at present, as it does not yet cover all subjects. The governors analyse and discuss the results of tests, and use this information to make comparisons with other schools, and are becoming more involved in the setting of the school's targets for literacy and numeracy. Their role as a critical friend to the school is developing well and increasing further as more training is held and knowledge and understanding becomes greater. Governors are becoming more directly involved in school development planning, reviewing progress made towards targets, and helping to ensure that key priorities receive sufficient funding.
69. Whole school development planning is very good. The school's monitoring programme clearly identifies priority areas for development. Action plans are drawn up, taking into account staff

training needs, associated costs, and relevant success criteria. The senior management team reviews the progress made on targets through their cycle of monitoring, with progress reports given to the governing body at meetings. The plan incorporates appropriate development points for all subjects for the school year. The plan runs for the academic year, which is highly appropriate, and the implications for the school's budget are fully built in. The plan has a suitably long-term perspective, and takes appropriate account of priorities for the next few years.

70. The school's financial planning arrangements are well organised, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. There is very good liaison between governors, the headteacher and staff in formulating the budget. Governors take an active part in the budget management and the strategies behind it. They take decisions with confidence because of the objective information provided to them by the headteacher. The budget is properly considered and approved by the full governing body. The specific funds element of the school's finances is very well targeted. The funds are used effectively to raise the attainment of those pupils with special needs. There is very effective corporate decision making to ensure that the financial resources available to the school, which are above those for similar schools, are properly targeted to improving standards throughout the school. Governors, advised by the headteacher, have proper regard for the use of financial reserves. These are maintained in line with the school's contingency planning to ensure that, because of some uncertainty about roll numbers, its finances will be sufficient to ensure the continuation of relatively small class sizes, and the maintenance of staffing levels, as well as providing adequate resources. This is to ensure that all is done to maintain and improve standards still further.
71. The school's overall administration arrangements, and the day-to-day control of its finances are very good as is the use made by the school of new technology in support of its management systems. The recommendations of the school's most recent audit report have been effectively addressed and the school's administrative systems and procedures are implemented very well. The school secretary and the clerical assistant undertake their administrative and financial monitoring duties very conscientiously and well. They provide very good support to the school community, liaising well with the pupils, staff, parents and visitors.
72. The headteacher and governors are very aware of the need to obtain value for money in the use of the financial resources available to the school. They implement the four principles of compare, challenge, consult, and compete well. They have some very good procedures in place. There is a systematic analysis of assessment results and other statistical information and good procedures for seeking the views of parents and staff. The effective implementation of these procedures means that the school's spending is properly evaluated and targeted to ensure that the quality of education provided for the pupils is as high as possible.
73. As a result of the high priority given to staffing levels the school is provided for very well in terms of teaching and support staff. Teachers are suitably qualified to meet the needs of the curriculum. All teachers, except those who are newly qualified, have extra responsibilities in addition to their teaching commitment. There is a suitable range of teaching experience although many of the teachers are relatively new to the school. Support staff are well trained and work closely with class teachers. They make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
74. The accommodation is very good. Although the school is housed in an old building, internally it presents a welcoming and stimulating environment that considerably helps learning. There are lively, imaginative and informative displays, mostly of pupils' work, both in classrooms and common areas. These make the school an exciting place in which to be. The quality and range of accommodation is very good overall, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Classrooms have been sympathetically refurbished. They demonstrate what can be achieved even in an old school when there is sufficient will. The provision for pupils who may be disabled is satisfactory. The building is well maintained and kept clean and tidy. The reception classes provide a very high quality environment for children starting their school life. Elsewhere,

classrooms are of reasonable size, generally bright and airy, and provide very good facilities for effective teaching. There is some disturbance to other classes when music is played loudly in the hall. Public areas provide a stimulating environment with a wide variety of artefacts and wall displays.

75. There is sufficient playground space of good quality for the size of the school. The playground space has been very carefully developed, helped by volunteers from the Royal Engineers, and now presents pupils of all ages with a stimulating and attractive external learning environment. There is provision for pupils to sit and read, or to talk quietly amongst themselves. The well-maintained, though small, grassed areas, a small pond, nature areas, and a profusion of well stocked planters and other flowers, and mature trees and shrubs, enhance the outdoor facilities provided by the school. No opportunity is missed to make use of the external facilities to challenge pupils to think and stimulate their imagination.
76. Provision of learning resources is good overall. It has improved since the time of the previous inspection when there were weaknesses in resources for history and religious education. Only art resources were judged to be good whereas now they are good in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and art and design. Resources for children in the Foundation Stage are also good. There are satisfactory resources for all other subjects. There has been a considerable improvement in the provision of computers and further improvements are planned and there is an ample supply of CD-ROMs.

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

77. Farnborough South Infant School is a very good school. It is within this context that the key issues for action are defined. In order to raise standards still further, the headteacher, governors and staff should take steps to:
- θ Ensure that all pupils understand fully the requirement for acceptable behaviour in class, without disturbing the current excellent practice of encouraging pupils to think, learn and research independently. (*Paragraphs 16, 19, 27, 50, 109, 138*)
  - θ Improve the balance between the differing elements of the science curriculum. (*Paragraphs 8, 33, 110*)
  - θ Improve the quality of pupils' individual reports to include more information specific relating to their attainment and achievement in all subjects. (*Paragraph 62*)

*In addition to the issues noted above, the following less important items should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:*

- Extend the governors' responsibilities to include a link governor for all subjects, in order to ensure consistency. (*Paragraph 68*)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	41
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
20	27	41	10	2	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)		188
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		29

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	5.3	School data	0.1
National comparative data	5.2	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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	19	27	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	16
	Girls	24	26	25
	Total	40	42	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (88)	91 (94)	89 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	16	18
	Girls	25	25	27
	Total	41	41	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (88)	89 (88)	98 (94)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	196
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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.9
Average class size	23.5

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

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	152

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	364,973
Total expenditure	359,357
Expenditure per pupil	2,078
Balance brought forward from previous year	35,495
Balance carried forward to next year	41,111

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	188
Number of questionnaires returned	108
Percentage of questionnaires returned	57

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	22	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	65	34	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	34	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	44	5	3	1
The teaching is good.	80	18	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	42	10	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	21	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	32	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	41	5	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	80	19	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	25	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	25	19	8	18

**Other issues raised by parents**

Parents raised no other issues. However, many letters and additions to the form stated how pleased they were with all aspects of the school and the dedication of the headteacher and her staff.

## **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**

78. Three reception classes currently provide education for 68 children. All have had some type of pre-school learning experience before they begin school in the September prior to their fifth birthday. There is good liaison between the pre-school group and nurseries and the school, and the children make three planned visits during the summer term prior to entry. Children enter one of the three Reception classes in September and attend full-time. Children's attainment on entry is below average, particularly in personal, social and emotional skills, and in communication, language and literacy. They settle quickly into school and make good progress in all the areas of learning. Those who find aspects of learning more difficult are quickly identified and offered good programmes to support their learning and they too make good progress.
79. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 most children have attained all the Early Learning Goals and a significant number exceed those in mathematical and physical development. This is due to the good teaching they receive and the very good attitudes towards school that the children have. There has been an improvement since the time of the previous inspection when children made satisfactory progress through sound provision. The provision and teaching are now very good, as is the progress being made by the children.

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

80. Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. Many of them enter the school with underdeveloped skills in this area of their learning, so teachers ensure that they provide a climate in which children learn to relate to each other and adults. By the time the children move into Year 1, they meet the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development. The children are confident in whole class discussions and enjoy working on their own or in a group. When working together in a group, they communicate well, enjoy each other's responses and display very high levels of concentration. They persevere with their tasks, and demonstrate an impressive ability to become absorbed in their tasks when not under direct supervision of the teacher. They learn to consider the needs of others, and are polite and pleasant. Through the very good opportunities offered by teachers, they develop a sense of wonder and appreciation of what the world around them has to offer. They gasp at the wonders of plant and animal life. They show that they can take turns and share, and willingly observe the conventions of school routines. They show much personal independence and self-sufficiency in their ability to find and use equipment, to prepare themselves for their physical education lessons or when tidying up after a lesson. Children with special educational needs are carefully helped to integrate with the other children.
81. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is consistently very good. In all classes, teachers and support staff provide very good role models. Every opportunity is used to reinforce this aspect of children's learning, whether it is planned or spontaneous. When the children enter the school, teachers' planning ensures that there are appropriate activities and opportunities for the children to gain confidence and develop the necessary skills, and this planning is adapted to meet their needs as they progress through the year. It is also implicit in the daily life of the classes. Teachers have high expectations for the behaviour and attitudes and ensure that the children are aware of these expectations, at the same time providing a warm and caring atmosphere, where they can develop their self-esteem and confidence.

#### *Communication, language and literacy*

82. Children enter Reception with below average levels of linguistic development. They all make good progress, and develop skills effectively. Most children meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children with special educational needs make good progress due to the specific tasks and support planned for them. All children show much enjoyment when listening to stories and songs. They join in very well and their listening skills are good. They pay good attention to the teacher, responding to what they hear with relevant comments, and follow instructions carefully. Although some have difficulty in articulating their ideas, they are gaining in confidence with their speaking skills. Teachers challenge them to think for themselves, and they use the new language they meet to describe what they have learned and explain their work. For example, when a group of children were discussing their knowledge of jungle animals, they were able to describe, accurately, the main features of the animals they were painting. They use their new language to communicate during role-play. Their early writing skills are sound, and they show confidence in their approach to writing. Their handwriting is carefully formed and well presented. They make recognisable attempts to spell words, and the higher attaining children are developing good independent writing skills. They recognise key words from their reading books, and enjoy learning to recognise and read key words from their current topic and literacy. The new words children meet are carefully consolidated through activities, such as rearranging jumbled sentences.
83. Half of the lessons observed for language and literacy were excellent, and half were good, which means that teaching overall is providing very worthwhile opportunities and experiences for the children to develop the necessary skills in this area of learning. In the excellent lessons, teaching is exemplified by high expectations, a strong sense of purpose and constant challenge. All teachers show that they have a very good understanding of the needs of the children, and apply stimulating and exciting strategies to motivate and arouse their interest. Every opportunity is used to develop language and literacy skills. Very good use is made of continuous assessment so that each learning opportunity is matched well to each child's individual needs. Teachers establish a calm, working atmosphere, where time is best used to the children's advantage. The quality of support provided by learning support assistants is very good. They are well prepared and know the children well. Appropriate weekly homework tasks and home reading further support the children's learning.

### *Mathematical development*

84. The children's attainment in mathematics when they enter Reception is average. They make very good progress, so that, by the time they enter Year 1, a significant majority are exceeding the Early Learning Goals. Most count and match to ten competently, and some go further. When counting confidently in twos, they show that their understanding is very good. They know that if they count in twos they will not include the number eleven and some are beginning to recognise odd and even numbers. Some can count in tens to 100 and identify numbers on a number square. Through the lively strategies employed by teachers, they are able to order according to ordinal numbers, such as first, second or third. They make models of dinosaurs and count the number of legs. When making a 'dinosaur trail', using the wet sand as a 'swamp', they place numbers in the correct sequence. Their knowledge of mathematical vocabulary is very good.
85. The quality of teaching is consistently good, with one very good lesson seen. The mental mathematics sessions are stimulating and the teachers make very good use of a range of strategies and resources to stimulate the imagination, motivate the children and provide a very good grounding in basic numeracy skills. Group activities link well with what children are learning and help to reinforce concepts taught during whole class sessions. These tasks are planned to meet the needs of the children, showing positive use of on-going assessment. The quality of learning in all the classes is very good indeed. The children are keen to complete their activities and show great enthusiasm for their learning, while, at the same time, showing very good levels of concentration. Much of this is due to the high quality teaching they receive, the high

expectations of the teachers and the stimulating way in which they are taught. Mathematics is made to come alive through the good links with other subjects. Teachers are thorough in ensuring that all groups of abilities understand the concepts they are learning.

### *Knowledge and understanding of the world*

86. Most children enter the school with a limited knowledge of the world in which they live. They make good progress, so that by the time they enter Year 1, they attain standards, which meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. During their time in the Reception classes, the children have broadened their understanding of the world around them considerably. Their knowledge and understanding is fully developed through an interesting range of activities linked to a topic theme. The children demonstrate that they know what is needed to make plants grow. They carefully identify the parts of the plant and many can say what their function is. Through links with literacy, they are able to talk knowledgeably about animals in the jungle and identify their different features. They express their likes and dislikes of certain animals giving reasons for their choices. A gorilla is described as too big and fierce. They use this knowledge when creating their own jungles. The children's handling of practical equipment develops well. For example, during the inspection, a group of children were observed using play dough, card and scrap material to make three-dimensional animals. They explore the properties of sand and water, and link this to their topics. The exciting areas created for role-play help to reinforce children's awareness of different environments. Photographic evidence shows that they participate in a range of visits and activities, such as gardening, which continually help to widen their horizons
87. Vibrant and colourful displays show that teachers are providing rich opportunities to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world, alongside their skills in other areas of the curriculum. Each classroom is alive and exciting with the obvious benefit in arousing children's natural curiosity, so that they want to learn. In the one lesson seen in this area of learning, teaching was very good. The strategies used to motivate children's interest and help them to learn were of a high quality. One child was dressed in a 'plant costume', and all the relevant parts of the plant were added, so that their function could be understood. Skilful questioning and quiet guidance enhanced the children's learning.

### *Physical development*

88. Children enter Reception with average levels of physical development. By the time they leave, their attainment exceeds that expected for the Early Learning Goals. The children know they have to 'warm-up' before activity and understand that exercise helps to keep the body healthy. They show a very good awareness of space and body control. When using large apparatus they show that they have good co-ordination and can perform a range of movements confidently. They show good understanding of the nature of the tasks and challenges presented to them. They run, hop and skip and many of them perform forward rolls with dexterity. They know that they have to listen carefully to instructions, and, following these, they strive to improve their movements with control and determination. They show maturity in their approach, and their achievements are very good. Children with special educational needs are given good support to help them achieve positively. Within the classroom, the children manipulate and handle small tools well. Their more precise skills, for example, when using pencils or scissors are good. They use pencils correctly when they write, and demonstrate good control when using paint and malleable materials.
89. Teaching in this area is very good overall. Teachers have high expectations for both achievement and behaviour. This results in strong management, and ensures that lessons take place in a safe and secure atmosphere. Teachers provide explicit guidance, but provide very good learning opportunities so that the children can explore movement and creativity with imagination and control. Support staff and parent helpers are used effectively to work with

specific groups, and this contributes much to the children's progress. The very good work in the classroom ensures that children experience many opportunities to develop their finer physical skills, such as pencil control and cutting skills. An outdoor area and equipment makes a further contribution to the children's physical development, although this was not observed during the inspection.

### *Creative development*

90. The children develop sound skills and achieve the expected levels of attainment in their creative development by the time they enter Year 1.
91. When painting, children are confident and produce bold and colourful images. They capture the elements of the stories they hear in literacy or what they are learning in other areas of their development. They make simple card puppets by drawing their own animals and cutting them out. When making animals with play dough and other materials, they talk purposefully of what they are trying to achieve and why they have selected certain materials. They have an awareness of pattern, and create attractive designs. They use printing patterns and card to create imaginative animal cages. They are particularly creative when engaging in role-play, and co-operate together well in this, suggesting ideas and listening to the ideas of others. When singing, they join in with good pitch and timing, using actions confidently. This aspect is a particular strength in their creative development. Their singing during assemblies and with other pupils is very good.
92. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers ensure that the children are presented with a wide range of opportunities to explore paint, cutting and sticking and materials. All this is carefully linked to what is happening in other areas of the curriculum. A good feature is the development of role-play. When children enter the Reception classes, they need guidance on how to play positively so that their speaking skills and creativity can be necessarily developed. Teachers plan carefully for this and provide imaginative environments so that the children make good progress in this area. All activities are carefully planned so that the children know what is expected of them. Classroom support is used efficiently to provide direction and help.

## **ENGLISH**

93. Standards in English have improved considerably since the last inspection. The results of the 2000 tests, for seven-year-olds, indicated that standards in reading and writing were above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, standards were average for reading and writing. The teachers' assessments matched the test results and showed that pupils achieved well above average standards in speaking and listening. Test results have risen over the past four years, for both boys and girls. The provisional results of the recently taken tests show an impressive rise in English standards, particularly in writing. Inspection findings reflect test results of 2000. In Year 2, pupils read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding. Higher attaining pupils display a keen interest in words and their meanings. All pupils have neat, legible handwriting. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and make very good progress. Their attainment in English is in line with the national average.
94. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is well above average and they make very good progress. Staff develop and extend pupils' speaking skills in every lesson. Pupils' opinions and ideas are listened to, with sensitivity and interest, by all staff during class discussions. Exciting and stimulating role-play areas, in all classes, encourage the pupils to speak and to extend their vocabulary. Drama is used very effectively in many subjects to encourage them to articulate their learning. For instance, a group of pupils in Year 2 were completely engrossed, when dramatising scenes from the Great Fire of London. They discussed the roles and dialogue with considerable maturity, and confidently presented their play to the rest of the class. In the Year 1



classes, pupils make very good progress in developing and extending their speaking and listening skills when discussing texts during the Literacy Hour. Teachers are good role models, demonstrating clear diction and expressive reading. Pupils respond very well to this good teaching by listening carefully and being keen to predict what might happen next. 'Big books' are selected carefully for their relevance and are linked to topic very skilfully. For instance when studying mini-beasts, pupils in Year 1 thought of adjectives, such as 'gorgeous', 'beautiful' and 'delicate', when describing a butterfly. Pupils' confidence in speaking in front of the whole class is consolidated and developed even further when pupils Year 2 have the opportunity to give oral explanations of their learning in many subjects. In all classes, pupils pay close attention to what the teacher is saying and reply to questions with thoughtful comment and detail. During the inspection, higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 showed that they understood the conventions of discussion, when they debated the purpose of a general election. Older pupils were very confident, coherent and sensible when discussing aspects of school life with the inspection team.

95. Pupils' attainment in reading is above the national average and they make very good progress. Reading is given a high priority and pupils, in all classes, demonstrate a love of books. Pupils understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and know and use terms such as *author*, *blurb*, *illustrator* and *contents* correctly. The home-school partnership is a very successful feature. Parents receive very useful guidelines, detailing clearly the most appropriate ways to help their child. A focus on the teaching of the letter sounds raises attainment and accelerates progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. By the time they are seven, higher-attaining pupils read with accuracy and fluency, and can competently discuss the characters in a familiar story. Pupils develop a love of literature and those in the Year 2 classes discuss their favourite books, and authors with obvious enjoyment. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of authors and stories. Consequently, higher-attaining pupils show a good understanding of a range of texts and can refer to passages in books to support ideas. Teachers read regularly to their classes from a good selection of fiction, poetry and information books, proving very good role models with their own clear diction and love of literature. Reading is assessed continually and parents are kept informed through the use of home-school record books.
96. In Year 2, pupils' attainment in writing is above average and they make very good progress. Staff have worked extremely hard to raise pupils' achievement in writing to match the high standards in reading and speaking and listening. This goal was achieved in the national tests for 2001. Pupils' test scores for writing are well above average. The English co-ordinator and the headteacher work with groups of higher-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2, each week, to ensure that they achieve their potential. They debate various issues and they decide on a course of action. For example, in Year 1, pupils expressed their concerns and views about the recent Foot and Mouth epidemic in well-crafted letters to the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. They were delighted to receive a reply. In Year 1, pupils build on the good start they make in the reception class and begin to write clear and logical sentences, using capital letters and full stops. Pupils in Year 2 produce an extensive range of interesting work, which includes fiction, instructions, lists, stories and poems. Most of this work is of a high standard, and pupils take a real pride in presenting their work carefully. The samples of pupils' work seen indicate that pupils are constantly and consistently encouraged to practise their writing in other subjects. For instance, in a personal and social education lesson, they were encouraged to list things that make them glad and sad. One pupil's writing showed careful and unusual thinking when listing things that made her sad, 'Lightening, dinosaurs, tigers and lettuce'.
97. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to write interesting stories and show a good understanding of how to structure their writing with a beginning, middle and an end. In Year 2, pupils write and produce outstanding fiction and non-fiction texts, which have contents, chapters, glossaries and indexes. These are beautifully presented with 'marbled' covers, which links their English and artwork very effectively. Teachers value all pupils' writing. There is a school writing board, where examples of work from all year groups are displayed and changed weekly. Pupils are proud and pleased to see their writing displayed. Standards of spelling are very good and all pupils learn their weekly spellings conscientiously. Most pupils are confident when using spellings in their writing and good progress is maintained through their ability to check spellings on word cards and in dictionaries.

Handwriting is taught in all classes, and pupils' writing is very neat and well formed. There is a consistent approach to this in all classes and teachers set a good example with their own neat, clear handwriting. There are many interesting examples of pupils using information and communication technology to skilfully word-process their writing. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support with their English work.

98. The quality of teaching is very good overall. It ranges from satisfactory to excellent. The best teaching occurs in Year 2. Teachers show considerable confidence and expertise in all aspects of English. Lessons are carefully planned to build on pupils' existing knowledge and experiences. All teachers make excellent use of question and answer sessions to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. They have very high expectations of what pupils can do and work is planned for different needs. Pupils of all ability levels are given challenging and interesting work. A brisk pace is maintained, which keeps pupils busy. This is particularly evident in the Literacy Hour where pupils waste no time in settling to group activities after sharing a class discussion. Teachers intervene well to consolidate and advance literacy skills. A strong feature of teaching is the skilful use of praise and encouragement, which does a great deal towards increasing pupils' confidence in all aspects of English. The teachers value all pupils' contributions and there is often sensitive questioning of the least able pupils, which includes them fully in discussions. The individual target setting has a significant impact on pupils' progress in specific areas, such as presentation and punctuation. Homework is used very effectively to support what the pupils learn during the Literacy Hours. Arrangements for monitoring progress in literacy are very good. Assessment of reading, writing and spelling is excellent; difficulties are identified at an early stage so that extra support can be given. Challenging targets are set and teachers expect a lot of themselves and their pupils.
99. There is excellent leadership and management of the subject. The results of tests and the achievement they represent are impressive. This success story is a direct result of high-quality teaching, excellent leadership by the co-ordinator, improved planning, excellent assessment and a shared commitment by all staff to improve standards. Support staff are actively involved in lessons and are very well prepared, as teachers write daily information sheets for them to follow. Resources are good and the co-ordinator has been working hard to make the library provision even better. Information and communication technology is used very well in all English lessons, and other subjects, such as history and geography, make a great contribution to pupils' development in English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

100. The results of the National Curriculum tests in mathematics for seven-year-olds, in 2000, were well above the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. The provisional tests results for 2001 show a further improvement with all pupils attaining standards at least in line with the national average, and a large percentage attaining standards above average.
101. The trend over the last four years has been for a continual rise above the national average, for both boys and girls, and the rate of improvement is in excess of the national trend. Evidence from the inspection confirms that pupils are attaining above the national average, with a significant number attaining above what is expected. This is an improvement since the last inspection where standards across the school met national expectations. This improvement has been brought about by careful attention to all aspects of the subject, the willingness of staff to consider and evaluate the way mathematics is taught and the high expectations for attainment within the school. There is vibrancy in many of the mathematics lessons and an enthusiasm for the subject, which results in pupils being well prepared and achieving high standards from an early age. The school has embraced the National Numeracy Strategy with enthusiasm and there is evidence of real progress in the way the subject is taught. From the time pupils leave the reception classes to the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2, their overall progress is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are quietly and sensitively supported, ensuring that they, too, make good progress.

102. At the age of seven, pupils have a good, and frequently very good, understanding of mathematics, and how all the various areas are inter-related. Good emphasis is given to learning basic number facts and pupils' number concepts are good. They see the relationship between numbers, and all but the lowest-attaining pupils identify hundreds, tens and units correctly. The majority use their knowledge to carry out mental calculations quickly and efficiently. Nearly all pupils count confidently in multiples of twos, threes, fours, fives and tens, and understand the difference between odd and even numbers. They suggest units of measurement for tasks and give sensible estimates. They know how to apply their knowledge to an investigation, and demonstrate good thinking skills. For example, in a Year 2 problem-solving lesson, pupils showed that they were able to collect, sort and organise information and, from this, organise data. Whilst performing this task, they estimated and measured, and decided how to group their charts in a variety of ways. Some pupils immediately recognised the number patterns forming, and calculated the differences accurately and with confidence. Pupils know and recognise the names for two- and three- dimensional shapes, and the good focus on mathematical vocabulary helps to reinforce pupils' understanding. This solid knowledge and understanding is begun in Year 1, where pupils explore number relationships and successfully use this to solve problems of addition and subtraction. There are no areas in which pupils show marked differences in their level of attainment.
103. The quality of teaching of mathematics is good overall. During the inspection there was one satisfactory lesson and, of the remainder, half were good, and two lessons were judged to be very good or better. Teachers are very good at communicating to pupils that mathematics can be fun. At the same time, they provide them with a sense of challenge, and help them to understand how all aspects of mathematics are inter-related and not learned in isolation. The high expectations of teachers have a significant impact on pupils' achievements. Teachers' good knowledge of their pupils enables them to stretch the higher attainers, as well as supporting those who have difficulties. Teachers meet together to plan daily, so that strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning can be addressed immediately in the next day's lesson. This shows that very good use is made of daily assessment. Learning support assistants are prepared carefully and provide unobtrusive support, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are confident and use skilful questioning and effective strategies to motivate and stimulate pupils and to develop pupils' thinking skills. A good feature of teaching is that teachers get pupils to explain how they have arrived at their answers, thus helping them to consider the strategies they have used. Teachers are always efficiently organised, with resources prepared well. This ensures that no time is wasted and lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Mental mathematics sessions are well paced and the methods used ensure that all pupils are involved. The range of teaching methods used ensures that the quality of learning is consistently good and frequently very good. There is good rapport between teachers and pupils, and a sense of liveliness is engendered in mathematics lessons. The positive attitudes shown by most pupils and their good behaviour contribute to their learning. The majority are eager and enthusiastic when responding to challenges and show they are able to work well both independently and co-operatively. Where the management of pupils is less confident, a small minority shows signs of inattention, particularly towards the end of the lesson as their concentration wanes.
104. The school has given careful consideration to the way numeracy skills, and an understanding of the whole picture of mathematics, can be developed through close links with other subjects. These initiatives are helping pupils to develop their mathematical skills outside the normal scope of the numeracy lesson. Information and communication technology is used to enhance pupils' understanding, when collecting and organising data and understanding shapes and pattern. These skills are also linked to geography, where pupils use their knowledge of mathematics to support their geography skills of enquiry. Similarly effective links are made with literacy, science and design and technology. All of this makes a very good contribution to pupils' all-round skills for investigating, solving problems and using the knowledge they have gained.
105. The curriculum offered by the school is based soundly on the National Numeracy Strategy and is broad and balanced. Lessons are evaluated carefully and points for improvement are covered in

future lessons. The school's procedures for assessment are excellent and help to identify any weaknesses in the school's provision for mathematics and in pupils' learning. A well-organised portfolio of pupils' work clarifies levels of attainment. Not all pupils have targets for mathematics, and targets are set as the need arises. This area could be improved by the setting of more precise targets for individual pupils. The marking of pupils' work is very good. Careful annotation shows areas of strengths or weaknesses and what help has been needed.

106. The subject co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of her role and provides excellent leadership and management of the subject, which she undertakes with enjoyment, commitment and enthusiasm. She has had the opportunity to visit classrooms to observe teaching and has been observed in order that teachers can recognise good practice. She has also had the opportunity to look at the work in pupils' books and feed back her findings to teachers appropriately. The effort that has gone into the way in which mathematics is taught and its impact on pupils' learning is bearing fruit. The range of resources is good. They contribute to attractive displays in the classrooms, which are frequently accompanied by challenging questions and tasks. A stimulating environment for mathematics is created in all classrooms.

## **SCIENCE**

107. The teachers assessments, in 2000, for pupils aged seven, showed that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level, was above average, with a very high number of pupils attaining the higher level. These results are well above average when compared with similar schools. These results are a significant improvement on those at the time of the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line with the national average.
108. By the age of seven, pupils are achieving standards that are above those expected in all areas of science. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve high standards in their work. The emphasis is on pupils learning through first-hand experience and all work is rooted in investigation and first hand research. For example, in Year 1, pupils investigated mini-beasts and studied the life cycle of the butterfly. They did so practically by having a caterpillar each to study. They made careful notes and drawings of its development and, at the time of the inspection, many of the caterpillars were beginning to pupate prior to their final stage of development. The pupils were fascinated, and could discuss the stages of development confidently and with understanding. Pupils in Year 2, when covering a topic on houses and homes, make their own houses and learn about electricity by setting up parallel and series circuits for lighting and, incorporating bells and buzzers for front doors. They investigate friction by running cars down a ramp with different surfaces. They record the data they collected in a number of ways. They make graphs, bar charts, and pie charts, using the computers. They show they can successfully interpret and use the information they gather. They learn to observe carefully. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress and the work they have produced shows that they acquire a broad range of scientific knowledge, as well as developing a high level of skills and understanding.
109. The quality of teaching is very good, which enables pupils to learn very effectively. In all the lessons observed it was at least sound with some very good and excellent teaching seen. Teachers are confident and knowledgeable when teaching science. The planning for every lesson is meticulous and all sessions have a clear structure. Lessons always begin with an appropriate recap of what was learned previously and the ensuing lesson builds on this prior knowledge. Clear explanations are given to the pupils and health and safety issues are rehearsed where appropriate. For example, in Year 1, when pupils examined their caterpillars they were given clear instructions as to how the containers should be handled for reasons of hygiene, and the welfare of the caterpillars. The teachers have very high expectations of their pupils both in terms of understanding, the ability to get work done and of behaviour. This was particularly evident in Year 2 lesson, where pupils were discussing the structure of the eye. The teacher posed penetrating questions to probe the full extent of her pupils' knowledge and challenged the most able by asking how images were received on the retina. Because these pupils had been effectively carrying out their own research, the answer that the image was upside

down came quite quickly. The teacher then asked 'So why do we see it the right way up?' which made the pupils think, and then reply, 'Because the brain turns it the right way up again'. The pace of lessons is brisk. In all lessons the tasks set were appropriately matched to pupils abilities. Towards the end of the lesson, work is conscientiously evaluated with the teacher asking questions, such as 'How did you...?' 'What happened when...?' and expecting to receive logical and well thought out scientific explanations. Pupils are expected to follow instructions carefully. Teachers are continually assessing the level of pupils' knowledge both formally and informally. All pupils show an enthusiasm for science and an eagerness to learn. They participate readily in discussion from an early stage and ask and answer questions confidently. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are very positive and make a significant contribution to the standards achieved. Pupils are generally very attentive when the teacher is teaching, although when management is not firm enough a small minority become distracted. They learn to work independently from an early stage and co-operate very well together. Pupils record their work carefully and take pride its presentation.

110. The management of science is excellent and the co-ordinator is enthusiastic and competent. The curriculum is exciting and topic based and is integrated successfully into many other areas of the curriculum, such as literacy and mathematics. Information and communication technology is used effectively, both for research and recording data and other information. The co-ordinator devised a new scheme of work based on nationally approved guidelines, but heavily adapted to meet the needs and the philosophy of the school. However, it has not yet been fully monitored as she has been away on a year's leave of absence. At present, it shows a slight over-weighting towards life and living processes, although all areas of the recommended curriculum are covered to a high standard. The policy has been recently revised and the scheme of work gives due emphasis to the development of scientific knowledge and skills through practical investigation. The curriculum planned ensures that all areas of the National Curriculum are covered and teachers know exactly what they are supposed to be teaching, and when, thus pupils make very good progress from the time they enter the school. Assessment tasks from the latest guidelines are being successfully incorporated in order to keep an on-going effective record of pupils' progress. There is an extremely comprehensive portfolio of the work of each pupil, which has been carefully assessed. This not only provides a very good record of work covered, but also helps teachers decide about the standards that pupils achieve. Effective monitoring of teaching and classroom practice, and of planning, and assessment records, takes place.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

111. Only one art lesson was seen during the inspection. However, from the evidence of previously completed work, and that which is well displayed throughout the school, pupils' attainment is well above that expected for their age, as was found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' work develops from varying starting points. They use a range of media and are taught specific skills and techniques.
112. Pupils in Year 1 consider the outdoor environment when pursuing their topic on houses and homes, and make interesting rubbings of all the different textures they can find, such as bricks and wood. They make three-dimensional models of mini-beasts, carefully planning the re-cycled materials that they will use and methods of joining them. They use the computer to design their own, highly imaginative, mini-beasts. They use pasta to create interesting and exciting collage houses and homes, blending shapes and colours skilfully and thoughtfully. Pupils in Year 2 study pictures by Van Gogh, and observe sunflowers in bloom carefully and then create their own versions of 'Sunflowers', using a range of brush techniques to show the seeds accurately and realistically. Watercolours by pupils in Year 2 are the result of the detailed study, and pupils have built up skills and experiences during the year. The teacher has displayed pupils' work carried out in September and asked pupils to compare it with their achievements now. The progress made is considerable. Some pupils show a developing awareness of line and form, with shading and blending to create effects. The work in all year groups shows very good links with all areas of the curriculum and relates closely to the topic for the term. The pupils in Year 2 have painted

watercolours based on the African story of 'Whispering Thorn'. They are expressive, atmospheric and show a skill and technique far beyond that expected by seven-year-olds.

113. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection but it was evident from the work seen around the school that teachers provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities to experiment, using a variety of media to increase their creativity. Planning is thorough and the school has a wide range of appropriate resources. In the lesson seen the teacher discussed with the pupils how they were going to paint their mini-beasts. The teacher asked pertinent questions, such as, 'How can you paint the stripes so that the colours don't run together?' to help them plan their painting. The pupils decided that by painting the yellow and letting it dry, before adding black stripes, would be the best way of avoiding difficulties. This discussion demonstrated the confidence the pupils have in putting forward their own ideas. It is evident that the teaching allows for pupils' skills to develop progressively, and inspires them to work with enthusiasm and confidence at challenging tasks. The school has a good range of resources, which are used very well. It is evident from the work seen that pupils have worked very hard and gained great enjoyment from creating their own works of art. Pupils pay meticulous care to detail and show great sensitivity when creating their work. The pupils in Year 2, particularly, show a delicacy of touch and feeling when creating their pictures. The expertise they have gained in their art and design work has carried over with benefit into other areas of the curriculum so that in history, for example, illustrations for their work shows the same finesse and sureness of touch as in their art work generally.
114. The subject is led very effectively by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She has written a very exciting and thorough scheme of work incorporating all the necessary elements of the National Curriculum. Termly planning is monitored and, through this and informal discussions with colleagues, the co-ordinator is aware of strengths and areas requiring development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

115. The provision for design and technology has improved since the previous inspection, when many pupils were judged to achieve standards below expectations. A significant minority of pupils were underachieving. Weaknesses in teaching were identified. The overall planning in the subject has improved, so that teachers are clear about what is expected for pupils' learning and can ensure continuity and progression in the subject. The facilities for food technology have improved and are well resourced. Opportunities for pupils to design, select materials and evaluate their work have been introduced to ensure an adequate balance of activities and the systematic development of pupils' skills. Overall, the school has made good progress in its provision for design and technology since the last inspection. Good links have been established with other subjects.
116. Although only one lesson was observed during the inspection, it is clear from studying pupils' work, and from discussions with pupils and teachers, that pupils attain the expected standards for design and technology by the age of seven. In Year 2, pupils retain knowledge of previous work and recount in detail their experiences with food technology. They experience handling a range of textiles, which they use to create puppets, some parts of which are stuck in place and other parts sewn. In the one lesson observed, a small group of pupils, working on mechanisms, showed that they were able to read and follow instructions when investigating cogs and gears. They succeeded in putting together quite complex mechanisms. They used the correct terminology when discussing their work, and the higher-attaining pupils identified the need for less effort as the result of gearing. The good links with other subjects are obvious from what pupils have produced. For example, pupils in Year 2 made models of buildings such as churches, lighthouses and schools, using their knowledge of circuits to create lighting and to support their learning in geography. They confidently used different sized boxes and cut, stuck and joined materials. Pupils' understanding of the purpose of evaluation are systematically developed through the key stage. Pupils in Year 1 list the materials they want to use when designing their own mini-beasts to link with science work. They evaluate and change their design as necessary in order to improve. By the end of Year 2, many pupils are able to look critically at

what they have made and suggest sensible means of improvement. The higher -attaining pupils understand fully the purpose and need for evaluation of their efforts.

117. In the one lesson observed, design and technology was integrated with other subjects and the teaching was good. It allowed for purposeful and challenging investigation, with supportive help and guidance when necessary. Effective use was made of questions to encourage pupils to think carefully about what they were doing and consider questions, such as 'Why?' or 'What if?' This has a considerable impact on pupils' learning, enabling them to be responsible for their own learning and to work together co-operatively. From the evidence of the work seen, the achievements of all pupils are good, including pupils with special educational needs, and show they are successfully building their skills.
118. A good feature demonstrated when talking to pupils, is not only their enthusiasm and good recall of what they have learned, but also their appreciation of the efforts and success of others. When pupils talked about the buildings they had made, for example, they made sure that the achievement of every pupil was noted and that it received due praise and attention.
119. The policy and guidelines for design and technology are comprehensive. The subject is led well by the co-ordinator, who carefully ensures that continuity and progression in the subject are addressed specifically, and there are efficient procedures for assessment. Links between art and design and other subjects are effective and help to make pupils' learning realistic. Pupils' achievements are celebrated through attractive and carefully labelled displays. Resources are good, well organised, and stored efficiently.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

120. Pupils are attaining standards in line with expectations by the age of seven, as was the case at the time of the last inspection. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. However, discussions with older pupils and with teachers, as well as a scrutiny of work and the planning for the subject, indicate that pupils are given a good range of worthwhile and realistic experiences in geography. There is full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study, with effective links made with other subjects, particularly mathematics, science information and communication technology, art and design and design and technology.
121. By the age of seven, pupils show they have a good knowledge and understanding of the topics covered. They capably compare and contrast different areas such their own town with a seaside resort. They know that people may have different jobs in different areas, such as working in a factory or as a coastguard. They have good recall of the work and study they have done on rivers. They talk knowledgeably about how a river is formed and what happens to it on its journey to the river mouth, and understand the correct terminology. The achievements and progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good, and they build successfully on their previous knowledge and understanding. Pupils make good strides in learning about the locality. Through a series of walks and studies of nearby environments, they make judgements about what they like and dislike about their environment. For example, younger pupils through their topic on 'Out and About' expressed their dislike of certain building such as the abattoir and the gas works. They look at their wild life area and make maps of this appropriately, marking the main features. In Year 2, pupils build systematically on these skills, as they construct pictures and maps from aerial photographs, and map the journey of a river. They know how to use the keys on a map, and state that they 'unlock the map'. They can recognise and name the countries of the British Isles, and higher attaining pupils can identify this on a map of the world.
122. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching in geography, as only one lesson was observed. In this lesson, teaching was very good. It allowed pupils to develop good thinking skills alongside their geographical skills. The teacher's effective questions and guidance ensured the maximum learning by pupils. It is evident from the scrutiny of work in pupils' books, and that on display, that teachers have a good understanding of the requirements for geography. The

links with other subjects are effective, support geographical skills of enquiry and support good learning in other areas of the curriculum. Teachers use the subject effectively to promote pupils' skills in literacy, through the use of 'big books' and writing, and their numeracy skills through the introduction of data handling, patterns and shape, and this is firmly linked with investigative mathematics. Good use is made of information and communication technology to show, for instance, the number of different types of houses pupils observed on their walks, by collecting the data and making graphs. An attractive and meaningful collage captures the journey of a river, with each aspect carefully labelled.

123. The effective links with other subjects, together with teachers' expertise has a positive impact on pupils' learning and responses to the subject. Discussions with pupils in Year 2 show their eagerness for the subject and their desire to demonstrate what they know, while younger pupils are motivated and excited by their experiences. Teachers are providing exciting learning opportunities with good challenges.
124. The good level of progress and standards of provision have been maintained since the last inspection. The national scheme of work is appropriately modified to meet the needs of the school. A worthwhile addition to this is the scheme for linking mathematics with geography. The co-ordinator has good expertise and promotes the subject well. Pupils' progress is carefully and thoroughly assessed and this helps to measure the effectiveness of the curriculum. The subject is enhanced by visits to local places of geographical interest. Attractive photographic displays show how well the environment is used.

## **HISTORY**

125. By the time pupils are seven, their standards of work are as expected for their age. The school has maintained the standards seen during the previous inspection. There have been good improvements to the curriculum and new resources have been purchased. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.
126. By the age of seven, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past effectively, for example, by re-telling stories and using role-play to imagine life in the time of Samuel Pepys. In Year 2, pupils know that we learn about the past from a variety of different sources. By watching a video, they learn why the Great Fire of London spread so quickly. The work is successful because the teacher has a very clear grasp of the subject, as shown by the perceptive questions, which challenge the pupils and keep them interested. Through her enthusiasm, the teacher inspires the pupils to discover more and challenges them to research in information books. Pupils are motivated, productive and very enthusiastic. They have a zest for learning, for example, they are fascinated by Pepy's diaries. In this lesson, as a result of the very good teaching, pupils attain above expectations.
127. In Year 1, pupils learn how homes long ago were different from those today. Good, practical experiences, such as handling old kitchen utensils enrich their learning. A walk around the school to spot the Edwardian features extends pupils' knowledge of the past. All pupils record their history work in their own words. Teachers take every opportunity to encourage pupils to practise their writing in their history work. There are numerous links with other subjects. For instance, in Year 1, pupils have drawn detailed sketches of old and new laundry equipment and in Year 2 pupils have used excellent descriptive language to record Buzz Aldrin's moonwalk. Computers are also used well to word-process pupils' work in history.
128. The subject is led well. There is a scheme of work based on national guidelines. This provides a structure which teachers find helpful in their planning. The co-ordinator has organised the history resources into packs, which is very useful for busy teachers.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**



129. There has been significant improvement in the provision for information and communication technology since the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line with expectations. The co-ordinator has raised the profile of the subject within the school and, although pupils' attainment by the age of seven is still in line with expectations, there have been significant improvements, particularly in the quality of teaching.
130. Pupils have regular access to computers in all classes. There are also two 'clusters' of computers outside the Year 1 and Year 2 classrooms, where pupils can practise their skills. They are learning to load discs, open programs, and use icons. Information and communication technology is used very well to support learning in other subjects. For instance, in Year 2 pupils used 'Starting Graph' to create bar graphs and pie charts when investigating surfaces in science. No direct teaching was seen during the inspection, but pupils' learning was consistently good when they were observed working. For instance, in Year 1, pupils successfully used an art program to draw colourful minibeast and word-processed the accompanying text and as part of their work during the Literacy Hour, pupils in Year 2 were keen to learn how to edit text. They highlighted the words in the text 'Think of an Eel', changed the size, and printed their work totally unsupervised. They set up the text ready for the next pupil. The pupils were competent and confident with this activity. They were aided by the very clear instructions, beautifully written by the teacher and displayed next to the computer. Pupils concentrate well when using computers and are keen to assist each other with problem solving. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by their classmates, teachers and other adults, and make good progress.
131. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to improve the planning and assessment, which is now very clear and gives all staff very useful guidelines. All staff have attended training to improve their competence and are becoming more confident in their own computer skills. The co-ordinator has been very effective in purchasing new resources and more are planned for next year. The main strength of the provision is the way information and communication technology is used effectively in all subjects. The areas for development are control technology, as the two floor turtles are currently being repaired, and pupils' access to the Internet. The school is due to be linked to the Internet very soon.

## **MUSIC**

132. Standards in music are above expectations by the age of seven and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. The standard of singing throughout the school is very good. Pupils sing a wide range of hymns with enthusiasm during assembly and in a weekly performance time. In lessons, they sing tunefully and with obvious enjoyment. They understand the dynamics and the duration of phrases and, after practising, they apply these to the songs they are learning. The majority can beat a steady rhythm and start and stop at a signal.
133. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Lessons are carefully planned and teachers have high expectations of the standard of pupils' participation. They ask demanding questions and expect pupils to be able to use appropriate terminology. In Year 1, pupils discuss the tempo and dynamics of the songs they sing and the music to which they listen. They compose their own rhythms and record these appropriately, using a range of symbols to represent the dynamics, tempo and the length of notes. As a result, pupils can interpret what others have written and a good deal of enjoyment is spent in playing original compositions. All lessons move at a rapid pace, with a good balance between pupils listening, singing and playing instruments, which results in them making good progress. Because the pupils show interest and concentrate, they learn new songs quickly and remember the words to songs they have learned previously. Lessons are evaluated and notes are made on pupils' development, which are used to plan subsequent lessons.
134. The subject is enthusiastically led by the co-ordinator. She organises the weekly 'sing-a-long', which is far more than the title suggests. Each class prepares an item to perform in front of the rest of the school. This is a wonderful, social occasion and considerably enhances pupils'

personal, social and listening skills, as well as their ability to perform in front of an audience. The scheme of work is original and geared strongly to the ethos of the school. Resources are sound and are used well. The pupils respect them and, consequently, they are also in good condition.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

135. The school has improved the standards noted at the time of the last inspection, when standards were found to be in line with expectations. Standards are above those expected for seven-year-olds, and are particularly good in the gymnastic and dance aspects of the subject. All pupils achieve well and make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, which enables them to be fully included and achieve accordingly in all lessons.
136. By the age of seven, pupils attain high standards in dance. They show a good awareness of others and an ability to interpret the different messages conveyed by the music. They successfully match heavy and slow, or quick and light movements to suit the mood of the music, listening to it with the utmost concentration. They then interpret it, through their dance, with thought and creativity. Pupils have good gymnastic skills and know how to begin and end a routine, showing that, in between, they are able to effectively link their movements to make a sequence. They show a high level of co-ordination, control and agility when developing sequences and interesting movements on large apparatus. Most pupils know why it is important to warm up before beginning the intensive part of the lesson, and listen carefully to what they are expected to do. They are eager to watch the performance of others, and make sensible suggestions as to how their performance can be improved. Only one games lesson was seen, and pupils demonstrated appropriate skills for running and performing in group activities. The skills of pupils are carefully built up throughout the key stage. Pupils in Year 1 demonstrate a good awareness of space, controlling their movements and co-ordinating them in line with musical rhythm. This shows that pupils have a sound and confident base on which they are able to develop their achievements effectively.
137. The quality of teaching in physical education is good overall. Four lessons were observed, one very good, two good, and one unsatisfactory. The qualities which distinguished the best lessons from the least satisfactory were the high expectations of teachers and the very good management of pupils, ensuring a brisk pace to the lessons. Where teachers managed their classes extremely well, it not only ensured that good attention was given to safety, but generated an atmosphere in which pupils were able to concentrate on their performance without distraction. In the unsatisfactory lesson, this was not the case. From the start of most lessons, teachers give pupils a good lead, indicating their confidence in teaching the subject and their own enthusiasm. Because teachers make their expectations clear, pupils have a good understanding of what is required and this results in good progress in lessons. This, together with the good interaction between teachers and pupils, has a positive impact on the high level of enjoyment and enthusiasm, within a disciplined and well-ordered environment. Effective use is made of on-going assessment in order to allow pupils to further refine and improve their performances. All this has a positive impact on what pupils learn and their good achievements overall.
138. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and provides very good leadership. She has developed a comprehensive scheme of work, which ensures good guidelines and that all areas of the curriculum are covered. This enables teachers to plan lessons that effectively develop pupils' skills. The time allocated for the subject allows for regular lessons for dance, gymnastics and games on a weekly basis, and this, therefore, ensures very good curriculum provision. Pupils are regularly assessed and have opportunity to gain nationally recognised rewards.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

139. During the last inspection, little religious education was taught. Standards were generally sound, but there was some underachievement by pupils. This is no longer the case, due to good improvements, spearheaded by the co-ordinator. At the age of seven, pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education is now in line with the locally agreed syllabus.
140. In Year 2, pupils learn about special journeys in both the Christian and the Muslim religions. They contrast Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem with the Hajj to Ka'ban. They compare the Bible with the Qur'an. They learn about the Christian and Muslim view of God. A study of pupils' work indicates that pupils in Year 2 have, sensitively and maturely, described their reflections about God. One pupil wrote, 'I think when people die at night, God takes them into space and then into Heaven'.
141. In Year 1, pupils learn a significant amount about water as a symbol, through watching a doll being baptised. They enjoy comparing a Mosque and the local Church. All pupils learn about key events in Jesus' life such as his birth, crucifixion and resurrection. Older pupils understand why the events at Easter are so important to Christians.
142. No lessons were seen during the inspection, but a sampling of pupils' work, and discussions with pupils, would suggest that the quality of teaching and pupils' learning are satisfactory overall and sometimes good. The planning is detailed and links very effectively with other subjects, such as literacy and art and design. There is good subject leadership, with clear vision and a good awareness of areas for future development.
143. The co-ordinator has devised a very useful overall plan for acts of collective worship, which links very effectively with religious education lessons. Resources have improved since the previous inspection, as has the confidence and subject knowledge of the staff.