

INSPECTION REPORT

Fawbert and Barnard Infant School
Sawbridgeworth

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique Reference Number: 117149

Headteacher: Mrs Y Beeson

Reporting inspector: Mr Terry Elston

Dates of inspection: October 18th to October 20th 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707420

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body of Fawbert and Barnard Infant School
Name of Acting Chair of Governors:	Mr M Taffs
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

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Jan Leaning, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development, Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision, Attendance, Support and guidance, Partnerships with parents and the community.
Hilary Ring	Science, History, Geography, Music.	Curriculum and assessment, Children under five.
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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good. The new staff have bonded well together to form a strong team. Careful planning extends all pupils.
- Pupils make good progress. They enter the Nursery with attainment slightly above average and by Year 2, their attainment is above average in nearly all subjects, and is improving year by year.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher provides good leadership, and places a strong emphasis on raising pupils' attainment.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are very good.
- The school's partnership with parents and the community is very good.
- The school has made a good start with the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Pupils' standards in information technology are too low.
- II. There are health and safety issues concerning the cooker in the Nursery, and the entrance to the dining room.
- III. With so many new staff, co-ordinators have yet to be appointed for some subjects.
- IV. The curriculum in the Reception class does not focus clearly enough on the recommended areas of learning for children under five.
- V. There is insufficient planning to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, and their attainment in this area lags behind other aspects of English.
- VI. The governors' Annual Report omits information about provision for pupils with special educational needs, the progress of the school's action plan following the last inspection and staff development.

The strengths significantly outweigh the weaknesses but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school

· **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

Since the previous inspection, the school has been largely successful in securing improvement in the areas identified as key issues and, overall, has made a good improvement. The quality of teaching has been improved significantly, and is now consistently good. The headteacher has worked hard with the new staff to improve lesson planning and increase the pace of lessons. The school has made very good use of the Local Education Authority's advisors to review its work, and to observe teachers, and suggest ways to develop their expertise. The standards of pupils' work have improved in mathematics, science, religious education and art. A great deal of work has been put into the planning of the curriculum, and this is now good. The school makes good use of data gained from the initial assessment of children in the Nursery to monitor their progress by Year 2, and this process is now good. Shortcomings in registration procedures have been addressed, and these now meet statutory requirements. The roles of co-ordinators have been strengthened: key staff now have time allocated to monitor teaching, and co-ordinators now provide good support to colleagues. Some subjects, however, have no co-ordinator, two teachers are newly qualified, and many others have only recently been appointed. The headteacher has made a priority of ensuring that the core subjects of English and mathematics are adequately covered. This thoughtful and positive response to areas identified as weaknesses illustrates the improvement in the school's leadership, its clear direction and its determination to improve the school's provision. In view of these factors, the school has a good capacity to make further improvements.

· **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

The table shows that pupils' scores were well above the national average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, the school's results were average in mathematics, but above average in reading and writing. In the teachers' assessments for science, pupils' scores were above average nationally, but close to those of similar schools. Pupils' results over the past three years have improved significantly. The findings of the inspection largely agree with these results, with the exception of English, where the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs this year means that standards are now above average overall rather than well above. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in other subjects. In information technology, standards are below those expected. The school has significantly fewer computers than the national average, and pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills to the full. In religious education, standards are above average. Pupils' work is above average in all other subjects except design and technology and physical education where it is average. Children under five are above average in mathematics and their personal and social skills, and average in language and literacy, physical development, creative skills and in their knowledge of the world.

· **Quality of teaching**

· **Teaching in Under 5 5 – 7 years**

English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science		Good
Information technology		Unsatisfactory
Religious education		Good
Other subjects	Good	Good

The quality of teaching at the school is good. In the previous report, teaching had shortcomings in Key Stage 1, particularly concerning the way that teachers planned lessons. This largely new teaching staff works very well together, and teaching overall is greatly improved. Teaching is lively, well informed and challenging for all groups of pupils. Only one lesson out of 49 was unsatisfactory in this inspection, and nearly nine out of ten lessons were good. In nearly one quarter of lessons, the teaching was very good. Only in information technology is the teaching unsatisfactory, because too little time is allocated to developing pupils' skills.

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

· **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. Pupils are courteous and keen to work. Poor behaviour is very rare.
Attendance	Average, although unauthorised absence is higher than normal, mostly as a result of parents taking children on holiday in term time.
Ethos*	Very good. Relationships are very good, and the school has a strong commitment to raising pupils' standards.
Leadership and management	Good. Staff are well led by the headteacher, who provides clear direction and support. This is particularly important with so many new and inexperienced staff. There is an enthusiastic and knowledgeable new governing body. There are no co-ordinators for science, physical education and music, although the school has plans to appoint these next year.
Curriculum	Good. This is well planned, and builds upon pupils' skills effectively from one class to the next. Literacy and numeracy are good. There are shortcomings in Reception, where too much emphasis is placed on National Curriculum work at the expense of activities for children under five. There is a muddled curriculum for information technology which gives too little guidance about the standards that pupils should attain. Assessment is good.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision leading to good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	There is good spiritual provision in assemblies and opportunities are given in lessons to consider issues in some depth. Moral provision is very good and pupils have a clear idea of right and wrong. Very good social provision underpins the high quality of relationships and behaviour. The range of cultural experiences is very good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	There is a well qualified staff with good knowledge despite inexperience. Good support is provided by classroom assistants and nursery nurses, but there is no support in the Reception in the afternoon. Resources are sound except for information technology where the school has far fewer computers than the

national average. Good accommodation, but there is no outdoor play area for children in the Reception.

Value for money Good. Slightly high costs offset by good progress, teaching and leadership. Efficient use of school's funds.

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

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

What most parents like about the school

VII. Good standards, especially in English.

VIII. Very good atmosphere in the school.

IX. Excellent relationships.

X. Very good information for parents about the curriculum.

XI. Very good provision for higher attaining children.

What some parents are not happy about

XII. A few worry about so many new,

XIII. Five days in the Nursery for very

Nearly all parents are pleased with the school. Very few negative comments were made. The school supports new and inexperienced teachers well, and all make positive contributions to the school's provision. The school has introduced a shorter week for the youngest children.

• **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

The governors, headteacher and staff should address the following matters in writing the action plan, in order to raise standards, ensure pupils' health and safety and improve the provision the school makes still further. References to these issues are indicated by the paragraph numbers in brackets.

XIV. **Raise standards in information technology by:**

- a. increasing the number of computers to at least the national average;
 - b. giving more time to the direct teaching of computer skills;
 - c. ensuring that curricular planning informs teachers of the specific skills that pupils should acquire, including higher attaining pupils who often use computers at home. (11, 30, 33, 130, 131)
- **Address the health and safety issues concerning the cooker and ramp to the dining room.** (59)
 - **Improve provision for children under five in the Reception by:**
 - a. ensuring that all children under five follow the nationally agreed curriculum for very young children;
 - b. introducing joint planning for the Nursery and Reception to develop consistency and continuity of provision;
 - c. investigating the provision of an outdoor play area for Reception children and the provision of classroom support for the teacher in the afternoons. (15, 27, 38, 76, 80, 95, 100)
 - **Appoint co-ordinators for science, music and physical education at the earliest**

opportunity. (69, 126, 165, 170)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Examine ways to reduce the percentage of unauthorised absences.
- Address the shortcomings in the governors' Annual Report to parents.
- Improve curricular planning in English to include the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.

• **INTRODUCTION**

• **Characteristics of the school**

1. Fawbert and Barnard Infant School is of average size, with 139 full time pupils from five to seven years old, and 53 children under five in the Nursery who attend part time. Overall, there are 108 boys and 84 girls. Children enter the Nursery at the start of the term in which they are four years old, although a few enter before this time. They attend part time until they are five, and then transfer to the Reception class. The numbers on the school's roll have steadily increased over recent years.

2. The attainment of children on entry, as shown by the school's initial assessment procedures, is above average overall compared with children nationally, but average in their language and literacy skills and their physical development. One pupil comes from an ethnic minority group, which is very low compared with other schools, and no pupil has English as an additional language. This is a socially advantaged area, and most homes are owner occupied. Fewer than two per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is a very low proportion, and just over ten per cent of full time pupils are designated as having special educational needs, which is below average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is average for a school this size. The school has yet to agree targets for pupils to achieve in English and mathematics with the Local Education Authority, but plans to do this in November.

3. The school's current priorities focus on introducing the new National Numeracy Strategy, improving pupils' writing skills and supporting the many new teachers. The aims of the school emphasise the need to give all pupils access to a balanced curriculum, to provide a safe environment and for pupils to recognise their own achievements and those of others.

4. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	98/99	31	28	58

4. National Curriculum		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Test/Task Results				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	24	25	25
	Girls	32	30	30
	Total	56	55	55
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	97(88)	95(93)	95(92)
	National	85(80)	86(81)	90(84)

4. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	24	25	25
	Girls	32	30	30
	Total	56	55	55
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	97(80)	95(85)	95(80)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

4. 1 Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year: 1997/98			%
	Authorised	School	5.6
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.8
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

4.

Exclusions

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

4.

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	24
	Satisfactory or better	98
	Less than satisfactory	2

4.

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

4.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

4.

Attainment and progress

1. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 tests for 1999 shows that in reading and writing, the proportion of pupils attaining the national standard, at Level 2 and above, was well above the national average. The proportion exceeding Level 3 was above average in reading and well above average in writing. In mathematics, standards were above the national average, both in terms of those achieving Level 2 and Level 3. Compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was above average in reading at Level 2, and average at Level 3. In writing, standards were above average at both Level 2 and Level 3. Compared with similar schools in mathematics, standards were average at Level 2 and Level 3.

1. In the teachers' assessments for science, standards were above average at both levels compared with pupils nationally, and average compared with those from similar schools. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. When the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 test results are compared with those reached in 1998 and 1997, they show that standards are rising significantly in all three subjects. The biggest improvement is in reading, where the proportion of pupils attaining at least the national standard has increased from 80 per cent in 1997 to 97 per cent in 1999. The school has yet to agree targets to raise standards further with the Local Education Authority, but has plans to do it shortly after this inspection.

2. The findings of the inspection show that the attainment of pupils in Year 2 in English is lower than the corresponding group of pupils in the 1999 national assessment tests, but broadly similar in mathematics and science. This is due to this cohort having a much greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs than last year's group, many of whom have particular difficulties in reading.

3. In this inspection, overall, pupils' standards in English by the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. Standards in speaking and listening are average, and meet national expectations for age. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils narrate, describe and converse at levels appropriate for their age, and speak confidently. Their length of speech and grammatical constructions are generally appropriate for their age, although not enough opportunities are planned for them to develop their speech fully, and few acquire good skills. They listen attentively, and have a good understanding of what they hear. Pupils attain above average standards in reading. Nearly all read accurately and take their books home regularly to practise their skills. This home-school reading link supports well the good attainment made in reading in the school. Pupils' standards of attainment in writing are also above average. They write simple sentences well and put them together to form a story, letter, description or report, generally of a good length for their age. They have made a good start with punctuation and spelling. Higher attaining pupils attend to form and style connected with the purpose of their writing, and often use more complex sentence structures. Handwriting is generally well developed for age, and most pupils write in a clear, legible style.

4. Pupils' attainment in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. Nearly all pupils have a good knowledge of place value in tens and units, and identify odd and even numbers, in or out of sequence, with confidence. Pupils have a good knowledge of addition and subtraction principles with numbers up to 20, and many complete rapid calculations using higher numbers. Pupils identify and recognise two and three dimensional shapes, and know the number of sides and

corners of different shapes. They use small amounts of money well to calculate change, and the cost of purchases using various units of coinage. In their measurement work, they measure classroom objects using standard and non-standard measures with accuracy, and tell the time using half past and o'clock. Pupils compile properly labelled graphs, for example, of their favourite games, and use tally charts well to collect evidence to enter on to a computer database.

5. In science, pupils attain standards which are above national expectations. By the age of seven, they devise simple experiments to a good standard, respond well to suggestions, put forward their own ideas and make good predictions. They classify foods with confidence, and make good observations of their own meals over a period of time. They show above average skills when providing explanations for changes in living things such as how diet affects the health of people and animals. They use their knowledge of materials well when they describe ways of sorting them into groups according to their properties. When they explore and test electrical circuits, they form accurate conclusions that the circuit must be joined to make the bulb light up.

6. In information technology, the attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 is below national expectations, and similar to that reported in the previous inspection. Whilst many of the pupils can communicate their ideas on a computer, using text and pictures, their work on the keyboard is slow and inaccurate. They use the mouse with sound control, but have difficulty in selecting items on the screen accurately. Pupils use computer programs well to research information on Bolivia for their geography topic, but require considerable help to carry this out.

7. In religious education, standards by the end of the key stage are above average, exceeding expectations for age in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils are familiar with a number of religious and family celebrations in Christian and other faith traditions, and the importance of these events in their lives and in those of others. They learn a good range of stories from the Bible, including those which Jesus told and about his life.

8. In art, pupils have good drawing and painting skills for their ages. They work carefully and with good attention to instructions and to the stimulating items provided. In geography, pupils have a good knowledge of changes in weather and the seasons. They talk confidently about their own town and its locality, and have some understanding of factors involved in its settlement. Pupils' work is above average in history. Many display good skills as they use appropriate language, sequence events and objects and discuss the purposes of artefacts which were used in the home during Edwardian and Victorian times. Several pupils have a very good understanding of the way in which the past can be depicted and can discuss information gained from clues in old photographs, which show the buildings, transport and costumes of different times. Pupils' work in music is above average for their ages. Many read musical notation well, follow a graphic score and sing songs in parts showing good control of breathing, pitch and dynamics. When they follow a conductor, they demonstrate accuracy, improve their performance by rehearsal and appraise their work well after hearing it on tape. Pupils' work in design and technology and physical education is average for their ages.

9. Pupils' standards in literacy and numeracy are above average. They have responded well to the successful introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours, and show good skills in reading, writing and number work.

10. The attainment of children by the age of five is average overall, but a significant number reach higher than average standards. Their personal and social skills are higher than average. Nearly all children behave in appropriate ways for their age and are beginning to understand what is acceptable behaviour, for example, they know that they must keep quiet when others are speaking. They help to clear away and treat the classroom environment with respect. Pupils' standards in language and literacy are average, but, on entry to the school, many of the present Reception children were below average in this area. They make good progress and by the age of five, the majority of children are on course to meet the standard expected. On entry to the school the

present Reception children's mathematical skills were slightly above average. Nursery and Reception children make good progress as a result of good teaching and by the time that they are five, many are likely to exceed the expected nationally agreed targets. Number songs and rhymes help them to count forwards and backwards, take one away and add one on. They learn new vocabulary such as 'more' and 'less', 'full' and 'empty' when working with sand, water and dough.

Children's physical skills are average by the age of five. They generally hold pencils properly, cut with scissors safely, spread glue and use paintbrushes reasonably well. The provision for developing muscular skills by riding bicycles and using wheeled vehicles is good in the Nursery but unsatisfactory with regard to the Reception children, and, consequently, these pupils' muscular skills are barely average. Many children have good creative skills. They make good pasta necklaces and explore collage materials well when making pictures of houses. Children participate with enthusiasm in singing activities and know the words and actions of simple songs and games.

11. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The initial assessment of their skills as they enter the Nursery shows that they are above average overall, but only average in language, literacy and physical development. The present Year 2, however, were below these standards when they entered the school, and a significant number have below average literacy and mathematical skills. This group has made good progress and their attainment overall is now above average in nearly all subjects.

12. In the lessons observed, children in the Nursery made at least good progress in all lessons, and very good gains in almost six lessons out of ten. In Reception, progress was sound overall, but good in only half the lessons. Good progress was made in their literacy and numeracy work where the carefully structured work develops appropriate skills. Too much of their other work, however, is based on the National Curriculum, rather than on the areas of learning recommended for children of this age, and this affects the development of their skills. Children's physical skills in Reception develop slowly, as the lack of appropriate facilities limits their experiences. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress. In the lessons observed, pupils made at least sound progress on all occasions, good progress in seven lessons out of ten and very good gains in over one lesson in seven. The consistently good teaching, and the effects of the literacy and numeracy hours, in particular, ensure that pupils are suitably extended, and build systematically on their skills. Higher attaining pupils do well, and, in this year's national assessment tests, over one third exceeded national levels in science and reading, over one quarter in mathematics and nearly one fifth in writing. In particular subjects, progress is good, apart from in design and technology and physical education where it is sound. In information technology, progress is slow as there are insufficient computers, too little emphasis on the regular building of skills, and too few occasions when pupils benefit from direct teaching followed by an opportunity to practise new work.

13. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Their individual education plans are well constructed to identify their weaknesses clearly, and are regularly reviewed to judge the effectiveness of the teaching. Consequently, nine pupils were withdrawn from the special educational needs register last year. Higher attaining pupils make good progress overall. Apart from in information technology, teachers' planning gives good opportunities for higher attaining pupils to extend their skills, and as a result, many attain higher than average levels.

18. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

14. Attitudes to learning, behaviour and relationships within the school are very good, and are significant strengths of the school. These findings are broadly similar to those of the previous inspection. The pupils are articulate and friendly, and always polite, both to each other and to adults. They are keen to learn, courteous to each other, work well together and react positively to the adults. The atmosphere in classrooms is calm and purposeful. All pupils respond very well to teachers' high expectations of both their attitudes and behaviour.

15.Children under five show good responses in both Nursery and Reception classes. Children are frequently engaged in handling and exploring equipment and materials and in the Nursery are learning to remain with an activity. A few find concentration on one activity difficult but most show good attitudes to learning and are happy and secure in their surroundings. Their behaviour in and around the classroom is mostly appropriate and they take turns and share fairly. They demonstrate positive relationships with one another, for example, by helping each other when putting on coats. Children are learning to play co-operatively in both Nursery and Reception classes. They are often thoughtful about others; for example, they take care of Mozart and Picasso (teddy bears in the Nursery) who go home each day with a different child.

16.The previous inspection noted that a significant minority of pupils soon lost concentration, but the findings of the current inspection are that the pupils work hard and sustain concentration very well. They are confident in class discussion and are keen to offer help to other pupils. They are obviously enthusiastic about their work, enjoy school and show a positive response to challenges.

17.The standard of behaviour is very good, especially within the classroom. The school has developed a behaviour policy with staff, governors and parents which is clear and has sound objectives. Pupils take good notice of 'golden rules' displayed around the school, and each class has its own rules, decided after discussion. Parents are very satisfied with the way in which the school promotes and achieves high standards of behaviour, as they feel that this has a very good effect on pupils' attainment. They are involved at an early stage if there are problems. There is no evidence of bullying at the school, and there have been no exclusions.

18.Relationships between staff and pupils are very strong, and this creates a very good working atmosphere. Pupils are respectful of the views of others, and listen with interest to the opinions and answers of their classmates.

19.The personal development of pupils is very good. It is effectively encouraged through personal, social and health education, which is not formalised but extends across the whole curriculum. Pupils are keen to take on extra responsibility as monitors, for example, taking registers to the office, helping in assembly and at wet playtimes when they are responsible for getting out and putting away equipment. Year 2 pupils are keen to look out for and help smaller children.

24. **Attendance**

20.Attendance is satisfactory, averaging 93.6 four per cent, which is in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence, at 0.8 per cent, is above the national average. Scrutiny revealed that the unauthorised absence is high because a minority of parents take their children out of school for more than the permitted ten days. Most pupils arrive punctually at school and at lessons. There is good information to encourage parents to ensure their children's regular attendance. They are aware of the need to inform the school of absences and are immediately involved in cases of persistent lateness or absence. The previous report noted that registers were not always completed at the start of teaching sessions, but the school now meets this requirement. Registers are efficiently and accurately kept and are monitored weekly by the school secretary and monthly by the headteacher. The good attendance and punctuality of the majority of pupils have a positive effect on standards of attainment

25. QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

25. Teaching

21. The quality of teaching at the school is good. In the previous report, teaching had shortcomings in Key Stage 1, particularly concerning the way teachers that planned lessons. This largely new teaching staff has bonded very well together, and teaching overall is greatly improved. Only one lesson out of 49 was unsatisfactory in this inspection, and nearly nine out of ten lessons were good. In nearly one quarter of lessons, the teaching was very good.

22. The quality of teaching for children under five is good. It is very good in the Nursery, where the teacher focuses clearly on the planning of activities to meet the recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes for very young children. The Nursery teacher is very skilled, as is the nursery nurse who can ask questions very well and leads sessions competently and confidently. Expectations are high in the Nursery, and the teaching is well balanced between structured and 'free' activities. The teaching in the Reception is satisfactory, but the focus on the recommended Desirable Learning Outcomes for these children is less precise than in the Nursery, and this slows down children's progress towards these goals. The Reception class teacher plans her work according to the school curriculum rather than for children under five, and, whilst this is often appropriate for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, the planning is too formal in other activities.

23. In Key Stage 1, the teaching is good overall, with over nine out of ten lessons at least good and over one lesson in five very good. Teachers' planning is thorough, and there are clear indications of the levels that different groups of pupils should attain. This planning has gained a great deal from recent reviews by the staff, and the school has made good use of the Local Education Authority's advisors to decide upon the best system. In contrast to the previous report's findings, teachers' planning now provides challenging work for pupils of all levels of ability, and enables the great majority of pupils to attain at least national standards in all subjects. Teachers are knowledgeable, and research their topics thoroughly to ensure that pupils benefit from correct information. Less experienced teachers are well supported by the headteacher and senior staff, and contribute significantly to the high standard of teaching. Teachers build warm, supportive relationships with their pupils, value their contributions and give plenty of praise and encouragement. They establish and maintain firm rules to ensure that the behaviour of pupils is very good, and that all lessons take place in a calm, purposeful manner.

24. The school has made a good start to the National Literacy Strategy, and these lessons have an appropriate structure. Reading skills are taught carefully, and texts for reading are generally well matched to pupils' stages of development. Spelling, grammar and early punctuation are taught well, and there is good attention to handwriting and presentation.

25. The teaching of mathematics is good. In numeracy, teachers have received good training in the new National Numeracy Strategy, and much of the mental mathematics work is good. In one of the best numeracy lessons, the teacher was introducing the idea of addition by beginning with the larger of two numbers, 'holding that number in your head' and adding the smaller number. The teacher made good use of large dice to select the numbers, and picked out pupils to complete the sum. Pupils were excited by the use of the dice, and stimulated by their success at applying the new skill. As a result, all made good progress. In information technology, the teaching is unsatisfactory; there are too few computers, and too little time has been allocated on the timetable to develop pupils' skills. When new computer techniques are introduced, the whole class crowds around the one machine, finding it difficult to see, and then misses the opportunity to practise the skill because of the shortage of computers. The teaching of all other subjects is good. The school is making effective use of published schemes of work, and reviewing their usefulness with some success. This means that lessons are focused appropriately on the Programmes of Study, and develop pupils' skills systematically.

26.The provision of homework is good, and concentrates appropriately on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The homework diaries are a good initiative, and allow pupils, parents and teachers to comment on aspects of work completed at home and school.

27.The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' individual education plans are completed by the teachers, and monitored by the headteacher, who is the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs. These plans give clear guidance to teachers, and are characterised by specific targets to enable pupils to make the best possible progress. Teachers' lesson plans make clear provision for pupils with special educational needs, and they make good progress. The educational support assistants are well trained, and work closely with teachers to provide good support for pupils working in small groups within the classroom.

32. The curriculum and assessment

28.Curricular provision is good and promotes the aims of the school effectively. It is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements where these apply. Improvements have been made since the previous OFSTED inspection when history, geography and some aspects of information technology did not meet requirements. At present, only information technology does not fully meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. All subjects of the National Curriculum are provided and religious education is taught according to the locally Agreed Syllabus. Personal, social and health education issues, although not formalised, are successfully incorporated into the curriculum and include important components relating to the dangers of drugs. Sex education has been agreed by governors as part of the pupils' personal development and is taught within the science curriculum appropriately for the ages of the pupils. Curricular provision promotes the pupils' intellectual, physical, spiritual, moral and cultural development successfully and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

29.The school gives good emphasis to literacy and numeracy. The format of the literacy hour is now well established and teachers provide a breadth of opportunities for writing for different purposes. For example, in science, pupils give accounts of what they have found out and in history, they research into the lives of famous people and imagine the conditions in which they worked. Opportunities for speaking and listening are less prevalent. The numeracy hour has been successfully implemented and chances to work problems out mentally are found. Widespread examples occur where mathematics is included in subjects such as science and design and technology, when pupils carry out measurements and analyse data. The school has also tried to raise the profile of number work by having a mathematics day based on the theme '101 Dalmatians'.

30.In the previous inspection report, a key issue was that the school should put schemes of work in place and improve the quality of the planning. The school has made a good response in this area and has clearly defined criteria for testing the improvements made. Planning documents are now detailed for each year group and indicate how the curriculum is taught from the Nursery to Year 2. Schemes of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority have been recently adopted for science, history, geography and design and technology. Hertfordshire Education Services schemes of work are used for art, information technology, music and physical education. These provide the necessary information to guide teachers in planning so that pupils have the opportunity to make good progress in their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding.

31.The school produces statements of current practice, and annual reviews of subjects by subject co-ordinators are useful in making an assessment of the progress made and in giving an outline of future plans. Planning which covers a term is well documented and is carefully communicated to parents. On a weekly basis, there are comprehensive plans for literacy and numeracy and detailed planning guides the teaching of science and religious education. Information technology is not so precisely outlined, and teachers try, often with limited success, to incorporate information technology into other lessons.

32.The strengths of teachers are used productively when skills in music and art are shared in Year 2. Weekly teaching hours are satisfactory and time allocations for the different subjects are appropriate. History and geography are successfully alternated over half termly periods.

33.The curriculum for children aged under five is uneven. Some areas are good but there are weaknesses in the Reception class. The Nursery curriculum is documented in terms of the recommended areas of learning for children aged under five, and provides a good range of appropriate experiences for young children. The Reception class curriculum focuses on the same subjects which are covered in Key Stage 1, and there is insufficient planning for the areas of learning for children under five. The teaching does, however, take notice of some of the elements of these factors but they are not carefully detailed. Some good first hand experiences occur based on the Local Education Authority's schemes for the early years but there is not a coherent approach to planning for the children under five. The early years co-ordinator's role has not encompassed monitoring the full curriculum which the children who are under five are receiving. There are deficiencies in the provision for the Reception children who do not have their own outdoor area for the development of physical skills.

34.The school's equal opportunities policy does not explicitly include all four categories of opportunity, but taken with the implicit inclusions in the school's general aims, all aspects of equality are fully covered. In practice, apart from pupils in the Reception class whose work for this term is not planned in line with the recommended curriculum for children under five, all pupils receive full equality of opportunity. This includes equality of curricular provision, of lessons within classes, and of all activities, experiences and events open to pupils in classes, year groups or the whole school. Pupils also receive equality of support in that support is provided according to pupils' individual needs. Equality of opportunity is also well supported by a new multicultural education policy, which has been well implemented in activities such as the recent book week which included a performance by Hindu dancers, and an African storyteller.

35.The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs. There is a good policy for the education of pupils with special educational needs which clearly outlines the school's procedures. The headteacher, as special educational needs co-ordinator, knows each pupil well and gives good support to teachers. Pupils' individual education plans are good, and give clear and achievable goals towards which pupils and teachers can aim. The school monitors pupils' progress well, and teachers pay particular attention to why certain strategies succeed or fail. All the requirements of the Code of Practice are met, and all parents are partners in the formation of their child's individual education plan. The governors' Annual Report does not sufficiently detail the discharge of their duties regarding special educational needs, such as changes to the policy, the success of the policy, or the allocation of resources to pupils with special educational needs.

36.The school has a clear homework policy and has an appropriate home/school agreement. The home/school diary is purposeful and gives parents good information about the precise work in lessons when homework is linked to it. A good example was seen in Year 2 where the learning outcomes of a history lesson had been included so that parents were clear about the nature of a research task. Similarly, a mathematics task involved pupils in finding eight items at home, which clearly gave their weight. According to their ages, pupils take home work on phonics, reading and number work. The school maintains that homework is a voluntary activity and should not take precedence over events with the family.

37.Extracurricular provision is good, and shows an improvement on the sound provision at the previous inspection. Pupils have the opportunity to belong to a football club and to participate in a fun and games club. There are no competitive matches with other schools but around 30 pupils are involved in the football activity, which is run by parents.

38.The curriculum is enriched by visits, for example, to a Victorian school, a Hindu temple, Harlow museum and the National Gallery and the Science Museum. Theatre groups visit the school and

during a History Week, pupils had the chance to learn about their own heritage and to hear about the childhood of their grandparents.

39.The school has made a rigorous attempt to address the previous key issue relating to assessment which was to establish systems to monitor pupils' rate of progress from entry to the end of Key Stage 1 in order to evaluate the quality of education provided by the school. These procedures are now good, and provide a clear picture of the progress of individual and groups of pupils.

40.The school now has good procedures for assessment, recording and reporting which have been recently reviewed. Assessment is closely linked to planning, especially where the new Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's schemes of work are involved. Assessments are built in as units of work are completed. Helpful guidelines also indicate the knowledge and skills which are expected for different levels of abilities within a class. Assessments linked to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are detailed and guide teachers in their planning of future programmes of work. The assessment and recording of progress in design and technology and information technology are not so elaborate.

41.The analysis of data by the Local Education Authority which indicates the strengths of children is used productively by the school, and provides information to enable comparisons to be made with the county average. Assessment is well monitored by the headteacher who, in the absence of an assessment co-ordinator, looks at overall trends and identifies significant weaknesses. Whole-school information is shared to enable teachers to modify and improve their termly planning. Analysis of the end of key stage tests is thoughtfully undertaken to pick out areas where pupils found difficulties so that adjustments can be made to the curriculum. The school is considering reintroducing reading tests to gain more information on individual progress.

42.There is good use of assessment to inform planning overall. Very good examples occur of assessment on a day-to-day basis and the information gained is kept in teachers' planning folders. A good attempt has been made to carry out moderation exercises and examples of pupils' work are accompanied with statements of the levels. These serve as accurate points of reference to enable inexperienced teachers to judge levels accurately. They are not yet in a readily accessible form and the school acknowledges that this is the next stage.

43.Assessments, which are conducted when children enter the Nursery and then the Reception class, are used carefully to plan the work for children under five. In the Nursery there are very accurate forms of assessment, which are linked to the six areas of learning recommended for very young children. These help the staff to track the progress which children make each term. Detailed personal and social records are kept for the youngest children in the school but are more variable in the Reception class and Key Stage 1.

44.The marking in pupils' books is often encouraging but does not always show them how they might improve their work. Some good individual setting of targets occurs and the school is gradually involving pupils in developing their own goals for personal achievement. The analysis of information by the Local Education Authority about cohorts enables the school to set accurate targets with regard to attainment at the end of the key stage. The reporting of the national assessment test results to parents meets the statutory requirements.

49. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

45.The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and better than the good provision noted in the previous inspection. The school promotes very good values and standards throughout the whole school community, with the emphasis on the value of every child as an individual. Adults set a very good example by the way they respect others' feelings and views.

46.For children under five, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

is good. Nursery children attend assemblies with Reception on Thursdays. They join in with major school celebrations, such as the harvest festival, and they have produced their own class assembly to show to the rest of the school. Sometimes, they sing songs for the rest of the school during that time to show what they can do. Clear guidelines are given to children about right and wrong. They are encouraged to work together in groups, and these arrangements promote their social skills. They learn about caring for babies and young animals. There are multicultural stories in the book corner in the Nursery. Reception children join in with the school assemblies and learn about events in the Christian calendar and other events, which are celebrated by different faiths. Both Nursery and Reception children were included in the activities of the multicultural week, when they heard stories from the African storyteller and saw Hindu dancers perform.

47. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good, and regular acts of collective worship contribute well to this aspect of the school's work. Assemblies are of a mainly Christian nature but other religions and faiths are also explored. Assembly is a special time, denoted by pupils focusing on a lighted candle. Pupils are given suitable time to reflect on the content of the assembly and to consider and enjoy individual achievements. All pupils are given many opportunities to reflect upon, consider, enjoy and put into practice the values of the school. The parents speak of the school as a 'family with family values'. The teachers have high expectations that pupils will value and respect each other. Teaching allows pupils to explore feelings of awe and wonder and a good example was seen in mathematics in Year 2 when the teacher put paint onto some paper, folded it and the pupils gasped at the symmetry of the patterns that this produced.

48. The school provides a very good moral atmosphere in which all children, regardless of religious background, are encouraged to worship in a way which is appropriate to them. Pupils are given a strong idea of right and wrong, with clear rules, which they are given some responsibility for devising. The school's strong emphasis on the importance of good behaviour is underpinned by a comprehensive behaviour policy which is also circulated to parents so that they understand what the school is trying to achieve. Teachers make very good use of the system of rewards and stickers, which are valued by pupils. When sanctions are needed, these are explained and are applied fairly and consistently. In an assembly, a pupil was given the opportunity to explain how honesty influences the way we live, and her answer exemplified how well the school's moral values were understood by the pupils. Throughout the school, there is strong evidence that pupils are valued and that their opinions sought and respected.

49. The provision for pupils' social development is very good, and is enhanced by a wide range of visits and visitors. This is considered to be an important part of school life. Pupils have visited Museums, the National Gallery, the Playhouse and a Hindu Temple. Visitors from other faiths and communities are encouraged to speak to children in assembly. Two parents run a football club after school, which is well supported. Through the personal and social education programme, pupils are encouraged to explore their own feelings and to share other people's problems. They are given many opportunities to develop their very good social skills, such as confronting and dealing with situations, giving help when there are difficulties and learning to listen to and respect the views of others.

50. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. The school has a clear and straightforward policy statement, which supports the development of positive attitudes towards cultural diversity. The emphasis is on preparing children to live and work in harmony and to provide a culturally rich environment in which learning opportunities are fostered. In classes and assemblies, festivals from other religions, including those of Jewish, Muslim and Hindu and Sikh beliefs, are studied and celebrated. There are many examples of other customs, cultures and religions in evidence about the school, with a very good selection of books and artefacts in use to support the curriculum. In art, the works of famous artists such as Cézanne and Kandinsky are studied, and in music, pieces from around the world are introduced to the pupils, for example, in assembly, the music played was from Ecuador. In the recent 'book week', a multicultural theme

was adopted, and Hindu Dance, African stories and Aboriginal art were presented to pupils. Year 2 visited a Hindu Temple and Reception pupils visited 'Aklowa', a simulated African village, and later presented an assembly on the theme. The emphasis throughout the school is on teaching pupils to live and work in harmony. Parents appreciate the very good provision, which enhances pupils' opportunities in these areas.

55. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

51. All adults within the school support and guide the pupils within a safe, welcoming and caring environment. These findings reflect those of the previous inspection. Provision is good, and there is a consistently positive approach to any pupils with problems. The school's ethos enables all pupils to feel secure and valued and to have their viewpoint and personal qualities recognised. Staff have very good relationships with their pupils. The strong emphasis on very good behaviour enables pupils to learn effectively in a happy, relaxed atmosphere. Pupils are very polite and parents are aware of the expectations of high standards, which they fully recognise and to which they are committed. The behaviour policy is clear and there are good systems in place for monitoring behaviour and ensuring consistency. The bullying policy includes a booklet 'Tell Tell Tell', which contains good advice presented in an easily understandable way.

52. The school is a secure environment with access during school hours by a monitored front door entry system. During breaks, pupils are well supervised by a sufficient number of adults. Pupils' progress is monitored effectively by assessment, and teachers keep good records of pupils' academic and personal development. There is good liaison between parents and the school to ensure that pupils' progress and any problems are communicated effectively. There is good support for pupils who are new to school, and teachers make good use of the formalised induction process. Visits and the passing on of records ensure a smooth transition to the junior school.

53. Pupils' attendance is monitored efficiently, and punctuality and regular attendance are encouraged. The child protection policy provides good guidelines and information and it follows the Hertfordshire 'Working Together for Child Protection' policy. The headteacher is the child protection officer and liaises with the appropriate authorities. New staff are aware of procedures to be followed in case of problems. The school has good links with outside agencies, and there are a number of regular visitors including the educational welfare officer, school nurse, fire officer, speech therapist, educational psychologist and governors.

54. The health and safety policy is concise and very informative with each person's roles and responsibilities clearly outlined. The headteacher is the designated officer, the caretaker reports matters on a day-to-day basis and there is a termly risk assessment and audit. In practice, the school is generally safe, although the piano in the hall is a potential hazard for pupils doing physical education, and bars leading to the dining hall pose a threat as pupils climb on them and there is a hard surface with sharp edges if they fall. In addition, the cooker in the Nursery is insufficiently guarded, and is too easily accessible to children.

55. Fire appliances are regularly checked and records of these checks are accurately recorded. The accident book is properly maintained and parents are informed of any incidents. There are two people with first aid experience and first aid boxes are suitably located and checked. There is no medical room. The school's policy on sex education is to answer questions as they arise and drugs education is covered in science. These procedures are sound.

56. Induction procedures for children who are aged under five are good. These ensure a calm transition from home into the Nursery and also from there into the Reception class. Arrangements are made for Nursery children to experience some of the elements of the main school, for example, playtimes and story sessions, before they attend on a full time basis. There are good links with external agencies, and good links with the county special educational needs support service have helped with the assessment of pupils.

61.

Partnership with parents and the community

57. The partnership with parents is very good. The school is determined that parents should feel welcome in school, and parents confirmed the effectiveness of this policy in their questionnaires and comments at the parents' meeting before the inspection. Parents give good support to the school and are actively involved with their children's learning. Many of them help in school and their contribution is highly valued. Pupils' academic progress is efficiently monitored, and good curricular planning ensures access and availability to all pupils. There is a parents' evening each term which allows each parent adequate time for discussion. Other meetings are held to support curricular developments, and parents value the usefulness of these activities. Recently, there was a day's focus on numeracy called '101 Dalmatians', which many parents attended and appreciated. Written annual reports on pupils' progress are detailed, and good opportunities are provided for pupils and parents to add their comments.

58. Parents at the meeting and in discussion expressed their satisfaction with the quality of information which the school provides, including annual reports, details of consultation meetings and regular newsletters. Inspectors' findings confirm the high quality of this information.

59. Although the Friends' Association is made up of only a small nucleus of active members, it receives very good support from parents and staff, which results in very impressive fundraising. This has provided computers, books and other items associated with the National Literacy Strategy, large physical education apparatus, outdoor play equipment and a water fountain. These donations significantly enhance the quality of resources available. There are good links with the pre-school groups and the integral Nursery. Pupils visit in the term before starting school. Links with the nearby junior school are strong. They include visits by pupils, staff and parents, as well as the passing on of pupils' records, all of which ensures a smooth transition.

60. The governors' Annual Report to parents and the school's prospectus are generally sound, and include appropriate details of the home/school agreement. There is, however, insufficient information about the progress of pupils with special educational needs, staff development and the progress on the school action plan since the previous report to fulfil statutory requirements.

61. The school energetically supports fundraising activities for local and national charities, including a local special care baby unit. Pupils have also raised funds for Red Nose Day, held a concert for the 'Breakthrough Breast Cancer' charity and are arranging a sponsored event for National Children's Homes. They also support Poppy Day, The Marie Curie Daffodil Day and fill shoeboxes for a charity for children in Eastern Europe. Pupils prepare gifts at harvest time which are donated to the local elderly, some of whom have sent letters of appreciation which were read out in assembly.

62. There are many visits, including those to the National Gallery, Playhouse, Museums, a Victorian School and a Hindu Temple. In January, there is to be a family visit to a Pantomime. Governors and friends are invited into school on a regular basis. These all contribute very well to the pupils' confidence and personal development, support the curriculum, enhance learning opportunities and raise pupils' awareness of the wider community.

67. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

67. Leadership and management

63. The leadership of the school is good, and manages the school effectively. This is an improvement from the findings of the previous inspection when the leadership was sound. Since the previous inspection, the headteacher, governors and staff with management responsibilities have been largely successful in securing improvement in the areas identified as key issues. The quality of teaching has been improved significantly, and is now consistently good. The headteacher has worked hard with the staff to improve lesson planning and increase the pace of lessons. The headteacher has made very good use of the Local Education Authority's advisors to review the school's work, and to observe teachers, and suggest ways to develop their expertise. The school has improved the planning of the curriculum, and has made effective use of published schemes of work. The headteacher makes good use of data gained from the initial assessment of children in the Nursery to monitor their progress by Year 2. Shortcomings in registration procedures have been addressed, and these now meet statutory requirements. The roles of co-ordinators have been strengthened, and they now provide good support to colleagues. However, some subjects have no co-ordinator as two teachers are newly qualified, and another has only recently been appointed, but the headteacher has made a priority of ensuring that the core subjects of English and mathematics are adequately covered. This thoughtful and positive response to areas identified as weaknesses illustrates the strength of the leadership, its clear direction and its determination to improve the school's provision.

64. Parents and governors speak highly of the headteacher's leadership. The headteacher has very good relationships with parents, pupils and staff. She clearly demonstrates the requirement that everyone in the school should work to the best of his or her ability, and achieves this goal by effective support, clarity of purpose and sensitivity to individuals' needs. The effectiveness of this leadership and direction is illustrated by the significant raising of pupils' standards in the national assessment tests over the past three years.

65. A significant strength of the leadership lies in the way the headteacher, in particular, has bonded together a largely new team of staff to form an effective teaching force. The selection of new staff has been astute, and they have been effectively supported as they settle to their new roles. Newly qualified staff are supported well, and have strengthened the teaching with their energy and ideas.

66. The headteacher is keen to develop the expertise of all staff through training and encouragement. The school's appraisal system works well, and provides good targets towards which staff can aim. This process is not confined to teachers, and recently led to the nursery nurse developing her role of liaising with pre-school groups and acting as a mentor to nursery nurse students.

67. The headteacher and senior staff monitor pupils' standards well. Together with the subject co-ordinators, the headteacher monitors pupils' performance in the national assessment tests, and then works with teachers to address weaknesses. This process, for example, uncovered shortcomings in pupils' spelling. The school, therefore, focused on developing this area of pupils' work, and subsequent results in the national assessment tests showed significant improvement. The headteacher has worked with the Local Education Authority to set challenging targets for English and mathematics in the national assessment tests. In school, pupils are set targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy, and this is effective practice.

68. The monitoring of teaching was criticised as being informal and unsystematic in the previous inspection. This is now good, and has helped to improve the teaching from the previous inspection. The headteacher scrutinises teachers' planning, and monitors all teachers in the classroom. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have monitored teaching in their subjects, and the school's introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been successful.

69. The school development plan is sound overall. The headteacher, governors and staff have

produced a plan which clearly identifies priorities which are relevant to the school's needs and circumstances. These are set in a suitable timescale, and address appropriate issues concerning standards and staff development. The plan is reviewed and evaluated regularly by the staff and governors, and this makes it useful as a working document. The weakness of the plan lies in the fact that it covers proposed developments for the coming year only, and this denies the school a long-term vision.

70. The governing body is largely new, following the division of members between this school and the juniors. The acting Chair is knowledgeable, and is keen to work with other governors and the staff to take the school forward. Governors are already becoming actively involved in the everyday life of the school, and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The governing body substantially meets the statutory responsibilities which it has for the teaching of the curriculum, the provision of religious education and acts of collective worship, and those obligations which influence the welfare and progress of pupils, and reporting to parents. There are, however, minor omissions in the prospectus and Annual Report to parents, and health and safety issues concerning the cooker in the Nursery, and unsafe steps to the dining room. The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, and provision is good.

71. The two teachers who form the senior management team with the headteacher provide good support. They share the monitoring of teaching with the headteacher, and meet regularly to discuss issues regarding staffing and pupils' standards. They share a common vision for the school, and parents respect the direction that this partnership provides. The Nursery teacher is also the early years co-ordinator but her role is not developed to include real oversight of the Reception class. This is unsatisfactory, and leads to inconsistencies in the provision between the two classes for children under five.

72. The school's ethos is very good. The school's aims express high expectations of what pupils can achieve in educational terms, as well as embodying the values which underpin the school's very positive and caring ethos. The school meets these aims with considerable success. When responding to the questionnaire, a high proportion of parents feel that the school teaches positive values and attitudes to their children. The headteacher and staff have created a stimulating, warm and welcoming learning environment which is greatly appreciated by pupils and parents. They monitor and evaluate the performance of girls and boys and have a policy for equal access and opportunity.

77. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

73. In the previous inspection report, staffing was said to be appropriate and adequate, professional development was satisfactory, and education support staff made a positive impact. Accommodation was sufficient, although the Nursery accommodation was only just adequate, playground resurfacing was a priority and an environmental area had been identified for development.

74. In this inspection, the number and qualifications of the school's teaching staff meet the needs of the curriculum satisfactorily. The teaching staff is completely new since the previous inspection. There are seven full-time teachers in the school, including the Nursery, and this figure includes the headteacher. The average class size is 28, and the pupil teacher ratio in Key Stage 1 and the Reception together, without the Nursery, is 23. All teachers have appropriate training and qualifications for this age group. However, largely due to the recent retirement of some much older teachers, the staff is predominantly young, and most teachers have only a few years experience as well as two newly qualified teachers. Despite this, the quality of appointments has enhanced the staff, and the level of inexperience is being handled well. Some in-service training has already taken place for relatively new members of staff, and the school has gained much from the energy and ideas brought by new teachers.

75. In addition to the teaching staff, there are four education support staff giving a total of 47.5 hours per week in the classes for children under five, and 50 hours per week for the four Key Stage 1 classes. Additionally, two learning support assistants work specifically with pupils with statements of special educational need. The education support staff are generally very well qualified. Those working with children under five have the specialist qualification for nursery nurses, and two others have studied for relevant certificates on long courses at the local college of further education. They also have a suitable range of experience between them. Whilst the number of support staff is good against national average levels, the Reception class with children still under five does not have any assistance in the afternoons, and this hinders their progress. The expertise and skill of the education support staff contribute well to the standards achieved by pupils in the school. Clerical assistance is 29.5 hours per week, which is close to the average for all schools of similar size. Secretarial, caretaking, and cleaning staff contribute well to the smooth running of the school and to its ethos.

76. The school's arrangements for the professional development of all teaching and support staff are good, and training is related to both the priorities of the school development plan and the needs of individual staff. Teaching and support staff have benefited from a good number of professional training events, and many courses in relevant subjects and aspects of the school's work have been attended. School-based training in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been substantial and effective. The school's arrangements for statutory appraisal are met for the headteacher who has recently been appraised. For other members of the teaching staff, a more frequent professional development interview is conducted, on a termly basis rather than yearly, and this includes use of the Local Education Authority's appraisal self-review format. Teachers are building their own professional portfolios from these regular interviews, and include their self-reviews, observational notes, course attendance and outcomes, and targets set for the ensuing term from the evaluation of their own strengths and weaknesses. This procedure works well.

77. The school has good procedures for the induction of new staff. New support staff are given induction, and new members of the teaching staff are provided with mentors who meet with them formally once a week, whilst the headteacher meets both the new staff and their mentor once a month for a review. Newly qualified teachers have frequent informal as well as formal access to their mentors, and are also systematically observed by the headteacher or senior staff when taking lessons. There is a useful staff handbook in which the professional development policy is outlined.

78. The school's accommodation is generally good, and classrooms are spacious. Nursery children are based in a new purpose-built building which was opened earlier this year. This has very good facilities and has toilets and a shower. There is a good secure outdoor play area, which is adequately stocked with toys and large wheeled vehicles. Equipment is housed in a shed and there is a wooden playhouse for children. There is an attractive garden area with a mound and a bed where children can dig and grow plants. The priority has been to provide new resources for inside the Nursery and outdoor facilities are being developed. Inside the Nursery, there has been a complete refurnishing. The previous Nursery building was demolished. There is no climbing apparatus within the dedicated outdoor area for Nursery children but they do have access to the climbing frame, which is in the school playground. Reception children do not have a safe, secure enclosed area for the development of physical skills, and this slows down their physical development. There are no arrangements at present, for them to use the facilities which the Nursery children have. Nursery children use the hall for music and movement and have physical education sessions there with small apparatus. They do not yet make use of the large apparatus as this is regarded as too dangerous. The Reception class uses the hall for large and small apparatus and for dance activities.

79. For Key Stage 1, the hall is spacious and provides a good floor for movement and physical education, and the foyer area of the school is both spacious and attractive. Although the school is fortunate to have a separate dining room, the ramp to the entrance of this is slippery in wet weather,

making it a possible hazard. Plans have been made to develop the environmental area, and the playground has been resurfaced.

80.Shortcomings in the resources for history and geography noted in the last inspection have been given good attention, and they are now good in history and satisfactory in geography. However, although resources for information technology, also noted as having shortcomings, have been considerably increased by the school, the national average of provision for this subject has also been raised in the intervening period, and the numbers of computers and range of software remain insufficient. Apart from this, resources for learning across all subjects are satisfactory. There are good collections of artefacts for history and for religious education, and the book stock in the library is adequate.

81.There are good resources for children under five. Resources are easily accessible for use by staff and children. There is a good range of construction, malleable and practical resources including information technology.

86. **The efficiency of the school**

82.The school's use of its funds is generally good, as was stated in the previous report. The school development plan sets clear and achievable targets which reflect the needs of the school, and which have the criteria for success built into the process. All developments are costed annually, and match the funds available. All staff and the governing body are appropriately involved in setting the targets, designing the plan and evaluating the effectiveness of their decisions. The school monitors the school development plan well, and the headteacher and subject co-ordinators report regularly on their progress towards the targets, and the money spent. However, the planning for just the next twelve months is unsatisfactory, and provides too little focus on the long term financial development of the school.

83.Governors monitor the school's spending each month, and work with the headteacher and financial secretary to ensure that the finances are in good order. Co-ordinators monitor their resources regularly and advise the headteacher on areas of need, and the benefits gained from their expenditure. This system works well: it ensures that the use of money is closely matched to the school's main priorities, and monitors the benefits.

84.The teaching staff are deployed effectively. The school has made funds available to enable literacy and numeracy co-ordinators to monitor the teaching of their subject, and this has helped to develop good teaching in these core subjects. The school uses teachers with specialist skills well, for example, to provide informed teaching of art and music. The school has made funds available to increase the number, and develop the skills of, education support assistants who are used well to support pupils, including those with special educational needs and children under five. The lack of support in the Reception in the afternoons, however, is unsatisfactory, and means that these children have to wait too long for help in their work.

85.The accommodation is used well. The school grounds and environmental area are used well to give pupils first hand experience of creatures and their habitats for their work in science. There is good storage space for resources, and this is used well to ensure that teachers have easy access to books and equipment.

86.The school's administration runs smoothly, and supports the organisation and teaching of the curriculum well. Financial planning and monitoring of spending are very thorough, and the financial secretary makes every effort to secure the best price for the school's goods.

87.The previous report found that the school provided adequate value for money. Taking into account all the above features in this report, including the good progress pupils make, and the good teaching set against slightly higher than average costs, the school now provides good value for money.

92. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

92. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

1.The previous inspection report said that ‘children get a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes which successfully builds upon their wide range of experiences, knowledge and positive attitudes’. Little detail was given with regard to the early years provision and there were no key issues.

2.At the time of the inspection there were 15 children who were still under five in the Reception class. The Nursery had 26 part time places. Children feel safe and secure in the Nursery environment, which enables them to learn and explore confidently. Relationships with adults are good and there is good full time support for children in the Nursery but only support assistance in the Reception class in the mornings. The attainment of the Reception children is mainly in line with expectations for their age but there were weaknesses on entry with regard to their language and physical development according to their initial assessments. Some of the progress which they have made has been good but progress overall is judged to be satisfactory. The majority of children are in line to achieve the expected outcomes for very young children by the age of five.

3.Nursery children make good progress. The curriculum is well planned for children in the Nursery and covers the six areas of learning in order to develop a wide range of skills. The curriculum for children in the Reception class is planned on a subject basis and does not take sufficient account of the recommended areas of learning, considering that many are still under five and are not able to participate fully in the Key Stage 1 curriculum. In practice, the teaching is satisfactory, and the teacher is endeavouring to provide suitable activities for the age range but does not have sufficient classroom support. The literacy and numeracy approaches are suitably adapted for them and are taught well. Planning is not coherent across the pre-Key Stage 1 phase. In the Reception class, children are sometimes experiencing tasks which do not provide sufficient challenge as they have already successfully encountered them in the Nursery. In addition, some of the play is not sufficiently structured for children in the Reception class in order to develop the appropriate knowledge and concepts. The teaching in the Nursery is very good. The teacher’s direct teaching skills are very good and she pays good attention to children’s individual needs. Assessment procedures are good in the Nursery and satisfactory in the Reception class. The accommodation is very good for the Nursery children. Reception children have a large airy room but do not have free access to a secure enclosed area so that they can undertake outdoor play on a daily basis. This is a weakness in the early years provision, and affects the progress of children’s physical skills.

95. **Personal and social development**

4. The progress made in personal and social development is good and this is reflected in the quality of teaching. Children's skills are good overall, and nearly all children are on course to achieve at least the nationally expected outcomes by the time that they are five. This area of development is given a particularly high priority in the Nursery. Children are encouraged to consider others, take responsibility for their own equipment, dress themselves, visit the toilet satisfactorily without assistance and share materials when working in groups. Staff provide very effective role models for children, give praise and build confidence. Children echo the positive comments which are made and learn to value the efforts of others, for example, when they are showing their finished work to the class. Nursery children show good attitudes to most learning and are happy and secure in their surroundings. They listen attentively and concentrate on a task in order to finish it. Several of the Reception children are at the same stage as the Nursery children and are developing sound social skills. Good examples of collaborative work occurred when two Nursery children worked on a computer program and had to decide which words rhymed, and when Reception children made pretend meals with collage materials and had to share the scissors and glue. Most children behave in appropriate ways for their age and are beginning to understand what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour; for example, they know the importance of keeping quiet when others are speaking. They help to clear away and treat the classroom with respect. Some of the classroom activities are predetermined and do not always allow children to make choices about the materials to be used. Children have the chance to experience wonder and joy when they visit a farm to see the animals, and when they notice changes in the weather and flowers and trees in different seasons. Reception children are confident when going into assemblies and Nursery children have the chance to join acts of worship with the infants and to realise that they are part of a larger community.

96. **Language and literacy**

5. On entry to the school, many of the present Reception children were below average in this area. They make good progress and by the age of five, the majority of them are on course to meet the standard expected. The quality of teaching is good with some very good teaching in the Nursery. Teachers place strong emphasis on the development of language. They use many strategies to encourage speaking and listening; for example, in the Nursery, teddy bears called Mozart and Picasso go home with children for an overnight stay and parents write a diary of their adventures. This is discussed at the beginning of sessions and is a good starting point for children to talk about everyday matters and to relate incidents occurring in their own families. They learn new words to describe fruits and vegetables and have practice in explaining what they see in photographs of babies. They listen intently to stories and rhymes and enjoy hearing poems which have visual impact when the nursery nurse wears her 'poetry coat'. The role play area which may represent a house, a hospital or a café provides opportunities for children to explore the use of conversation and questions when they play together. Children share books on a daily basis and also take books home to read with parents. Nursery and Reception children know that print gives meaning and sometimes tell the story from the pictures. A few are beginning to recognise initial letters and simple words. Reception children read big books to a good standard with the help of the teacher during the literacy hour and refer to pages and the title. They display good maturity when they reach decisions about whether the story has a sad or a happy ending. Phonics are taught well through a structured scheme which links the letter sound with an action and with the written formation of the letter. Displays help children to learn the letter of the week. Children have good opportunities to practise early writing skills when they go into the writing corner and imagine that they are making birthday cards or writing letters to others. They draw pictures well, and with help, write about 'myself' and 'things I can do', and begin to write in an emergent way. Skills in the formation of letters are at an early stage in Reception and many children trace over the teacher's model.

97. Mathematics

6. On entry to the school, the present Reception children's mathematical skills were slightly above average. Nursery and Reception children make good progress as a result of good teaching and, by the time that they are five, are likely to exceed the expected levels of attainment. In the Nursery, a comprehensive range of practical equipment enables the children to sort and match objects, thread beads in sequences and recognise numbers up to at least five. With help, they record data by making sets of the colour of eyes and the numbers of children who are three and who are four. Number songs and rhymes help them to count forwards and backwards, take one away and add one on. They learn new vocabulary such as 'more' and 'less', 'full' and 'empty' when working with sand, water and dough. In the Reception class, they count reliably up to ten and give one number name to each object. Higher attaining children refer to larger numbers and have practice in estimating how many trains they can see. Many can refer to a chart showing 100 squares when learning to count in tens. They show good skills when carrying out simple calculations involving addition and subtraction, naming flat shapes and solids and comparing two objects by using vocabulary such as longer and shorter. The daily mathematics lesson in the Reception class allows children to tackle problems, practise doubling numbers and try out mental strategies. In the home corner, they measure objects well by direct comparison in an incidental way, for example, by finding which doll is the smallest so that she can be the 'baby'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

7. Reception children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning and are on course to attain the appropriate standard by the time that they are five. The teaching is satisfactory but expectations are sometimes too low with reference to the content. Although the session is regarded as science on the timetable, it makes little reference to the recommended areas of learning for this age group. Some of the work in Reception is only at the level of children in the Nursery. The group organisation sometimes present difficulties when all children are expected to carry out an investigation in a session. This leads to a superficial focus on the work and children are not sufficiently challenged as the teacher is trying to oversee a range of activities without adequate support. The quality of teaching in the Nursery is very good and children make rapid progress, particularly when time is given for a thorough investigation of the properties of fruits, for example. Similarly, children discuss the growth of a baby with good understanding with the nursery nurse and notice differences in photographs of her granddaughter. Their attainment is above average as they compare their own skills with those of a baby and talk about their own experiences with younger children. The high quality of the work is achieved by very precise questioning which enables children to extend their vocabularies and voice their opinions. Planning is thorough and resources are very well prepared and organised in these situations so that children benefit from the experience.

By the time that they are five, the current Nursery children are on course to exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area. They make good model houses, use the sense of touch to investigate the contents of 'feely bags', learn about the different shades of colour when they look at the green table, and explore their immediate environment. Both indoor and outdoor play enables them to pretend to dress up as other people such as a policeman, waitress or bridesmaid and small world play with animals and people allows them to pretend to enact situations from their own experiences. Role play areas engage them in pretending to be at the seaside or inviting guests for a meal. Reception children learn about different types of buildings, start to write their addresses and begin to make routes. They are not so adept at using computers as their counterparts in the Nursery.

99. **Physical development**

8. Nursery children make good progress and receive good teaching with regard to the development of fine skills, which require appropriate hand control. They are taught to hold pencils properly, cut with scissors, spread glue and handle paintbrushes. Opportunities to handle artificial dough and to use small constructional equipment help pupils to develop good manipulative control. The provision for developing muscular skills by riding bicycles and using wheeled vehicles is good in the Nursery but unsatisfactory with regard to the Reception children who do not receive this experience. They do not have free access to a secure outdoor play area with the appropriate resources on a daily basis. This is a requirement for children aged under five in order to develop the necessary balance, co-ordination and skill in climbing. Nursery children do not have their own necessary agility apparatus but are able to use the equipment in the Infant playground. Progress in the acquisition of these skills is too slow for the Reception children and overall progress for pre-Key Stage 1 is, therefore, only satisfactory. The quality of teaching in the Reception class is satisfactory with regard to the development of fine skills but a lack of classroom support, especially in the afternoons, makes it difficult for this aspect to be highlighted. Reception children have the chance to use the hall for physical education and some higher attaining children are able to hop at least a step or two. Several are able to jump with both feet together and they are learning to use the space around them. On entry, the overall attainment of the present Reception children was slightly below average for their age. By the time that they are five, around half are on course to meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes for physical development.

100. **Creative development**

9. Children show obvious enjoyment when working creatively and Reception children are on course to meet the nationally agreed outcomes by the time that they are five. The present Nursery children are on course to exceed them. Progress is good overall and is matched to the quality of teaching. The standard of the work produced is enhanced by the intervention of adults, especially in the Nursery when children are taught specific techniques and are encouraged to look carefully at the items which they are drawing or painting. On these occasions, the quality of the teaching is very good. Progress is good in the Reception class when the teacher gives attention to children carrying out observational drawings of vegetables, and satisfactory when time has to be spent attending to groups working on other elements of the curriculum. In this class, there are some opportunities for children to express themselves freely with paint but these are not a regular feature within the daily activities. Nursery children making good pasta necklaces and these also help them to sequence colours and develop skills in threading. They explore collage materials well when making pictures of houses. Children participate in singing activities, know the words and actions of simple songs and games, use musical instruments to good effect, and clap to accompany a beat. Reception children benefit from the services of a visiting musician who helps children to explore music through everyday sounds and shows them how to recognise loud and soft ones when they are listening.

101.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

101. **English**

10. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 tests for 1999 shows that standards in English were well above the national average in reading in terms of those attaining at least the expected Level 2. Standards were above average for the proportion of pupils exceeding the national expectation at Level 3. In writing, standards were shown to be well above the national average at both Level 2 and above and at Level 3. In reading and writing, where the school's data was compared with similar schools, they were above average. Trends over the last three years show that standards in reading and writing have improved significantly, particularly since the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy.

11. In the previous inspection report, standards in English were found to be good, despite some frequently unsatisfactory teaching. Although there were no key issues in the subject itself, the teaching issues were addressed in a key issue which included aiming for high quality teaching, and, in particular, improving planning and establishing the monitoring of progress. In English, these points have been satisfactorily addressed.

12. The findings of this inspection are that standards in both reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 exceed national expectations and that standards in literacy are good. This is in line with the findings of the last inspection, but lower than the latest national end of key stage results because of the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2. The findings of the inspection indicate no current significant variations in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs attain well for their capabilities and their previous learning, and higher attaining pupils are challenged effectively.

13. Standards in speaking and listening at the end of Key Stage 1 meet national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils narrate, describe and converse at levels appropriate for their age, and speak confidently. Their length of speech and grammatical constructions are generally appropriate for their age, but a significant minority of pupils show a good range of vocabulary. They listen attentively. Progress in speaking and listening is also satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to use their speech for reporting with an awareness of audience within the classroom, and to hold short small group discussions on focused topics. They listen with increasing attention to detail as they get older.

14. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain above average standards in reading. Pupils generally read accurately and use reading to enjoy some easy stories or to understand simple information. All of them like reading and take their books home regularly to practise their skills. This home-school reading link supports well the good attainment made in reading in the school. Good progress takes place in reading through the school. Many pupils have good book handling skills for their age, and use their library skills well to find their own books, stories and poems in the school library. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in reading, helped by the good individual education plans designed to meet their specific needs.

15. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment in writing are above average. Pupils write simple sentences well and link them together to form a story, letter, description or report, generally of a good length for their age. They have made a good start with punctuation and with spelling. Higher attaining pupils attend to form and style connected with the purpose of their writing, and often use more complex sentence structures. Progress in writing through Key Stage 1, including that made by pupils with special educational needs, is good. Pupils learn to spell monosyllabic and other easy words increasingly well, thus enabling them to develop the ability to express their thoughts and ideas in writing. Handwriting is generally well developed for their age, and increases in neatness and clarity as pupils become older.

16. Progress in English overall through Key Stage 1 is good. Pupils enter the key stage with standards close to the average for their age in all three strands of the subject, and, by the end of the key stage, show good standards in both writing and reading. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress for their capabilities and their previous learning.

17. Pupils' attitudes to their work in English are good throughout the school. They are interested in their work, settle down to it well, and begin to show some independence in their studies. Older pupils enjoy opportunities for collaborative work, such as small group discussion, but all ages are keen to comment, ask and answer questions.

18. The quality of teaching in the subject is good, and much better than the generally satisfactory teaching reported in the last inspection. Teachers have improved the quality of their planning, and pupils are extended far more than was previously reported. All lessons seen in the subject were good, and one in ten was very good. Careful listening skills are encouraged, and pupils' comments

and questions are welcomed. Challenges in thinking and reasoning were well presented and were often specifically targeted to gain appropriate matches to pupils' abilities, through the careful use of questioning. Reading skills are taught carefully, although there is a lack of awareness of important points in the development of skills shown in the assessment and recording of progress used by teachers. Texts for reading are generally well matched to pupils' stages of development. Indexing and library skills are well taught. The study of texts in the literacy hours is very carefully structured, and is effective in promoting pupils' progress in literary understanding and appreciation. Spelling, grammar and early punctuation are taught well, and there is good attention to handwriting and presentation. Teachers provide pupils with a good range of purposes for writing, and this helps to adapt the style and structure of writing to its purpose and reader. Teachers assess writing well, and have a good grasp of the sequence of learning and development in this strand of the subject. Here, the relationship between assessment and planning is working very effectively. The National Literacy Strategy has been well prepared for and is now effectively established. Planning for this at all levels is very good. The quality of teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs in this subject is good throughout the school.

19. The policy for the subject includes a brief scheme for each of the strands of the subject in terms of appropriate approaches and objectives. There is also a comprehensive curricular map across the year groups, for the strands of reading and writing, which provides good support for progress. There is, however, no indication of expectations in speaking and listening, and this is a weakness that helps to explain why attainment in this aspect of English is relatively low. Details of assessment and recording are also given for reading and writing, but not for speaking and listening, although the standardised tests detailed for reading have been abandoned pending a further review. Spelling and comprehension are also assessed, and this is a valuable practice. In writing, assessment is good, and staff are used to moderating each other's assessments, using national criteria. Two pieces of work for each pupil are assessed in this way every year. There is a good guide for staff providing criteria for assessing story writing. Although planning for the literacy hours is very good, there is no planning for speaking and listening, and, although there are specific timetabled periods for extended writing, there is also no planning for this aspect.

20. Individual targets are set for pupils, and appropriate whole-school targets for the Year 2 pupils are set. Reporting to parents is done well.

21. The co-ordinator has good knowledge of, and an enthusiasm for, the subject. She has ensured good preparation for the literacy hour in school-based training sessions, is available to her colleagues for advice and help, audits and selects resources well. The co-ordinator samples written work, conducts moderation of assessment in writing, sees planning at all levels, and has done some effective monitoring of lessons. Resources are generally adequate, and of good quality. The library stock is adequate; it is well organised and attractively presented. Useful experiences, which enhance curricular provision, include the holding of a 'book week' with a multicultural theme, Hindu dancers, an African storyteller, and a theatre visit for pupils to see a production of Pinocchio.

22. Literacy is appropriately developed through other subjects in the curriculum, such as writing a harvest prayer in religious education or a report in history or geography, and the standards of literacy across the curriculum are good. Literacy is taught daily in all classes, and the National Literacy Strategy is effectively established. Time is used well. The teaching of the subject and its Programme of Study meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

114. Mathematics

23. In the 1999 national assessment tests for seven year olds, the school's scores were above the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 2 and above was above the national average, as was the proportion who attained the higher Level 3. These results represent an improvement on the broadly average standards reported in the previous inspection. When compared with other schools whose pupils come from similar backgrounds, the school's results are average in terms of those attaining the national standard, and those attaining Level 3. Evidence of the inspection confirms that pupils' attainment in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 is above national expectations for the age group. The standards of numeracy are also above average. Trends in attainment in mathematics show a significant improvement over the past three years. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

24. By the end of Year 2, pupils' numeracy skills are above average. Nearly all pupils have a secure knowledge of place value in tens and units, and can identify odd and even numbers in or out of sequence. Pupils have a good knowledge of addition and subtraction principles with numbers up to 20, and many complete rapid calculations using higher numbers. They count up to 100 and back in tens with confidence, and add and subtract ten from a given number easily. Most pupils have a good mathematical vocabulary, and use terms such as 'cuboid' and 'vertices' accurately. A few pupils, however, have difficulty with the language of mathematics. Although they can often succeed with simple calculations, they find it hard to differentiate, for example, between 'plus', 'add' and 'subtract', and this leads to errors when choosing the appropriate operation to solve problems. Pupils identify and recognise two and three dimensional shapes, and know the number of sides and corners of different shapes. They use small amounts of money to calculate change, and the cost of purchases using various units of coinage. In their measurement work, they measure classroom objects using standard and non-standard measures with accuracy, and tell the time using half past and o'clock. Pupils compile properly labelled graphs, for example, of their favourite games, and use tally charts well to collect evidence to enter on to a computer database. Pupils have a good knowledge of symmetry, and draw corresponding sides of a figure cut in half.

25. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in the subject. They enter the school with average mathematical understanding, and by Year 2, the vast majority of pupils attain at least the national standard and many exceed this level. They make good progress in their numeracy work, gaining speed and confidence during the frequent mental mathematics sessions. Pupils in Year 1 soon develop a good grasp of numbers, and develop effective strategies for adding numbers together. They learn, for example, that the easiest way is to 'hold' the largest number in their head and count on the value of the smaller number. They gain a good early concept of money, and soon recognise the coins. Pupils have a good understanding of shape in Year 1, and know the characteristics of squares and triangles. In Year 2, they build well on their earlier work, and learn to add and subtract mentally single digit numbers with increasing speed and accuracy. They move steadily from measuring length and capacity with cubes and hand spans to using standard units of measure, calculating, for example, the weight in grammes of classroom articles. Pupils make good progress in their use of mathematics, and are confident when making a pie chart of their favourite pets on computers and when making solid shapes in design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and grow in confidence as the daily mental mathematics sessions reinforce their understanding of number. A few, however, still have difficulty with the orientation of their numbers, even by Year 2. Higher attaining pupils also do well, spurred on by good extension activities, and last year, over a quarter exceeded the national expectation in the national assessment tests.

26. Pupils in both year groups are keen and interested in their work in mathematics, and their response and attitudes to all aspects of the subject are very good. They are attentive, listen to their teachers' instructions and respond well to any questioning. Pupils are always well behaved, both in

and out of the classroom, and they work well in collaboration with their classmates when given the opportunity. Pupils are willing and eager to describe and evaluate what they have achieved. The presentation of their work is good, and many show a pride in their books.

27. The school has made a good start with the National Numeracy Strategy. The teaching of mathematics throughout the school is good, and ranges from good to very good. This shows an improvement from the previous inspection when teaching was satisfactory. The teachers have responded enthusiastically to the new numeracy requirements. They start lessons with a lively whole-class introduction which focuses on speeding up pupils' calculations, and this works well. The group work is managed effectively, and all pupils are clear about their tasks. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics, and place good emphasis on regular practice of number skills. They employ skilful questioning and make good use of practical, everyday resources to encourage pupils' learning. One teacher, for example, used large dice to produce two numbers for pupils to add together, and this created great excitement, while providing very good practice for developing pupils' skills and confidence with number. The teachers manage and organise pupils well, and there is a good pace to lessons in order to challenge pupils. Lessons are planned well, with a good concern for the different levels of ability in the class. All lessons have appropriate objectives which, in the best practice, are shared with pupils at the start. Teachers plan well for their support staff, and deploy them appropriately in the classroom to support groups of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Teachers use homework appropriately to develop pupils' numeracy skills. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment by teachers are good, and provide a clear picture of the attainment and progress of individual pupils.

28. The mathematics co-ordinator provides good support to colleagues. She monitors teachers' planning, assessment and teaching rigorously, and this has helped to achieve the consistently good quality of teaching. The curriculum for mathematics is good, and provides clear guidance to teachers when planning lessons. Assessment procedures are good, and have benefited from the in-service training organised by the co-ordinator to achieve consistency between classes. The teachers have received appropriate training on the National Numeracy Strategy, and they are employing the methods effectively. National and internal tests are used well to identify trends and weaknesses, and to identify differences in the attainment of boys and girls. The school has set challenging targets to raise standards further by the year 2000. Resources are sound, with sufficient classroom equipment, text books and larger apparatus, and these resources are used well to hold pupils' interest and to develop their skills and understanding. There is still a shortage of appropriate computer programs to support class work, and this provision has improved little from the weak computer resources noted at the previous inspection. The teaching of the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

120. Science

29. Analysis of the national end of Key Stage 1 assessments by teachers for 1999 shows that the percentage of pupils who reached the expected Level 2 or above, and Level 3, was in each case above the national average. When the results are compared with those of similar schools, they show that at Level 2 and Level 3, they are broadly in line with the average. Over the last three years, there has been a significant improvement, both in the proportion of pupils attaining the national level and those exceeding this to attain Level 3. There are no important differences between the performance of boys and girls.

30. The findings of the inspection are that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards which are above national expectations. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were found to be 'in line with national expectation and frequently above'. By the age of seven, pupils devise simple experiments to a good standard, respond well to suggestions, put forward their own ideas and make good predictions. They classify foods with confidence, and make good observations of their own

meals over a period of time. Most pupils know that humans need food, water, air and light in order to survive. A few show above average skills when providing explanations for changes in living things such as how diet affects the health of people and animals. They use their knowledge of materials well when they describe ways of sorting them into groups according to their properties. When they explore and test electrical circuits, they form accurate conclusions that the circuit must be joined to make the bulb light up.

31. Pupils make good progress. Those with special educational needs also make good progress when classroom assistants support them during investigative work. Rapid progress is closely linked with skilful teaching and careful planning which addresses the needs of all pupils. In Year 1, pupils start to acquire the necessary scientific skills. They begin to draw accurate conclusions about keeping healthy when they identify types of exercise which have a beneficial effect on the body and realise that these cause the heart rate to increase. Their understanding of the importance of bones in the structure of the body is reinforced when they produce pictures of skeletons. Systematic enquiry and good progress continue in Year 2 when pupils learn about growth and make comparisons between their own body measurements and those of other children of the same age. Further analysis occurs when they consider the differences between children and adults and take sample measurements of the sizes of their feet and heads and those of the teacher and learning support assistant. From the data which they collect, they form sensible conclusions about individual differences, but recognise a pattern of growth.

32. Pupils' responses are consistently good. They have positive attitudes towards learning and display enthusiasm when engaged in research, sometimes following up interests in their own time at home. Throughout the school, pupils sustain concentration well for their ages. They show maturity and initiative and are able to work without intervention by the teacher once they are sure of what the task involves. When working with support assistants, they give them the same respect that they show to their teachers. The pupils' good behaviour and self-discipline contribute to the quality of the work achieved.

33. The quality of teaching is good, and ranges from satisfactory to very good, which is an improvement on the last inspection when it was sound overall. Very good teaching occurs where the planning is particularly purposeful and caters for the needs of the higher attainers as well as those with special educational needs, and is successfully put into practice. This occurred when Year 2 pupils learnt about the role of drugs as medicines. In such lessons, the expectations of the work and behaviour are lucidly conveyed and there is time for an evaluation of what has been learned at the end. In all lessons, there are clear introductions and some teachers communicate the expected learning outcomes to pupils by writing these on the board. Teachers prepare and resource their lessons carefully but do not always allow pupils sufficient time to complete the written tasks to the best of their ability. The teachers' management skills are of a high order. Teaching is never less than satisfactory but, during some lessons, when pupils carry out written work, they do not receive enough attention from the teacher and, therefore, do not receive the necessary feedback on how to improve their work.

34. The teaching of science meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The recent adoption of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work ensures that pupils build on the skills as they move through the school. Assessment procedures are integral with the units of work and are carried out appropriately. A good attempt is made to analyse the end of key stage assessments to pick up on difficulties which have arisen. The school has not yet developed collections of pupils' work with examples of levels in order to help teachers to check the accuracy of their judgements. An experienced teacher who is new to the school will assume the responsibility of science co-ordinator later in the term. A good emphasis and understanding of practical work and investigative methods are evident but teachers are less confident when teaching the element concerned with physical processes. There have been few opportunities for in-service training recently. Resources for science were previously judged to be satisfactory but are now good. They

continue to be well organised and matched to the work. Curricular provision is enhanced by visits to a local conservation site. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development when they observe the wonders of the natural world, discuss conservation issues and learn to work together in groups.

126.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information technology

35. The attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 is below national expectations, and similar to that reported in the previous inspection. Although many of the pupils can communicate their ideas on a computer, using text and pictures, their work on the keyboard is slow and inaccurate. With help from adults, they select colours and brush size to produce simple pictures using an art program, and a few save their work with help. They use the mouse with sound control, but have difficulty in selecting items on the screen accurately. Pupils use computer programs well to research information on Bolivia for their geography topic, but require considerable help to carry this out. A few higher attaining pupils find information on the Internet at home to illustrate their work on Florence Nightingale, and Year 2 pupils have made a start at using the Internet in class to support their literacy work. Pupils' work on using databases is average, and some good tasks were completed when organising a database on their favourite foods.

36. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make slow progress overall. With so few computers in the school, pupils have too little time refining their skills, and few develop the confidence to use simple wordprocessors or modelling programs without considerable help from adults. Pupils working in pairs on computers work well for a short time, but soon come to a halt, and time is then wasted waiting for assistance. Pupils with special educational needs make sound gains, but very few higher attaining pupils make the progress of which they are capable.

37. Pupils enjoy using the computers and appreciate the speed at which changing information is displayed on the screen. Most pupils maintain good levels of interest and concentration for a while when working in pairs, but eventually their lack of skills frustrates them.

38. Only one information technology lesson was observed during the inspection, but pupils were noted attempting to use computers in other lessons. On this evidence, and on the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, the quality of teaching of information technology is unsatisfactory. This was also the case in the previous inspection. Teachers' planning gives too little indication of the skills and knowledge that pupils should acquire, and there are very few occasions when information technology is on the timetable. Teachers attempt to fit computer work alongside other subjects, and, although this may help their history, literacy or geography research work, it makes for slow progress in developing pupils' skills in information technology. In the one lesson observed where direct teaching took place, the whole class was crammed around one computer, and the teacher tried valiantly to introduce a new program. The teacher then focused more on the content of the program than the skills needed to operate the program, and pupils soon lost interest. A brief instruction then followed about how to save work, but no pupils had the opportunity to put this skill into practice. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory overall, but few show good enough knowledge of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study to enable pupils to develop their skills fully.

39. The teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating information technology left last term; the headteacher has taken over this responsibility temporarily. The school uses the Local Education Authority's scheme of work, but finds this inadequate, and the headteacher is considering the use of a more comprehensive published system. Realising the shortcomings in the teaching of information technology, the school is considering different options, including the formation of a computer suite, but the lack of funds stands in the way, at present. The assessment of pupils' progress is patchy,

with some indication of the skills pupils have learned, but little to enable teachers to raise pupils' standards. The main problem is the shortage of computers. In the previous inspection, resources were poor, but the school has recently bought a number of new, powerful computers. Year 1 classes, however, still have just one computer, and Year 2 classes two, and this is insufficient to provide pupils with the range of experiences and time using computers to attain national levels of competence. Consequently, the subject does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. 131.

Religious education

40. In the previous inspection, standards were found to be satisfactory, whilst teaching was generally good. Multicultural aspects of the syllabus were found to be underdeveloped.

41. In the current inspection, standards by the end of the key stage were found to be good, exceeding the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils are familiar with a number of religious and family celebrations in Christian and other faith traditions, and the importance of these in their lives and those of others. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils learned about the Jewish festival of Sukkoth. Their recall of facts was good, and they were able to draw and write to record the details which they had understood. They learn a good range of stories from the Bible, including those which Jesus told and about his life. They also learn about those who follow the Christian way of life in the service of others, such as Mother Teresa, and are beginning to understand with sensitivity the value of such devotion. Pupils had a good recall of facts, and could interpret the meanings of this demanding work.

42. Progress is good in religious education. Pupils gradually gather more information and gain in understanding as their religious studies continue through the key stage. They are increasingly able to make comparisons, and to understand ideas central to different faiths. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress.

43. Attitudes are good. Pupils are very interested in the subject, and they are eager to contribute and comment. They are able to recall facts well, think about issues carefully and make and express their own opinions and views. They listen well and enjoy stories.

44. The quality of teaching in the subject is good, and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Four lessons were seen, one in each class in Key Stage 1, and all were good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and impart it clearly. Planning is careful, objectives are clear, and content is relevant. Information is made interesting to pupils, and good emphasis is placed on understanding, making comparisons and developing opinions. Teachers use questioning well for this purpose. Active tasks follow up the receiving of information, such as writing, drawing and role play to consolidate what has been learned, and this is good practice. With older pupils, teachers make good use of small group work or paired discussion, and pupils enjoy this mode of working. Few displays were seen in the subject. There is no whole-school or systematic approach to assessment in the subject, but procedures are sound. Teachers make their own notes, often using the outcome sections of their lesson planning sheets to record group or individual progress. Multi-faith aspects of the syllabus are well developed, and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

45. There is no specific policy, although there is a brief statement of current practice. The scheme is one developed by the Local Education Authority, which reflects well the Agreed Syllabus. Planning is satisfactory at all levels. The co-ordinator's role is held by the headteacher, who is available for advice and help, monitors teachers' planning regularly and checks for adequate coverage of the Programme of Study. The headteacher also monitors lessons, and manages resources. Resources are satisfactory, with good artefact collections for Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Hinduism, and a good range of books on some other important world religions such as Buddhism and Sikhism. Visits to the local parish church, and to the Hindu temple at Neasden, and visitors to school such as the local clergy, a Hindu visitor and Hindu dancers enhance curricular provision. The subject meets

the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus well.

137. Art

46. In the previous inspection, standards in art were found to be sound, whilst teaching in the subject was satisfactory. However, the subject documentation gave insufficient guidance to teachers on continuity and progression.

47. In this inspection, although only three lessons were observed, pupils' work is above average for their ages. This is an improvement on standards found in the previous inspection. Pupils have good drawing and painting skills for their ages; they work carefully and with good attention to instructions and to the stimulating items provided. They mix autumn colours effectively, and use these in their printing to make patterns, showing a good sense of line and form. They have a good knowledge of the work of Cézanne and Matisse, and have used some features of the work of these painters in their own compositions when using painting and collage. Pupils with special educational needs do well for their capabilities and their previous learning.

48. Progress in art is good through Key Stage 1. Pupils enter the key stage with skills at an average level, and gradually increase in their abilities to form representations and to make creative expressions of ideas. They learn an increasingly broad range of skills, and develop growing attention to detail. They are also developing well a knowledge of the work of some famous artists, and art and craft traditions from both Western and other cultures. This was seen to good effect in a Year 1 lesson where pupils looked at the work of an Australian Aboriginal painter, and appreciated the colour, range and patterning techniques used.

49. Pupils enjoy their art work, show good attitudes towards it, and make comments about colour, shape, and representations in their own work and that of others, as well as in prints and reproductions.

50. The quality of teaching is generally good, and better than the satisfactory teaching in the previous inspection. Techniques and care of tools are specifically taught, and there is good teaching of the use of colour and form when pupils are producing their compositions. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is generally good, and, overall, planning is sound. Three dimensional work in both modelling and textiles, although planned for in the Programme of Study, was under-represented in the displays of work and lessons seen. Good attention is paid to the inclusion of non-European influences in art. Sound opportunities for assessment are incorporated into some specific assignments during each year, and teachers make notes on group and individual performances in their evaluations of lesson outcomes. Individual sketchbooks have just been started in Year 1, and will continue as a personal record of progress in drawing which is now established in Year 2.

51. There is a suitable policy for the subject, and a good scheme of work, produced by the Local Education Authority, has been adopted. This is an improvement on the situation reported in the last inspection. Provision within the documentation for promoting continued progress, particularly in the practical skills, is now satisfactory. Planning at all levels is careful, and short term planning is detailed. There is a co-ordinator for the subject who has only been in this role since the spring. She provides sound advice for colleagues, sees planning, deals with resources and teaches all the art in Year 2. She has not had an opportunity to monitor others teachers' lessons but, she has greatly improved resources, and is planning to re-write the scheme of work for the school. Whilst resources are adequate for the practical side of the subject, there are shortages in resources for appreciative work, which creates difficulties when producing lessons planned for in the Programme of Study. Although Year 1 pupils had a recent visit to a London gallery to see paintings by Monet, there is little else in the way of enhancing curricular provision in the subject. Displays in the school are well-mounted, and generally attractive.

143.

Design and technology

52. Although no design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, a thorough scrutiny of displays, records, planning and work books indicates that pupils' work in the subject is as would be expected for their age. This is similar to the judgement of the previous inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are developing average skills in designing and modelling using a variety of materials and simple tools. They are also beginning to investigate the use of materials for specific purposes and are adapting these ideas to design and make their own models. They make sound use of construction kits, and demonstrate average skills in building houses and cars. Year 2 pupils plan and make a hand puppet with average skill, and show a sound understanding of the techniques required. Their designs are sound, but a few show above average skills when introducing accurate labels of different features. Pupils displayed good skills when constructing a net of a solid shape in mathematics, and carefully sticking the flaps together. Year 1 pupils did particularly well constructing models of a room in their own house, complete with furniture and decoration.

53. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Year 1 pupils develop a sound understanding of the characteristics of different materials, describing them as 'soft' or 'hard'. They learn to join card and paper together with glue to make opening doors and windows, and show increasing skill using construction kits. By Year 2, they are developing the skills to use given tools, and select their own materials. Good progress in Year 2 is made when pupils discuss problems when using construction kits, and possible ways to overcome their difficulties.

54. Pupils enjoy their work in design and technology. They take care to produce a good finished model, and display great pride in showing their work.

55. The scrutiny of previous lesson plans reveals that teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, as was reported in the previous inspection. Their planning is generally good, and introduces pupils to a varied and increasing range of tools and materials for both designing and making. They have appropriate expectations of pupils' performance, and encourage them to strive for a good, finished product. Teachers pay good attention to the quality of pupils' designs, and ensure that each element is correctly labelled. Resources are used well and there is good management and organisation of the classroom to ensure that they are accessible to pupils.

56. The curriculum is balanced and appropriate, with equality of access and opportunity being accorded to all pupils. Planning for the progression of pupils' skills is good, and much improved from the weak planning noted in the previous inspection. Teachers now make effective use of the comprehensive scheme of work based on that produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The subject co-ordinator has benefited from good recent training, and gives clear direction to colleagues. She monitors standards by reviewing pupils' work and teachers' planning. The assessment of pupils' work is limited to evaluations by the pupils themselves, and the school has no formal way of monitoring pupils' progress. There is a sound range of tools, materials and textiles which are well stored, but there is a shortage of construction kits for older and higher attaining pupils.

148.

Geography

57. In the previous inspection report, no judgement about teaching or standards could be made, as only one lesson was observed. Work was surveyed and due to the limited coverage of the Programme of Study that this represented, it was stated that the subject did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Resources were limited.

58. In this inspection, only two lessons were seen, due to timetabling factors, but one was seen in

each year group. Although this is insufficient to form a firm judgement, when taken with the scrutiny of work and the survey of documentation and planning, it is possible to judge that pupils' achievements are above average for their ages. Pupils have a good understanding of changes in the weather and the seasons, and they have good knowledge about their own town and its locality, and of factors involved in its settlement. They understand that maps represent places, and they can find their own country and some others on a map or globe with above average skill. They have a good understanding of life in a country very different from their own, such as Bolivia, and make mature comparisons between climates, geographical features and lifestyles in the two countries.

59. Progress is also good. Pupils begin to learn simple map skills in Year 1, and then develop these as they grow older, looking for more specific details. They learn more about different geographical features, and begin to build a good store of knowledge about the different ways people live within their own environments. Pupils with special educational needs attain good standards and make good progress in the subject for their capabilities and their previous learning.

60. Pupils are interested in the subject and have positive attitudes towards it. They enjoy learning about their own locality and about the environments of others which differ from their own. They are able to express their own opinions and make conclusions, which they see as positive or negative, from their comparisons.

61. The quality of teaching in the subject is indicated as good. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. Planning is generally good: it is careful and detailed, and makes use of the national documentation and guidelines for the subject. For some projects, the subject is taught as an integrated topic along with history, and this works well. There is good progression of skills incorporated into planning, and all levels of ability are well challenged. There is good use of questions to promote thinking, reasoning, comparison, and recall of information. In the topic on Bolivia in Year 2, an attractive display of textiles, photographs and artefacts stimulated pupils' interest well, and they showed a fascination with the first-hand knowledge imparted by their well informed teacher.

62. The documentation of the subject is good. The policy is of very good quality and is carefully detailed. The national guidelines are used as a scheme, but have been valuably adapted to use information on Bolivia gained by a member of staff who has worked there. Planning is sound, and is careful at each level. There is no systematic whole-school approach to assessment in the subject, but assessment is sound. Teachers make their own notes, in their record books or on the outcome section of their planning documents. The co-ordinator for the subject is holding the brief temporarily, due to staff changes, but has recently surveyed work across the school in this subject. Resources have improved since the last inspection and are adequate. The school is still building collections of resources as different topics are tackled.

154.

History

63. It was not possible to see more than one history lesson during the course of the inspection because of the weekly arrangement of the timetable and the blocking of subjects which occurs over a half termly period. Sufficient evidence from teachers' plans, the scrutiny of past work and discussions with pupils indicate that, by the end of the key stage, pupils' work is above average for their age. No judgements on the standards achieved, the quality of learning or the quality of teaching were given at the time of the last OFSTED inspection.

64. By the end of the key stage, pupils display good skills as they use appropriate language, sequence events and objects and discuss the purposes of artefacts which were used in the home during Edwardian and Victorian times. Most have a good breadth of knowledge about the lives of people such as Florence Nightingale. Several pupils have a very good understanding of the way in which the past can be depicted and can discuss information gained from clues in old photographs,

which show the buildings, transport and costumes of different times. They show good perception as they identify with information gathered from older members of their families. Some of the higher attaining pupils are beginning to explain why people in the past acted as they did.

65. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. In Year 1, they make a good start when they learn that the past was different from present day times by examining household items used on wash day before washing machines were invented. When learning about houses and homes, they look at styles of buildings on a 'history walk' and notice differences in the chimneys. They observe the materials used in the construction of houses and make comparisons with those of different periods. All pupils make particularly good progress when the school focuses on history as occurred during a history week. Grandparents shared their experiences of childhood and helped pupils to draw comparisons.

66. Pupils make good responses. They are increasingly able to take responsibility for their own learning as they look for, and interpret, sources of historical information. Year 2 pupils, for example, used their initiative to carry out a homework task by applying skills in information technology to research details about the life of Florence Nightingale. Evidence indicates that they are capable of sustained concentration. The presentation of work in books is careful and complete. All pupils have positive attitudes and many are able to discuss confidently the work they have so far encountered. Behaviour is very good and pupils have good relationships with each other.

67. Based on a range of evidence, the quality of teaching is judged to be good across the key stage. It was very good in the example seen. On that occasion, there was comprehensive subject knowledge, very well prepared resources and an excellent introduction. Thorough questioning probed pupils' understanding but enabled them to offer contributions. Assessments of what the pupils already knew were very sharp and these led to a lesson content which enabled pupils to refer to evidence in photographs and to describe a journey from the United Kingdom to the Crimea in the early part of this century compared with the present day. Teachers have good subject knowledge and present the work in interesting ways. They often provide stimulating displays of artefacts for pupils to handle.

68. The curriculum for history is broad and balanced. The school has recently adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work for history, which ensures that pupils encounter the necessary historical content in a way which builds on their developing skills. In addition to this, the school has retained a local study unit for Year 2 pupils, which combines history, geography and religious education. Assessment procedures are linked to the scheme and are fulfilled in practice. Evident improvements have occurred since the last inspection when the subject did not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and there was not a coherent coverage of the Programme of Study. A clear policy statement of current practice outlines the variety of teaching approaches to be adopted and the expected skills to be acquired. The headteacher is managing the subject at present. The school had inadequate resources for history at the last inspection. Resources are now good and there are useful links with a local museum and a Victorian school in Essex. The school endeavours to raise the profile of history by the provision of 'museum displays'. The present one introduces pupils to a selection of toys, which were used by children earlier in the century. Also, visits from theatre groups allow pupils to imagine themselves in different times. History makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development.

Music

69. By the end of the key stage, pupils' work in music is above average for their ages. This is in agreement with the findings of the previous inspection. Many pupils exceed expectations when they read musical notation, follow a graphic score and sing songs in parts showing good control of breathing, pitch and dynamics. Most pupils repeat short phrases with accurate rhythms, based on phrases such as Ticka-tacka and 'Can I see your ticket, please?' and combine these carefully to

produce a composition. They take good account of when they are expected to produce loud and quiet sounds, distinguish between long and short notes and respond to symbols. When they follow a conductor, they demonstrate accuracy, improve their performance by rehearsal and appraise their work well after hearing it on tape.

70. The indications are that most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in Year 1 and this accelerates in Year 2. In Year 1, pupils create simple patterns sometimes using their names. They develop these so as to produce more complex patterns and begin to make comparisons between longer and shorter beats. They are introduced to terms such as 'duration' and learn to make their voices match the rise and fall of the music when singing. They respond to symbols well when singing and clapping and know, for example, how to sing quietly. The Year 2 curriculum successfully builds on these skills and pupils are aware that singing tone can be improved. They try out various combinations of patterns when composing and know that rehearsal is not just playing through again and again but is a time for trying different parts together and refining the performance.

71. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are enthusiastic, consistently well behaved and readily participate in music making. They show maturity beyond their years and work hard to produce a final performance of quality. Their concentration levels were particularly good when Year 2 pupils rehearsed a piece in order to produce a polished recording which reflected two part rhythms and singing. They are very positive about the efforts of others and evaluate their work with sensitivity. With the very effective support of the teacher, they have the confidence to offer suggestions and perform in front of others.

72. The quality of teaching was found to be very good at the last OFSTED inspection. In the one available lesson for observation during this inspection, the quality of teaching continued to be of the same high standard. Subject expertise was very evident with the provision of a good balanced content, planned in detail, which reflected all the current requirements of the National Curriculum. Expectations were high, the teaching was lively and imaginative and pupils were managed very effectively. There was excellent use of time and resources and very careful questioning extended pupils' musical vocabularies and enabled them to gain new knowledge and learn from assessing the quality of their own performances. From the scrutiny of planning and discussions, the indications are that, over the key stage, the quality of teaching is good. Some teachers are not as confident as others in teaching the subject.

73. Scrutiny of planning indicates that the music curriculum is broad and balanced. The county scheme is used thoughtfully and this sets out clearly what pupils are expected to learn in each year group. Planning includes appropriate assessment opportunities, but much assessment takes place during lessons when pupils receive good feedback on how they can improve. The subject makes a very good contribution to the provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Pupils have the chance to learn hymns and songs, reflect upon the words, and offer their own suggestions about the feelings which are engendered by the music heard in lessons and assemblies. They work together to produce musical effects and performances and are introduced to music from other cultures, for example, when they listen to music from Ecuador and examine instruments from Bolivia. A newly qualified teacher with specialist expertise has been designated as the new music co-ordinator but will not officially assume this role until the next academic year. She already demonstrates that she has a clear vision for the development of the subject and contributes to the development of skills by teaching both Year 2 classes and by taking a weekly music assembly with all the school present except for the Nursery children. All Year 2 pupils learn to play the recorder and the Reception children benefit from the services of a visiting music teacher. Resources for the subject are judged to be adequate although the previous inspection found that there was a wide range of musical instruments. The school has improved its collection of ethnic instruments but several on display in a classroom belong to a teacher and staff supplement the collection of compact discs which help pupils to develop their listening skills. Some of the tuned percussion instruments

are well worn and require repair. There are insufficient instruments for each class to have a good selection to keep in their rooms.

Physical education

74. Pupils' attainment in physical education is average, and similar to that reported in the previous inspection. In gymnastics, pupils work energetically and safely, with a good idea of space. They show good skills when devising different ways of travelling around the room, and a few link complex moves to form a fluid sequence. They are aware of the effects of exercise on the body, and talk with reasonable knowledge about the increase in rate of their heartbeat. They observe the work of others, and many improve their own performance as a result. Pupils' games skills are average. They use bean bags with sound skills, balancing them on parts of their body, and throwing them with accuracy. They run reasonably well, with sound control, and improve their technique with practice.

75. Pupils are making sound progress in developing their skills in physical education. They are keen to improve their work, and accept criticism well to achieve better standards. Pupils practise throwing and catching to develop their skills, and many show significant improvement by the end of the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress in physical education, and enjoy the success that this element of the school's provision gives them.

76. The pupils have very positive attitudes to physical education lessons. They change quickly into appropriate kit, and enter and leave the hall and classroom in an orderly manner. Most pupils listen attentively and respond quickly to instructions. They can work very well individually and with a partner.

77. The quality of teaching is always good. Teachers plan lessons well, and use initial warm up sessions effectively. All the teachers dress appropriately for physical education. They demonstrate techniques clearly, in order to improve the quality of pupils' performance, and they use pupils to demonstrate good practice. The teachers use praise and encouragement well. Opportunities are provided in many lessons for the pupils to evaluate the performance of others. Teachers pay due attention to safety in lessons, although the piano in the hall interferes with pupils' safe movement at times. The pupils are encouraged to change quickly and sensibly and to handle and use equipment correctly.

78. There is no teacher who has responsibility for co-ordinating physical education, but this has not yet affected the provision as the previous postholder left very recently. A newly qualified teacher has been designated for this post for next year. The school has a clear policy and comprehensive scheme of work in place. The subject has good resources, with appropriate apparatus and equipment. The hall provides a good area for gymnastics, and the playing field is large and well maintained. Pupils' games skills benefit from well organised extracurricular sessions run by parents, which are currently focusing on football. Emphasis is placed on fair play and good sporting behaviour and the subject, therefore, makes a good contribution to the moral and social development of the pupils.

170. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

171. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors who spent a total of 12 inspector days in the school. Time spent observing teaching, scrutinising the work of pupils and checking their attainment by working with them during the inspection - 67 hours 30 minutes: 7 hours at Pre Key Stage 1, and 60 hours 30 minutes at Key Stage 1. In addition, a further 13 hours 20 minutes were spent on the inspection activities listed below.

- 49 lessons or parts of lessons were observed as were a number of registration periods, assemblies, playtimes, lunchtimes and extracurricular activities;
- discussions were held with all teaching staff and some non-teaching staff;
- many pupils were heard to read and were questioned about their mathematical knowledge and understanding;
- three samples of pupils' work across the full range of ability in all year groups were inspected in addition to work examined during lessons;
- all available school documentation was analysed;
- attendance records, pupils' records kept by the school and teachers' planning documents were examined;
- the budget figures were inspected;
- discussions were held with pupils, parents and governors;
- a parents' meeting was held and the views of the 25 parents at this meeting and those of the 60 families who responded to a questionnaire were taken into account.

172. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

172. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y2	139	1	14	3
Nursery	27	1	1	0
Unit/School				

172. **Teachers and classes**

172. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	23.1

172.

Education support staff (YR – Y2)

Total number of education support staff: 5

Total aggregate hours worked each week: 115

172. **Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): 1

Number of pupils per qualified teacher: 26.5

172. **Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of education support staff: 2

Total aggregate hours worked each week: 45

Average class size: 27.8

172. **Financial data**

Financial year: 1997/98 1997/98

£

Total Income 317295

Total Expenditure 322859

Expenditure per pupil 1630

Balance brought forward from previous year 9783

Balance carried forward to next year 4219

172. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 151
 Number of questionnaires returned: 60

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	28	55	17	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	27	57	17	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	25	53	18	3	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	25	57	18	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	25	53	17	5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	25	57	18	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	24	58	17	2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	27	53	18	2	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	25	58	17	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	27	57	17	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	28	55	17	0	0

172.