

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Downside Infant School**

Luton

LEA area: Luton

Unique Reference Number: 109567

Inspection Number: 187639

Headteacher: Mrs S M Lewis

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Reporting inspector: Miss M A Warner

17288

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706964

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chaul End Lane Luton Bedfordshire LU4 8EZ
Telephone number:	(01582) 593460
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Appropriate authority:	Luton
Name of chair of governors:	Mr V Cowell
Date of previous inspection:	4 <sup>th</sup> – 7 <sup>th</sup> March 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
Miss M A Warner, RgI	Science Design and technology Religious education English as an additional language Equal opportunities	Attainment and progress Teaching Efficiency
Dr I Blair, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staff, accommodation and learning resources Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Leadership and management
Mrs E M D Mackie	English Music Geography History	
Mr J Paull	Under fives Mathematics Art Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Curriculum and assessment

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The Office for Standards in Education

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- There is a very good ethos for learning: behaviour is very good, the quality of teaching is good, pupils are hardworking, relationships are excellent and these all ensure good progress.
- Assessment procedures are very good so that pupils are well supported particularly in their mother tongue or through translation.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social development is very good and cultural development is good, effectively reinforcing the good standards expected by parents, most of whom are from Moslem backgrounds.
- The translated information for parents is good and relationships with parents are good.
- The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are well written and effective.
- The headteacher gives clear educational direction to the school.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Low standards of attainment in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- II. Few opportunities for pupils to use research skills to support learning through independent study.
- III. Pupils' attendance is below and the number of unauthorised absences is still above the national average.
- IV. The curriculum does not always draw on pupils' own experiences sufficiently.
- V. Long term planning of subject vocabulary does not take place.
- VI. The school development plan lacks criteria linked to improving pupils' attainment.
- VII. Regular school evaluation is at an early stage of development to support strategic planning.
- VIII. Attendance at governors' committee meetings is unacceptably irregular.
- IX. There are no formal procedures for the governors to monitor the effectiveness of budget spending.
- X. Parental involvement in their children's learning is not strong.

**The school has many strengths which are of great value, not least the good progress the pupils make whilst at the school. The weaknesses often relate to the fact that the majority of pupils come into school with little knowledge of English and many of their parents speak and understand little English.**

**The weaknesses 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

The characteristics of the pupils on entry to the school have changed since 1996 when the overall judgement on the standards of attainment in English was 'sound in relation to the national norms for the majority of pupils'. The majority of pupils now come to school with little or no English and present standards reflect this change.

The school has addressed the majority of the key issues of the last report:

- XI. the role of the curriculum coordinators has been developed well and they now monitor teaching and



the curriculum very effectively;

- XII. procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are now very good and teachers regularly provide work that matches the pupils' needs, particularly with regard to language needs. Whilst the school is addressing the needs of the higher attainers well through setting and withdrawal groups, provision within class is not always matched as well to their potential attainment;
- XIII. teachers' planning is now very good in the nursery and good in the rest of the school, but longer term planning of vocabulary for English as an additional language now needs to be addressed;
- XIV. improvements have been made in the teaching of information technology and the co-ordinator's vision for the subject is good, with many improvements planned;
- XV. steps have been taken to improve the size and condition of the nursery playground.

**Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

Attainment on entry is very low, with almost all pupils coming to school with very little or no English. The results above show that in 1998, at the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were very low, both when compared with schools nationally and with schools with the same percentage of free school meals. In 1999, however, results at the end of Key Stage 1 showed a considerable improvement, particular in writing, where results were just below the average and reading slightly lower than that, but showing improvement on the previous year's results. Mathematics and science had also improved, but remained at a low standard. Standards, overall, in information technology and religious education at the end of Key Stage 1 are below expectations, although subject knowledge is in line with what is expected by the Agreed Syllabus in religious education.

**Quality of teaching**

English	Very good	Good
Mathematics	Very good	Good
Science		Good
Information technology		Satisfactory
Religious education		Very good
Other subjects	Very good	Satisfactory

Teaching of the under-fives is very good. Teaching and non-teaching staff work together very well as a team and bilingual support for children is very good. Very good assessments of children's attainment and progress are made regularly. Expectations of children's commitment to good behaviour and concentration on tasks are high.

Teaching, overall, is good. Out of 63 lessons or parts of lessons observed, 98 per cent were satisfactory or better, 69 per cent were good or better and 37 per cent were very good or better. In 2 per cent, one lesson, teaching was unsatisfactory and this was because of problems of resources and organisation relating to the introduction of a new scheme of work being piloted.

*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**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Very good. Pupils are very well behaved in class, attentive and eager to learn. They play well in the playground and school dinners are a pleasant social occasion.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Levels of attendance are well below the national average and have been consistently so for many years. Punctuality is still in need of improvement as highlighted in the previous report.
Ethos*	Pupils come to school keen to learn and approach their work with positive attitudes and determination. Behaviour is very good and relationships are excellent. The good and often very good quality of teaching ensures that the ethos for learning is very good. Independent learning is less well developed.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides very effective leadership. Together with the coordinators she monitors teaching and the curriculum very effectively. Governors with specific roles are becoming more involved with curriculum issues, but attendance at meetings is irregular and roles and responsibilities are insufficiently clear.
Curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum. Whilst it includes all the required elements of British history and culture, it does not include sufficient references to the pupils' own backgrounds and experiences.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good – a strength of the school. The very good provision for pupils' spiritual development reflects and builds on many pupils' own religious backgrounds. There is a strong moral ethos in the school. Social development is incorporated into the curriculum, when pupils discuss ideas and listen to the views of others. Cultural development is promoted through visits and visitors, religious education and the celebrating of cultures and customs from around the world.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Teaching staff are experienced and well qualified. There are a good number of support staff and those who are bilingual provide good support for pupils with English as an additional language. The school is well resourced. Accommodation for teaching the curriculum is good and the building very well cared for. Staffroom provision for the larger than usual staff for a school of this size is inadequate. The office is small and storage space in the school is also inadequate as mentioned in the previous report.
Value for money	The school gives good value for money.

*\*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

- XVI. That their child likes school (100% of those who returned questionnaires).
- XVII. The school is approachable when there are problems.
- XVIII. That the school handles complaints well.
- XIX. The behaviour of the children is good.
- XX. The school promotes positive values and attitudes.
- XXI. The headteacher's happy face is infectious. She always welcomes pupils and parents at the beginning of the school day and on going home.

### What some parents are not happy about

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The comments above are based on the views of the 30 parents who returned questionnaires out of 200 and the 17 parents who attended the parents' evening. Parents' views and questions were translated, when needed, at the parents' meeting and the questionnaire was sent out in Urdu as well as English.

Inspectors found that:

XXVII. home reading is very good in the nursery and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The school's homework policy is followed, especially in reading and this has a positive effect on pupils' progress and continues good links, which are established with parents in the nursery. Whilst some parents would like to see more homework set, others find it difficult to support their children's homework because of limited English language skills themselves. The school is considering setting up a homework club;

XXVIII. supervision in the playground has improved; the school is aware of the isolation referred to and has taken measures to address that particular concern;

XXIX. the staff have noted the parents' concerns about more time for working parents at parents' meetings and the need for more advanced notice about things happening and they intend to address these issues; and

XXX. the major reason for absence is extended families visits to Pakistan causing the attendance of some pupils to fall significantly below 90 per cent.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to continue to improve the education of the pupils and raise standards further, the staff and governors should:

XXXI. improve the rate of progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language by planning the teaching of key words more methodically to support subject learning;

*Paragraphs 85, 89, 96, 116, 137, 145*

XXXII. provide more opportunities for pupils to work independently and extend the opportunities for research;

*Paragraphs 14, 49, 111, 144*

XXXIII. draw more consistently on pupils' backgrounds to ensure that teaching and learning is relevant;

*Paragraphs 57, 61, 93*

XXXIV. provide greater challenge more consistently for higher attaining pupils in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology;

*Paragraph 106*

XXXV. further encourage parents to take a full part in their children's learning;

*Paragraphs 57, 61, 93*

XXXVI. raise parents' awareness of the adverse effect of unauthorised absence on their children's attainment and progress;

*Paragraphs 28, 52*

XXXVII. improve school development planning so that:

- the budget is more effectively targeted; (62)
- the effectiveness of provision is monitored; (60)
- and criteria are directly related to the raising of standards ( 70)

- ensure that the roles and responsibilities of governors' committees are clearly understood and implemented.



## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

1. Downside Infant School is a happy, caring school where dedicated staff work hard to raise standards. It is of average size, when compared with primary schools nationally, with 190 pupils on roll, including 8 full time and 60 part-time in the nursery. The present headteacher took up her position in April 1998. There have been considerable changes in intake since the last inspection. The school is in the Challney ward of Luton but now resembles more closely the Dallow ward with a high number of socially disadvantaged families. There are no play-groups in the area and few children have had any pre-school experience. Most children start school with little or no English, even in homes where both parents speak English confidently. Many of the mothers speak very little English and are unable to venture far outside the home so the children often have had very limited experiences before starting school. Standards on entry are very low in language and literacy, mathematics and in knowledge and understanding of the world.
2. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is 49 per cent and well above the national average. Forty-three pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is well below the national average, reflecting the local education authority's policy. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language, 109 out of 122 in the main school, is very high. There is a similar figure in the nursery.
3. The school aims to:
  - involve parents in all aspects of school life through fostering positive home/school relationships;
  - promote a happy, safe and secure environment;
  - provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment;
  - ensure that the school offers equal opportunities to all pupils;
  - foster enjoyment of learning by providing a broad, balanced curriculum which develops the child socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually.
  - build personal and moral values together with respect; and
  - prepare children for their roles as responsible citizens in a changing society.
1. Priorities for the coming year are for:

Literacy : improve spelling strategies  
develop writing skills  
target additional classroom support at children who might achieve Level 2 (or 3) with extra help.

Numeracy: develop the range of mental strategies which children use to solve problems during daily mental arithmetic sessions  
target additional classroom support at children who might achieve Level 2 with extra help.

PHSE: develop playground games at lunch times.

Information and communication technology: improve resources and provide training.



Planning: include teaching and learning objectives.  
 Assessment: include pupils' understanding and achievement.  
 Develop links with parents and help them to support their children's learning.

5. **Key indicators**

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	29	32	61
	(98)			

5. <b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	19	26	15
	Girls	24	19	24
	Total	43	45	40
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	69 (30)	72 (48)	66 (50)
	National	81 (75)	79 (80)	85 (83)

5. <b>Teacher Assessments</b>		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	22	23	18
	Girls	27	24	22
	Total	49	47	40
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	79 (46)	75 (55)	66 (42)
	National	80 (74)	83 (83)	86 (85)

5. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	7.6
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	1.02
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

5.

5. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	2
	Permanent	0

5. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	37
Satisfactory or better	98
Less than satisfactory	2

.....

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

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **5. Attainment and progress**

2. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in the National Curriculum tests are very low when compared with schools, nationally, in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools they are very low in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing.
3. Most children enter the nursery with very low levels of attainment in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. The nursery baseline assessment which the school has been piloting has highlighted the low levels of pre-school learning that many of the children have. It showed that 50 per cent score 'W' (working towards) or 'N' (no evidence observed) in the reading and knowledge and understanding categories. Inspection evidence shows that levels of attainment are below those usually found in personal, social, physical and creative development. Most children speak English as an additional language and all make good progress in the six nationally recommended areas of learning. By the time they are of statutory school age, attainment is average for most in personal and social, physical and creative development. Children do not meet the nationally agreed outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.
4. Pupils' attainment in English on entry to school is very low and the results of the National Curriculum Tests in 1998 at the end of Key Stage 1 show that standards were still very low. The results of the tests in 1999 show a great improvement in writing which was slightly below the national average and in reading, which was below the national average. The introduction of the National Literacy Hour has had a positive impact on standards. A very good scheme of work has been based on the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers have implemented the strategy very effectively and their knowledge and understanding of the subject is good. These factors make a strong contribution to the good progress that pupils make. Standards in literacy by the end of Key Stage 1 are similar to those for English.
5. Standards in lessons show speaking and listening, reading and writing to be below average. Pupils listen well to their teachers and to one another and develop a growing vocabulary to develop their ideas logically. Despite pupils' difficulties with grammar, most pupils express their ideas satisfactorily in discussion. They enjoy reading and learn sounds in a systematic way, gradually using these and picture cues to gain understanding from texts. Younger pupils become aware of a sense of narrative and higher attaining pupils read simple storybooks and talk about the plot. Handwriting is correctly formed but spelling and punctuation are unsatisfactory. There are good examples, however, from higher attaining pupils, which include the use of inverted commas for speech. These pupils write some sensitive and exciting poetry. The majority of pupils begin to write simple stories, which show narrative form and an awareness of a reader. They write for a range of purposes, such as letter, reports, poetry and instructions.
6. The results of the 1998 National Curriculum Tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in mathematics were very low. The results of the 1999 tests show a larger proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels or above them than in the previous year, but are still well below the national average. In lessons, standards in mathematics are below the average, although there are indications that over half the pupils achieve at around the expected levels in all parts of the subject. The use of practical mathematics, solving problems with the use of number-lines, plastic cubes and similar equipment is a strong feature. This helps pupils to do well in lessons, even though their English

may not yet allow them to understand printed questions on the test papers. Nearly all pupils count objects reliably and have recall of simple addition facts up to at least 10. A little over half choose correctly between addition and subtraction to solve simple problems. They identify, visually, halves and quarters of surfaces such as rectangles. They know the names of regular shapes. Standards in numeracy by the end of Key Stage 1 are similar to those in mathematics. The numeracy strategy is being introduced and has not yet had an effect on standards.

7. The results of the 1998 statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in science are very low in comparison with national averages. The percentage of pupils who attain a higher than expected level is well below average in each of the attainment targets and very low, overall. When compared with similar schools, the results are similar. The results were lower in 1998 than in 1997, but have remained static in 1998 and 1999. In lessons, many pupils achieve average standards in science with much support. Pupils are often organised in small groups each with an adult and a greater number of pupils are given opportunities to ask and answer questions as a result of this. Their knowledge and understanding are often satisfactory, but their ability to experiment and investigate independently is still well below average. They also have difficulty in recording their work.
8. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in information technology is below the national expectations. There have been several recent developments, however, and the quality and range of the curriculum is improving rapidly. Levels of skill in using computers vary greatly. A few higher attaining pupils are very confident. Whilst the majority of pupils work on similar tasks, confidence is generally at a much lower level. Pupils are hesitant in their knowledge of what to do, requiring much help and prompting from the more advanced pupils, or from adults in the classroom. A further significant minority is very slow. These pupils have little idea of where to find letters and are inaccurate in their handling of the mouse. Pupils whose English is insecure, are often very slow in finding the letters on the keyboards and a lack of resources is a barrier to speeding them up.
9. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in religious education is in line with what is expected by the Agreed Syllabus in terms of knowledge and understanding, but lack of English language skills holds back written attainment and the pupils' ability to communicate fully in class. However, they have a good knowledge of Bible stories such as Moses as a baby which they learn about both from the Bible and as told in the Koran. The shared stories of different faiths are an important dimension of the religious education teaching. Pupils learn about celebrations of different faiths as well as birthdays, weddings and other customs.
10. Pupils of average and lower attainment make good progress. Higher attaining pupils do well when they are withdrawn for setted lessons, but work in class is not always challenging enough and they do not reach the standards they are capable of, because the work is not always well matched to the speed they are capable of working at, or to their abilities.
11. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. Their individual education plans are usually precisely worded, containing targets that explain what needs to be done in order to make progress. Teachers and assistants use these well to plan and adapt pupils' work in the classroom. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 1, a target stated that a pupil should be learning how to add and subtract numbers up to five. She was using plastic cubes to do exactly this task and made good progress.
12. Whilst trends have been downwards, mainly due to the changing intake of the school, there are signs that this trend is beginning to be reversed. There are now an adequate number of classroom

assistants and instructors to ensure that groups of pupils working at different levels are supported effectively in most lessons. Two teachers and three of the support staff (plus another teacher and nursery nurse in the nursery) are appointed specifically for pupils with English as an additional language. Also, several of the staff are bilingual. Thus, the school is well placed to teach the majority of pupils. Further reasons for the upward trend in standards is the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, which is also raising standards in English.

13. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is very good. They are well supported both in the classrooms and in withdrawal groups. Very good use is made of bilingual staff to team-teach, explain further what the class teacher is telling the pupils in English, as well as translate when necessary. The good progress in withdrawal lessons is due to a structured programme and the evident enjoyment the pupils show in the methods of teaching.
14. The progress of pupils in English, mathematics and science is good. Those who speak English as an additional language display increasing confidence in communication in English. Higher attainers benefit from the brisker pace and more demanding work when they are taught as a group. In mathematics, the good progress of pupils relates closely to the quality of teaching. Tasks are used which match pupils' prior knowledge and understanding, building on it well, so that skills broaden and deepen steadily. In science, pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of topics covered by the National Curriculum. Progress in information technology since the last inspection is satisfactory and the coordinator's vision for the development of the subject is good, with many planned improvements. In religious education, pupils make good progress in their knowledge of different religions.
15. Progress in art, design and technology, geography, history and music is good and in physical education is satisfactory. In art, design and technology and music, good progress is related to the systematic development of skills. In geography, the skills of geographical enquiry and communication are developed well and, in history, the range and depth of pupils' historical knowledge increases well as they move through the school. The satisfactory progress made by pupils in physical education is closely related to the quality of teaching. Where better progress occurred, there was a very good use of time when pupils began warming up for themselves as soon as they entered the hall, giving more time for teacher's planned work later in the lesson.
16. Attainment, overall, since the last inspection, is not possible to compare as the intake of the school has so radically changed.

20.

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

17. Children under five make good progress in the development of personal and social skills in the nursery. They grow increasingly confident and those who speak English as an additional language become more assured. Children enjoy coming to school and show enthusiasm for their work. They concentrate for increasing periods of time and form good relationships with the staff and other children. They recognise and keep the simple class rules and behaviour is very good.
18. Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are very good. Relationships in the school are excellent and personal development is good. Children under the age of five settle very well into the nursery classroom. A high proportion do not easily understand English on entry to the school, but they respond well to their teachers. This is because provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good, which also supports the development of very positive attitudes to learning. The children's behaviour is generally very good and they listen well to their teachers.

19. In Years 1 and 2, pupils usually work very hard. They are cheerful and nearly all of them like school, which is confirmed by the views of parents in the questionnaires. This is also true of pupils with special educational needs, which results in their maintaining optimistic attitudes towards their future progress. In turn, this helps them to remain interested in their work. These generally very good attitudes support progress well. They are conscientious and in subjects where a visual impact is important, such as art or design and technology, they are nearly always careful and take a pride in the appearance of their completed tasks.
20. Behaviour is nearly always very good in the classrooms. Pupils are usually quiet and follow rules sensibly. Around the school and in the playground pupils also behave very well. They are friendly towards visitors, acting politely and courteously. For example, in the dining room, older pupils chat sensibly to each other and to adults alike. Relationships are outstandingly constructive both between pupils and with all adults with whom they interact. The openness and confidence with which pupils approach adults for help and advice with their work are further clear examples of this in action. The large majority of pupils are from backgrounds originating in the Asian sub-continent, so the school's population is not noticeably diverse. Nevertheless, pupils respect each other's values and beliefs, including those of the few from other backgrounds. There was no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour during the inspection. There were two incidences of fixed period exclusions last year.
21. Personal development is good. Pupils willingly carry out routine responsibilities in the classrooms and around the school. For example, they help to set up and clear away paints during art lessons, or share out plastic shapes in mathematics lessons. They enjoy the responsibility of carrying registers to the office for their teachers, after the day's attendances have been checked. The activities that teachers set tend to require pupils to work independently on parallel tasks. This often results in good co-operation, through the sharing of equipment and resources. Nevertheless, it does not necessarily produce collaboration over ideas, with pupils working together on a common assignment or investigation.
22. Pupils' attitudes to work and standards of behaviour were good in the last inspection report. Many of these aspects are now very good or even excellent. This indicates that improvement has occurred.
26. **Attendance**
23. Pupils' level of attendance is well below the national average. It has been consistently so over recent years. There has been no improvement since the last inspection. The major reason for absence is extended family visits to Pakistan, causing the attendance of some pupils to fall significantly below 90 per cent. This is having an adverse effect on their education as they miss out on large sections of the curriculum and some pupils have forgotten much of their knowledge of English on their return. Unauthorised absence is well above the national average. This is often because parents cannot communicate effectively with the school to explain their child's absence because of their lack of fluency in English. There has been a considerable reduction in unauthorised absence, however, since the last inspection.
24. The punctuality of some pupils is unsatisfactory and there is still a need for further improvement as highlighted in the previous report. Much of the problem arises because many families come from a cultural background that does not rate punctuality as highly as is the case in the English education system. Most of the cases of lateness were observed to be of only a few minutes so and, although it is a bad habit, it cannot be claimed that it is having a serious effect on pupils' education.

25. The record of attendance and punctuality of pupils with special educational needs is not significantly different from that of other pupils.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **29. Teaching**

26. Teaching in the nursery is very good. Teaching and non-teaching staff work together very well as a team and bilingual support for children is very good. Planning adheres closely to the national Desirable Learning Outcomes and very good assessment of children's attainment and progress are made regularly. Activities are prepared in a stimulating and exciting way, which promotes children's interest and encourages step-by-step learning. Expectations of children's commitment to good behaviour and concentration on tasks are high. Good links with home include initial visits and appropriate translation for those parents who speak English as an additional language.
27. Teaching, overall, is good. Out of 63 lessons or parts of lessons observed, 98 per cent were satisfactory or better, 69 per cent were good or better, 37 per cent were very good or better and 2 per cent were unsatisfactory.
28. In Key Stage 1, teaching of four of the five core subjects; English, mathematics, science and religious education is very good and in the fifth, information technology, is satisfactory. In all aspects of teaching of the three main core subjects, teaching is good and, in English, teachers' planning is very good. In English and mathematics the quality of day to day assessment is very good. The teaching of religious education is sensitive to the needs of the pupils and is very good in all aspects, except planning, which is good, but does not include sufficient long term planning of vocabulary. Assessment in religious education is satisfactory. The teaching of information technology is satisfactory, overall, and good in relation to teachers' planning, their methods and organisation and management of pupils. Teaching of the foundation subjects is satisfactory, overall. It is strong in most aspects of art and physical education and in planning and the management of pupils in all subjects.
29. In the very good lessons observed, there was very good planning and use of a test to extend writing skills, such as in English and there was a clear sense of direction and subject knowledge. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils, are very encouraging and share good work when they see it. Work in all subjects is well differentiated for pupils' language needs and good use is made of tactile materials to support lower attaining pupils. The teaching of the higher attaining sets is also very good. Teachers deploy support staff well and team-teach, when appropriate, with bilingual teachers. In some lessons, the teacher successfully delegates the supervision of groups to support staff, monitoring their work, to carry out observational assessments. There was only one example of unsatisfactory teaching and this related to the fact that a new scheme was being used. A new unit had been introduced and planning and the management of the lesson had not accounted sufficiently for this.
30. The variety of ways support staff are deployed shows a good understanding of the different needs of pupils in different classes and subjects. For example, in mathematics, when pupils were learning about tessellation, the class teacher and the bilingual teacher alternated in English and Urdu demonstrating with diagrams on the board, before dividing the pupils into groups according to their command of English. In another lesson, in religious education, a Bible story was first told in English as from the Bible and then the bilingual teacher told the story in English as from the Koran and then translated into Urdu for those who needed extra support. Teachers use

questioning well and allow pupils time to reply and put forward their own ideas, although, sometimes, this can mean that those who are more fluent in English find it difficult to wait for their turn to talk and make progress. Teachers draw out the ideas of pupils very well. For example, in science, many put forward their ideas when they discussed the importance of safety with medicines. Teachers have a very good understanding of the stage of development of pupils and can relate their discussions to what is being taught, such as how they are usually told to share, but must realise the importance of not sharing medicines. In spite of all these very positive points there is no systematic planning of vocabulary related to different subjects and most of the new vocabulary is introduced verbally. Better use could be made of support staff to provide a visual image of the vocabulary being introduced when they are listening to the introductions to lessons given by the teacher.

31. The teaching of higher attainers in withdrawal groups is well planned and progress is good as a result of clear progression of skills. The speed at which pupils are able to progress is directly related to their command of English and, where written work is needed for mathematics tasks, progress is slower than for the practical tasks and the teacher adapts her plan accordingly.
32. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is usually good. Class teachers, specialist teachers and classroom assistants understand pupils' requirements well. Individual education plans are easily accessible in order to check what has to be done in order to plan work that is suitable. For example, copies are kept in pupils' classrooms and are available to assistants and their specialist teacher alike. Good day to day assessment ensures that continuing progress occurs.
33. Home reading is very good in the nursery and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The school's homework policy is followed, especially in reading and this has a positive effect on pupils' progress and continues good links, which are established with parents in the nursery. Some parents would like to see more homework set, but others find it difficult to support their children's homework because of limited English language skills themselves. The school is considering setting up a homework club.
34. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be 'sound and sometime good'. Teachers have adapted their teaching well to the changing needs of the pupils and the combined work of teachers and support staff is to be commended.

38. **The curriculum and assessment**

35. The curriculum for children under five closely follows national guidance and activities are well planned to include the six areas of learning. Long-term planning is translated into very effective medium-term plans which have clear learning objectives and which identify appropriate age-related activities. Bilingual support is included in the planning so that pupils gain maximum benefit from the nursery curriculum. There are appropriate, individual education plans for children with special educational needs.
36. Overall the school provides a good curriculum that is broadly based and very well balanced both within and between the different subjects that are taught. For example, practical elements of mathematics are included; there are opportunities to investigate scientifically; to talk about and evaluate the design of products and artefacts and to explore the work of famous artists. The relevance of the curriculum to pupils' knowledge and understanding is satisfactory, but not as strong. It includes all the required elements of British history and culture, but does not include sufficient references to the pupils' own backgrounds and experiences. The quality of the



curriculum for children under five is very good. The statutory requirement to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, according to the locally agreed syllabus, is met. The policy on sex education also meets requirements. The time that the school makes available for teaching the different subjects is appropriate and the curriculum successfully promotes intellectual development in, for example, the school's Literacy Hours when pupils study the text of "big books". Logical thinking is promoted through mathematics and science and physical and personal development are found in the study of the human body in science or in physical education lessons. In religious education, there are opportunities to find out about issues related to growing up in a way that acknowledges fairly the values and beliefs of others. The school's strategies for literacy and numeracy are both good and enable pupils to acquire basic skills, successfully.

37. The school has a good policy for establishing equality of access to its curriculum and there are no significant differences in its treatment of boys and girls in this respect, or of how it provides for groups of different ethnic origins. The teaching of English as an additional language is a strong element in achieving equality of opportunity. Specialists in this subject support pupils well by supporting them in the classrooms and using their home language when appropriate in order to ensure understanding. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs, although few, are provided with the help and resources that they require to make progress. The provision for other pupils on the school's register of special needs is also good. Their individual education plans are well constructed with clear targets for learning and advice to teachers and assistants about how best to adapt their teaching. Pupils of previously higher attainment are often grouped together. At times they are withdrawn from their usual class and taught separately. This allows them to work on tasks that better suit them.
38. Planning for progression and continuity is good. Schemes of work appropriately form the basis of teachers' medium-term and weekly lesson planning. In several subjects, teachers are carrying out trials of the documents produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency. The school has recently concentrated on its arrangements for literacy and numeracy. Teachers work together well in order to make plans. Their procedures ensure that pupils in parallel classes receive similar lessons.
39. Extra-curricular activities are satisfactory in the context of an infant school. For example, there are opportunities for coaching skills in sporting activities. In the summer term, a skipping club operates on the playground at lunchtimes and there is a weekly art club. These are well supported by pupils in the targeted age groups.
40. The last inspection report identified three key issues with a direct bearing on the school's curriculum. It has addressed these very well. For example, coordinators now understand their role well. They check teachers' planning against subject plans well. There is now clear guidance about what pupils are expected to know and understand at the end of topics and separate lessons. The planning of information technology is much better than previously and practical work, including problem solving, is far more apparent in mathematics. This amounts to considerable improvement.
41. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good. Assessed work is collected in English, mathematics and science. The school also retains portfolios in most subjects of the National Curriculum. For example, collections of photographs and work, as well as records, are maintained in art and in design and technology. A baseline assessment is carried out at the time when pupils begin working on the National Curriculum. The statutory requirement to carry out National Curriculum tests and to make teachers' assessments of seven-year-olds are met well. The school is very aware that, although the work of pupils with special educational needs and that of pupils with English as an additional language may appear similar, their needs are very different.

It assesses pupils in both groups very carefully. It also assesses pupils in their own language on occasions when a lack of English might prevent special needs from being identified.

42. Overall, the results of assessment are used very well. In the nursery, the teachers' and nursery nurses' evaluations of pupils' understanding and development are used very well to plan and adapt experiences to meet a range of different requirements. This supports progress very well. As pupils move through the school, results are used to adapt short-term planning to meet the needs of different groups of different prior attainments. For example, based on what they know and understand, pupils are on occasions withdrawn from their usual classes for lessons that include instruction and tasks that are based very closely on their prior learning. At the time of the last inspection, assessment was reported as being sound. Considerable improvement has therefore occurred since then.

46. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

43. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is a strength of the school. The example set by adults is very good. Pupils pray reverently and sing joyfully during daily acts of collective worship. At the special Harvest Festival service, there was a sense of awe and wonder as pupils saw the beautiful array of fruit and vegetables sent by parents. Pupils show a love of colour and pattern in their paintings and drawings and they write thoughtful poems to express their feelings. All pupils, even the youngest ones in the nursery, reflect on love of their families and friends. The calm and reassuring atmosphere in the nursery provides children with a secure background for learning and the warm, welcoming ethos gives children the sense of belonging. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to value the faiths and beliefs of others and assemblies are used effectively to promote a high level of racial harmony and respect. Arrangements for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils with special educational needs are similar to those of all other pupils. For example, there are planned opportunities for them to take part in assemblies, drama presentations and suchlike activities.

44. Provision for moral development is very good. In the nursery, good relationships are fostered through stories, games and sharing activities and pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. There is a strong moral ethos in the school. This is reflected in the good attitudes and behaviour of most pupils. Within the clear code of conduct expressed in school rules, pupils, including children in the nursery, are guided to an understanding of what is right and what is wrong. They consider why behaviour is, or is not, acceptable and display their written views about friendship and caring in the classroom. In the nursery, good relationships are fostered through stories, games and sharing activities. Good behaviour is encouraged through the school's reward system and most pupils respond well. When they do not, teachers are prepared to spend time with them to keep them focused on the positive aspects of their conduct. Staff provide good role models and stories of people who have made significant contributions to society are told in history and in assemblies.

45. Provision for social development is very good. It is incorporated into the curriculum, when pupils have opportunities to discuss ideas and listen to the views of others. In the nursery, opportunities are provided in discussion times for children to express their feelings and to value the views of others. Social skills are developed well in classrooms and pupils gradually understand that fair rules lead to a pleasant school environment. At lunchtime, pupils help with small jobs and develop friendship skills, self discipline and good manners. They respond well when they are given opportunities to organise their own lesson materials and clear up at the end of lessons. Pupils are encouraged to take care of their health. They learn about good food, exercise and hygiene. Research skills to support learning through independent study are less well developed. Community links are strongly based in family life. The rich ethnic backgrounds of pupils provide

opportunities for all to learn about life in contemporary multicultural society. Festivals such as Eid, Christmas and Diwali are celebrated with joy by the whole school community. Parties and concerts are held for pupils and parents. Efforts to raise funds for charity help pupils to gain a deeper understanding of care and consideration for other people.

46. The cultural development of the pupils is good. In the nursery, an understanding of a range of faiths and cultures is promoted and children gain self esteem as they learn to value their own rich heritage. Pupils visit local sites for the enhancement of history, geography and technology and they go further afield to places such as Bekonscot Village. They become more aware of history as they ask questions of older local residents and find out about life in earlier times. Visits to the school by dancers and musicians provide first-hand experiences which enrich the pupils' learning. Provision for the study of other cultures is provided through religious education, when a range of faiths is explored. Prints of works by famous artists are displayed in the school. Pupils are making a Millennium tapestry to record their own place in history. There are few examples of multicultural art in classrooms, but in the corridors there are displays of masks and Mendhi patterns for hands. Cultures and customs from round the world are celebrated in displays of food, flags and dolls from a wide range of countries. The school is enhancing its supply of recorded multicultural music to reflect and value the ethnic backgrounds of its pupils.

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

47. Children are introduced to the nursery sensitively with home visits and initial visits to school. All children are supported well by good teaching and non-teaching staff. Those who have special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language are appropriately supported by specialists from outside agencies and bilingual staff in the nursery.
48. Class teachers know each of their pupils well and hence are able effectively to guide their academic progress and personal development. This is supported by improvements in planning since the last inspection, target setting which has recently been introduced and a good marking policy, which is focused on helping pupils to improve. The support and guidance of pupils in the nursery is particularly good, as also is that of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The school is aware of the need to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality and is deploying a range of strategies to achieve these objectives. For example, bilingual staff talk to parents who are not fluent in English before or after school to try and determine reasons for absence and this has led to a reduction in unauthorised absence. Also, certificates are awarded to pupils who are punctual for a half term and this is having some effect.
49. Registration now takes place at the start of each session as recommended in the previous inspection report. Registration procedures are good and fully meet legal requirements, giving confidence that published figures are accurate. These are correctly recorded in the governing body's annual report to parents, the school prospectus and individually on pupils' annual written reports. The school's decision to move assemblies to the end of the day and the installation of a security system have helped to improved punctuality at the start of the day. In spite of these measures, attendance is still below the average and this affects the standards that pupils can reach.
50. The school has an extensive and well-considered behaviour and discipline policy. This includes rewards and sanctions and underpins a set of rules to govern behaviour, which is succinct and well understood. Behaviour is managed well by teachers and support staff both in the classroom and on the playground. The school takes a firm line on bullying, harassment and racism and educates pupils on these issues through the curriculum and in assemblies.
51. There are effective procedures in place for child protection. The deputy headteacher is the named person and she has undergone appropriate training and has experience in this area. She has informed all staff of the signs to look out for and the steps to be taken through in service training sessions and by other means. Appropriate guidance is sought from relevant local authority agencies and advisers for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Provision for both is good.
52. The school provides a safe and secure environment for its pupils. There are emergency exits from all teaching areas and fire drills take place each term. Risk assessments are undertaken regularly and professional advice is sought from the local education authority as appropriate. The school secretary is the qualified first aider and she deals effectively with minor accidents, informing parents, where necessary. The school library doubles as a medical room and is adequate for the purpose. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy, which is reviewed annually by the governing body.

**56. Partnership with parents and the community**

53. Partnership with parents is at the heart of the education programme in the nursery and reception

classes. Parents are closely involved with induction procedures and their support continues through help with visits and events. Bilingual staff help parents to understand the procedures and the curriculum so that children's learning in the nursery is continued at home.

54. The school is well aware that getting parents committed to and involved in their children's education is vital to the raising of standards. It has already taken many successful steps to achieve this and is continuing its efforts in this area. The major challenge facing the school is the fact that many parents, particularly mothers, are not fluent in English. This restricts their ability to help their children with homework and to contribute in the classroom, although many help in practical ways, for example with the sewing of a millennium tapestry and by supplying food for the Eid party. They also strongly support school events. Most written communications to parents from the school are produced with an Urdu translation. As well as the Section 11 teacher, several other members of staff are also bilingual and this helps with informal verbal contact with parents on the playground before and after school and at parents' evenings. A bilingual parent governor raises concerns with the headteacher on behalf of other parents and these are dealt with promptly. The school has recently started English language classes for parents. These are proving to be extremely popular and are reaching a significant number of the non-English speakers. Thus, the school has established and is continuing to build a good working relationship with its parents. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to take part in reviews of their individual education plans or statements of need as appropriate and, as required by the relevant national Code of Practice. In cases where parents do not speak sufficient English, translation services are made available. All parents who completed questionnaires said that their child likes school and over 50 per cent strongly agree.
55. The school produces written annual reports to parents on their children's progress. These are generally of high quality, describing both strengths and weaknesses of pupils together with areas for improvement. They are produced only in English as translation would be impractical. They fully meet legal requirements. There are several parents' meetings throughout the year at which pupils' progress and the contents of the written reports can be discussed or the latest education developments such as the Literacy Hour described. These are generally well attended. There is a half-termly newsletter which keeps parents well informed on the life of the school and in which forthcoming events are advertised. Both the governing body's report to parents and the school prospectus are informative and comprehensive. Thus, overall, the quality of information provided for parents is judged to be good.
56. Links with the local community are not extensive but those that exist bring benefit to the school. There are regular visits from the school nurse and representatives of the fire service. The school provides work experience for students from the local college of further education. Many of these students are bilingual and can be deployed effectively in the school. Good use is made of the Islamic Education Foundation in the form of relevant speakers who visit the school and in the supply of books on Islam. Some local firms provide sports coaching in tennis and football. Overall, links with the community are satisfactory.

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

### **60. Leadership and management**

57. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and she gives clear educational direction for the work of the school. She keeps a very good oversight of the curriculum and organises the day-to-day running of the school effectively and efficiently. Governors with specific roles are becoming more involved with curriculum issues in order to support the school in its drive to raise pupils' standards of attainment. They do not yet sufficiently monitor the effectiveness of

provision, however. The headteacher and subject coordinators monitor teaching and the curriculum very effectively and they scrutinise teachers' plans and pupils' work regularly. These measures have a positive effect on the raising of standards. The school's analysis of test results to identify and remedy weaknesses is a strength which promotes improvement. The headteacher and co-ordinators keep governors informed of curriculum developments in regular reports. Provision for children under five is managed very well. Staff work as a team to provide appropriate education for the children. They plan together and follow national guidance very effectively.

58. Policies and schemes of work are presented to the governing body for approval. There are named governors for special educational needs, literacy and numeracy and there has been governor training for the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school explains initiatives such as the literacy hour to parents through curricular meetings and this promotes support for pupils from home. The deputy headteacher is also the special educational needs coordinator. She has undergone considerable training for the role and is very knowledgeable, managing the provision well and demonstrating good leadership. The link-governor is kept informed of developments, but direct monitoring of effectiveness is fairly limited.
59. The work of committees contributes positively to the management of the school, but attendance at meetings is variable. Roles and responsibilities within committees are insufficiently clear. Governors keep a regular overview of the budget and the full governing body approves the budget and the school development plan. Budget implications of curriculum developments are not identified in the plan and this limits its use as a working tool. Major spending decisions are not evaluated against their effectiveness in improving standards. The governing body does not have clear evaluation procedures to identify priorities and set a longer term strategic plan for the school.
60. There is an appropriate set of aims which is reflected in the sense of purpose in the school. Most parents are well satisfied with the work of the school and their children enjoy coming. There is a positive ethos and a commitment to raising standards. The school has the capacity to continue to improve. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and relationships between staff and pupils are very good. All statutory requirements are met.
61. There has been satisfactory improvement in the development of the role of subject co-ordinators since the previous inspection. They monitor classroom teaching and learning and manage resources well. In the previous report, strategic management was judged to be good and financial implications were identified on the school development plan. The leadership is aware that these aspects now require attention. The school's capacity for improvement is good. The staff work together as a team and are dedicated to raising standards.
65. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
62. Staffing for the education of children under five is appropriate. Staff experience and qualifications meet the needs of the children. There are appropriate bilingual staff to support the range of Asian languages spoken by the children. Accommodation is good, with sufficient indoor space and adequate hard and grassed areas for outside play. Learning resources are good and they are well organised and well stored.
63. The school has a sufficient number of teachers to deliver the curriculum effectively. All are well qualified and most have had many years experience in the profession. There is an adequate number of classroom assistants and instructors, ensuring that groups of pupils working at different levels are supported effectively in most lessons. Two teachers and three of the support

staff (plus another teacher and nursery nurse in the nursery) are specifically funded and employed to support pupils with English as an additional language. Also, several of the staff are bilingual. Thus, the school is well placed to teach the majority of pupils, for whom English is an additional language. Indeed, many pupils arrive at the school speaking no English at all. The deputy headteacher is also the special educational needs coordinator. All the teaching and education support staff are female hence the school has had to take steps to provide male role models for the boys. For example, a male governor comes into school each Friday to hear pupils read and the sports coaches and a student in school for work experience are male.

64. Arrangements for the induction of new staff are sound. The staff handbook is being updated so that it is more useful for this purpose and the newly qualified teacher is being adequately mentored by the deputy headteacher. Effective procedures are in place for the appraisal of staff. There is ample evidence in the school development plan of a wide range of in-service training. This is fully costed and intended outcomes are clearly stated.
65. The accommodation at the school provides an environment which is conducive to good teaching and learning. The classrooms and the hall have ample space, with displays of pupils' work and educational aids of high quality and attractive appearance. The premises are in a good state of repair and decorative order and there is a high standard of cleanliness. For all this, the site agent and his staff can take credit. The grounds are well maintained by the local education authority. Lack of sufficient office space and storage facilities, as mentioned in the previous inspection report, is still a problem. The school has produced costed plans for an extension which would effectively address this problem and has already raised some of the funds. The extension to the nursery playground, also mentioned in the previous inspection report, is due to take place shortly after the present inspection. Hiring out the premises for general community use outside school hours would not be appropriate as the junior school on the same site amply fills this need. The school is, however, considering extending its use to pupils by setting up breakfast and homework clubs, hosting Koran lessons for its Muslim pupils and setting up language classes for parents.
66. Learning resources are good, overall. They are now at least satisfactory for all subjects of the curriculum and this is an improvement since the last inspection. They are particularly good in science, religious education and in the nursery. The school has recently obtained four new computers of high quality and fully up to modern standards. It has done this by leasing rather than buying, thus allowing the option of replacement in the future at little extra cost. There is still, however, only about one computer per class and this is barely adequate to deliver the curriculum. The school has an ample supply of books to support the curriculum. The range is wide and the quality generally high. Included in the stock are some very good bilingual books which cover all reading levels. The library is well organised. The good provision of appropriate resources is beginning to raise standards.
70. **The efficiency of the school**
67. Overall, the efficiency of the school is good. Financial planning is satisfactory with the school development plan now being costed for the present year. Details are not sufficiently targeted to all subjects and aspects of the school for the present year, however, nor is there adequate, long term strategic financial planning. There are no formal procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of provision and criteria are not explicitly related to raising standards of attainment. The school has a higher than average contingency fund, built up gradually over many years and now targeted for site development. Whilst the finance committee reports back to the main governing body satisfactorily, attendance at meetings is not satisfactory and this leaves too much responsibility on one non-employed member of the committee.

68. The use of teaching and support staff is good. Spending on support and administrative staff and on resources is much higher than the national average and is appropriate for a school with specific English as an additional language needs. There is low spending on supply staff and on premises related aspects, with teachers and the site agent contributing very positively to school life. In the nursery, staff are deployed well and resources are used effectively and efficiently. Both teaching and non-teaching staff are used efficiently and effectively in the main school. Support staff, particularly those supporting pupils with English as additional language are timetabled well to ensure that maximum use is made of their time. Resources and the accommodation are used well with all available accommodation being used for teaching purposes, such as an annex to the hall for withdrawal classes for English as an additional language. The hall is also used for adult English lessons once a week. Because of limited storage space corridors are often used for storage, which whilst safe, is unsatisfactory.
69. The efficiency of financial control and administration is very good. The office manager keeps up-to-date computerised records of the school's budget and school fund accounts, which are monitored by the governors, monthly. The LEA supports her well and provides information which can be evaluated by the headteacher. The office manager has attended relevant courses and all aspects of the latest audit report have been addressed, other than one relating to dinner money envelopes which, because of cultural or language differences is difficult to implement.
70. Children's attainment on entry and their socio-economic backgrounds are very low but pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress across the school and reach well below, or below average standards by the time they are seven years old. Their attitudes to learning are very good. Teaching is good and often very good with very few unsatisfactory lessons. The cost of educating a pupil is similar to the national average. Taking these factors into consideration the school gives good value for money, which when the changed intake of the school is taken into consideration is a satisfactory comparison with the last report which said that the school gave very good value for money because pupils achieved higher results.



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

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

71. At the time of the inspection there were eight full-time and sixty part-time children in the nursery. There is no reception class during the autumn term. Pupils usually spend three terms in the nursery before transferring to the infants in the term after their fifth birthday. This means that summer born children have no Reception experience and go straight into Year 1. Most children enter the nursery with very low levels of attainment in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Levels of attainment are below those usually found in personal, social, physical and creative development. Most children speak English as an additional language and all make good progress in the six nationally recommended areas of learning. By the time they are of statutory school age, attainment is average for most in personal and social, physical and creative development. Children do not meet the nationally agreed outcomes in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Those with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
72. The children soon settle into class routines in the nursery and develop an increasing ability to concentrate on activities. They establish effective relationships with the staff and with other children. There is very good teaching and very good support from nursery nurses and language assistants. This is very effective in developing children's confidence and creating a nurturing atmosphere. Children can ask questions in their own languages, experiment with the wide range of learning resources and learn from their mistakes. They demonstrate independence in personal hygiene and choose activities with confidence. Those who stay to lunch follow the routines and enjoy time spent in the hall with older pupils. There is clear understanding of what is right and what is wrong and children respond positively when reminded by the staff. They are thoughtful for one another and are keen to help and to share. Children develop a respect for a range of cultures as they celebrate a range of religious festivals. Visits before they transfer to the main school prepare children for the change and they enjoy assemblies and walks round the school to see what older pupils are doing. This helps them to integrate well and adapt to the brisker pace of work at Key Stage 1.
73. All children use a growing vocabulary and knowledge of English to express their feelings, views and ideas. Those who speak English as an additional language are well supported by bilingual staff. Most children listen well to one another and the teacher and in story times and discussions, they contribute eagerly, try hard to explain what they want to say and share their thoughts with candour and openness. Most take part in role-play confidently and enjoy chatting with friends in the phone box or the home corner. Staff intervene skilfully to enhance the language skills of all children. In the book corner, children handle books with care and enjoy looking at the pictures. With adult help, they tell stories by following the illustrations. Very few can read any words but a few know some letter sounds. Children develop writing skills by tracing patterns and writing over the teacher's words. Pencil control is weak and the movement from left to right develops slowly. Few write their names with appropriate upper and lower-case letters before they move to Key Stage 1. Very good teaching and support help all children to make good progress in the early stages of speaking and listening, reading and writing.
74. Children develop their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding through a wide range of activities. They match, sort, order and count objects and play simple games to reinforce learning. As their vocabulary grows, children sing counting rhymes and songs. They play with sand and water and develop mathematical language such as 'full' and 'empty'. They begin to match and name simple two-dimensional shapes and repeat patterns. In a variety of activities, they reinforce language about position such as next to, after, in front of and behind. By the time they move to

Key Stage 1, higher attaining children begin to show awareness of number operations such as addition and subtraction when they talk about 'more' and 'not as much' with the teacher. Very good teaching and support help children to acquire appropriate vocabulary and skills in a systematic way.

75. The children gain knowledge and understanding of the world through a well-planned programme of activities. They enjoy using the computer and gain increasing control of the mouse to drag images across the screen and play simple number and language games. Children gain knowledge and understanding of life and living things as they take turns to care for hamsters and fish. They recognise features of autumn such as seeds and coloured leaves and try to describe them. Teaching is very good and bilingual support ensures that children gain maximum benefit from visits and walks near the school. During visits to local superstores and showrooms, they look at cars, washing machines, cookers and televisions and become more aware of the wide use of technology in everyday life.
76. Physical development is fostered through a good range of indoor and outdoor activities. Children run, jump, balance, crawl and climb with increasing levels of control and co-ordination. They ride wheeled toys confidently and use the sand-play tools effectively. They have an awareness of space and use the area safely. Indoors, children show appropriate manipulative control as they play with construction kits, tools and malleable materials. They build confidently with large wooden bricks and climb in the imaginative play area. Fine motor control for using pencils and scissors is less well developed. Teaching, overall, is good.
77. The children use a wide variety of media, including paint, crayons, clay and collage, to make pictures with a range of textures. Their paintings often lack form, but they are bold and show a love of colour. Very good teaching and support help children to gain confidence in expressing their ideas in two and three-dimensional ways. In music, children develop a growing sense of rhythm and pitch as they sing simple, repetitive songs, repeat clapping rhythms and play percussion instruments with enjoyment. Children explore their feelings and develop their imagination as they play in the well-organised home corner. Throughout the day, there are opportunities for children to gain creative skills by playing alone or sharing and learning with others.
78. The quality of teaching for children under five is very good. The staff work together very effectively as a team and they have sound understanding of the needs of young children. Very good planning closely follows the requirements of the national Desirable Learning Outcomes and activities provided for the children are imaginative and inviting. There is a good balance of directed and child-initiated activities. Learning objectives are clear and all staff are appropriately involved in the planning of work. Deployment of non-teaching staff is very good. Resources are well prepared and the organisation of the part-time sessions carefully reflects the different age groups. All children, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, are well supported with encouragement and consideration when they move to the full school day. Relationships are very good and the very good management of children promotes a stable and purposeful atmosphere conducive to learning. Children are encouraged to be independent and the teacher's expectations are high.
79. Assessment of children's progress is very good. There is a regular and thorough system for staff to collect information which is used effectively to identify learning needs and plan appropriate compensatory work. This is a strength in the teaching, because it promotes a step-by-step approach to the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. There are good links with appropriate outside agencies such as the speech therapy service to support children with special educational needs. Bilingual staff give support in a range of Asian languages. Home visits before

children start the nursery help staff to get to know the children and assess what they can do. Very good relationships with parents are promoted through an open-door approach. Parents, including those who speak English as an additional language, come confidently into the nursery and talk to staff about practical issues and their children's development and progress. English language lessons held in school help parents to support their children's acquisition of vocabulary and reading skills.

80. Findings for teaching and provision concur with the previous inspection, when they were very good. Progress was not mentioned, but children's attainment was reported as very good. Most children now speak English as an additional language and, although their progress is good, their attainment, especially in language and literacy, does not meet nationally agreed outcomes by the time they are of statutory school age.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **84. English**

81. Pupils' attainment in the national reading tests at Key Stage 1 in 1998 were very low when compared with all schools and when compared with similar schools. In writing, it was very low when compared with all schools and well below when compared with similar schools. In reading, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level (Level 2) or above was 39 per cent and this was well below the national average of 80 per cent. In writing, 47 per cent reached the expected level or above compared with the national average of 81 per cent. In reading, nine per cent of the pupils attained at the higher level (Level 3) which was well below the national average. In writing, no pupils attained the higher level and this was below the national average. Averaged over the three-year period from 1996 to 1998, performance in reading and writing has been well below the national average level. Over the three years, there was no recorded difference between the performance of boys and girls. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or more in reading rose from 39 per cent in 1998 to 69 per cent in 1999. The percentage reaching Level 3 remained similar. In writing, the percentage reaching Level 2 or more rose from 47 per cent to 72 per cent. The percentage reaching Level 3 remained at zero. Currently, there are no national figures for comparison, but the school's drive to improve attainment is showing signs of success in the much better results in reading and writing at Level 2. Inspection findings reflect these test results. The school has now set itself the target of raising results at Level 3.
82. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average in speaking and listening. Most pupils start school unable to speak English. They listen well to their teachers and to one another and develop a growing vocabulary to develop their ideas logically. Despite difficulties with grammar, most pupils express their ideas satisfactorily in discussions and plenary sessions at the end of lessons. They speak confidently in class and contribute sensibly and thoughtfully when questioned by teachers. Pupils develop specific vocabulary to support work in all subjects. This is most effective for pupils who speak English as an additional language when the spoken word is reinforced with visual presentation of the vocabulary.
83. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average in reading. Pupils enjoy reading and are aware of the contribution of authors and illustrators to books. They learn letter sounds in a systematic way and gradually use these and picture cues to gain understanding from texts. Most pupils read frequently used simple words accurately, but they have difficulty in sounding out words. All pupils benefit from the practice of reading together during the Literacy Hour. This is especially beneficial for the large number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. With the teachers' help, pupils become more fluent and expressive. Younger pupils become aware

of a sense of narrative when they read stories such as 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and then sequence the events in the story. They enjoy reading poetry and improve both reading and spelling by discussing rhyming words. Higher attaining pupils read simple storybooks and talk about the plot, often using the text or pictures to help them to explain more clearly. They notice the use of punctuation and read speech expressively. They know how to use the contents and index pages in books, but do not have sufficient opportunity to develop this skill in other subjects.

84. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average in writing. Handwriting is usually correctly formed and evenly sized but spelling and punctuation are unsatisfactory for most pupils. They do not use full stops consistently to end sentences and have difficulty in building words from letter sounds. There are examples of good writing from higher attaining pupils which include inverted commas for speech. These pupils write some sensitive and exciting poetry with lines such as, 'I don't like the sound of thunder banging in my ears'. Pupils make books about themselves and include contents and index pages. The text is brief, but sentences are usually demarcated by full stops and capital letters. The majority of pupils begin to write simple stories which show narrative form and an awareness of a reader. They write for a wide range of purposes, such as letters, reports, poetry and instructions. In the Literacy Hour, they use children's literature to inspire their own writing and enhance their vocabulary. They use the story, 'A Quiet Night', to help them with their own story, 'A Quiet Day'. All use simple wordbooks or dictionaries effectively.
85. The progress of pupils in Key Stage 1 is good. Speaking and listening skills develop well as pupils gradually increase their vocabulary, express their opinions and develop their ideas. Those who speak English as an additional language display increasing confidence in communicating in English. In reading, pupils become more aware of letter patterns, rhymes and context cues and they gain increasing knowledge and understanding of books and how to extract information from them. Handwriting skills develop well and pupils write for a wider range of purposes as their vocabulary is extended. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Higher attaining pupils benefit from the brisker pace and more demanding work when they are taught as a group. This supports their good progress and meets the school's aim to raise standards and achieve higher levels in national tests at the end of the school year.
86. The use of literacy and spoken language in other areas of the curriculum is good. Teachers give pupils time to explain their thoughts and ideas in a reflective way in plenary sessions. Teachers listen well to pupils and this promotes confidence. Specific subject vocabulary is developed most effectively when teachers reinforce learning with the visual display of words. The school is aware that more opportunities are necessary for pupils, especially the higher attainers, to enhance their reference skills in the recently classified library. Writing is developed appropriately in other subjects. Teachers are very aware of the danger of losing pupils' interest by turning every lesson into a writing task, especially when recording is difficult for most. Information technology is used effectively both for enhancing spelling skills and for word processing.
87. Pupils' attitudes in Key Stage 1 are very good. They listen very well to the teachers and follow instructions effectively. Pupils enjoy stories and books and they listen to one another considerately in discussions. They settle to written tasks and work quietly in most lessons. Their levels of concentration are very good and they try hard to succeed. Pupils develop independence in speaking and listening through well-presented opportunities for them to take part in discussions. Pupils who speak English as an additional language respond well to the supportive and encouraging help from bilingual teachers and classroom assistants.
88. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is always at least good and, in almost 40 per cent of

lessons, is very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Teachers have implemented the National Literacy Strategy very effectively and their knowledge and understanding of the subject is good. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils who are expected to concentrate and work hard. In the best lessons, there is a brisk pace and teachers follow periods of direct teaching with stimulating activities. In a few lessons, teachers talk for too long and pupils become restless. The quality of teachers' planning is very good. Each lesson builds effectively on the previous one and this helps pupils to make systematic progress. Teachers ask probing questions which elicit pupils' understanding and extend their learning. Pupils are managed well in most lessons and teachers work hard to make learning enjoyable. The bilingual teachers work very effectively with pupils to ensure that they understand tasks and increase their skills in English. Non-teaching staff, including bilingual classroom assistants, are deployed effectively and are involved in planning. They are aware of lesson objectives and of targets on individual education plans. This ensures that pupils receive maximum benefit from their support.

89. Specialist teaching and classroom support for pupils with special educational needs are good, with a very good, multi-sensory approach, so that pupils learn by looking and listening and by working with tactile apparatus. Pupils benefit from the school's step-by-step approach to the teaching of reading and spelling. Throughout the school, assessment procedures are good for all pupils. Teachers assess pupils carefully during lessons and use information effectively to inform the next stage of planning. There are regular assessments of all pupils and good records are kept. Marking of work is good and teachers give pupils encouragement and helpful advice. The school's homework policy is followed, especially in reading and this has a positive effect on pupils' progress and continues good links which are established with parents in the nursery.
90. There is a comprehensive policy for English and very good schemes of work have been based on the National Literacy Strategy. The curriculum is co-ordinated very effectively by the headteacher and statutory requirements are met. An excellent audit of English standards and provision has enabled the school to identify weaknesses and build on strengths. The headteacher monitors lessons regularly and staff work well together to raise standards. Resources are good. The school has a very good supply of high quality fiction and non-fiction in classrooms, corridors and the well-organised library. The governing body is becoming more aware of curriculum developments through the involvement of the literacy governor. This support is essential for the whole school community to sustain a feeling of confidence in its ability to raise pupils' standards of attainment in English. A good number of parents attended a meeting about the Literacy Hour and this has a positive effect on the help they are able to give their children at home.
91. A direct comparison with the results of 1996 cannot be made fairly, as the characteristics of pupils attending the school have changed substantially since 1996, with over 89 per cent of pupils now coming from homes where English is an additional language. Since the last inspection, however, the school has increased the range of writing opportunities, so that pupils write for a wide variety of purposes. The use of the library has not been extended as recommended, but recent classification of the books gives the school a good base to improve research skills across the curriculum. National Curriculum requirements for English are met well.

## **Mathematics**

92. The results of both the 1998 National Curriculum tests of pupils aged seven and of statutory teachers' assessments indicate that attainment is very low in comparison with national averages. The percentage of pupils who attain a higher than expected level is well below average. The school's average level is also very low compared with the average of similar schools., which is based on the number of pupils qualifying for free school meals. The results of the 1999 tests,

however, show a larger proportion of pupils reaching the expected level or above, than in the previous year. Comparisons are not yet available for these results, although early indications are that the national figure has also improved. Over the three years from 1996 to 1998, there has been a downward trend. The performance of boys is slightly better than that of girls, but the difference is not significant.

93. Currently, overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 remains below average, although there are indications that over half the pupils achieve at around the expected levels in all parts of the subject. This is certainly higher than is shown by the 1998 tests, although it reflects more closely those of 1999. The school has a very high proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language and this has been growing in the past few years. Undoubtedly, this reduces the average level achieved in the tests, because pupils must first acquire the requisite English vocabulary in order to demonstrate their understanding. In the classrooms, often very good provision for pupils with English as an additional language reduces the effects. The use of practical mathematics, solving problems with the use of number-lines, plastic cubes and similar equipment is a strong feature. This, too, helps pupils to do well in lessons, even though their English may not yet allow them to understand printed questions on the test papers. In Year 2, nearly all pupils count objects reliably and have recall of simple addition facts up to at least 10. A little over half choose correctly between addition and subtraction to solve simple problems. They identify, visually, halves and quarters of surfaces, such as rectangles. They know the names of regular shapes. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to link explicitly the shapes that they recognise with simple properties. For example, they know that triangles have three sides and angles, whereas pentagons have five of each. A few pupils are beginning to generalise from this that ten-sided shapes must have ten angles. Many pupils use charts and simple block graphs to represent data. For example, they present information about their favourite vegetables, also using data-handling programs in information technology.
94. Progress through the school is good. Pupils begin work on the National Curriculum with skills and understanding that are often well below those normally found. However, assessment is used to establish their needs and these are well met. Pupils' good progress relates closely to the quality of teaching. Tasks are used which match pupils' prior knowledge and understanding, building on it well, so that skills broaden and deepen steadily. For example, pupils' mental strategies are promoted well, with good instruction and questions, establishing how answers come about. Pupils with special educational needs are also catered for well and make good progress. Individual education plans contain mathematical targets when appropriate. For example, in the case of a pupil whose prior understanding was quite limited, counting and adding up to five was precisely identified as a need. Her task in a lesson was adapted well, so that it related closely to this. Similarly, the progress of pupils with English as an additional language is well supported by teachers and classroom assistants with expertise. Pupils' home language is often used to extend their understanding, when their knowledge of English does not permit it.
95. Standards in numeracy are being developed well. Pupils are taught the relative sizes of numbers and nearly all recognise place value in tens and units. They recognise simple two- and three-dimensional shapes in the environment and across the curriculum, for example, when they recognise mathematical shapes in the art of Mondrian. They measure accurately in a range of situations in, for example, design and technology and science. The introduction of the Numeracy Strategy is being well co-ordinated and monitored.
96. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good, and frequently very good. They enjoy counting, adding, multiplying, and splitting and sharing numbers and objects. They listen and concentrate well. Behaviour is often very good. A relative weakness is that opportunities for collaborative work are restricted. Tasks tend to require pupils to work alongside each other on similar activities, rather

than to work together on the same activity. However, they co-operate well with resources, sharing and helping each other sensibly.

97. The quality of teaching is consistently good. All inspected lessons are at least of this quality, including a third that are very good. Teachers' knowledge of both the subject and pupils is good. It results in planning which matches pupils' needs very well. It contains very clear information about what pupils are expected to know by the end of lessons. Work is adapted for groups of pupils with different levels of prior attainment. For example, a teacher in Year 2 questions a group of lower attaining pupils carefully about properties of shape, ensuring that they know the reasons for what they have learnt. In this way, time is used well, so that different groups build on their previous knowledge at appropriate levels, contributing to good progress. Teachers assess pupils' understanding and evaluate the content and effectiveness of lessons, using the results to plan their next week's work. Management of pupils is often very good and organisation and uses of methods and resources are good.
98. Co-ordination of mathematics is good. The co-ordinator is well organised, knows her role well and is knowledgeable in the subject. She monitors planning carefully and offers advice and feedback to colleagues. The school has a good strategy for improving numeracy, based on the introduction of the National Strategy.
99. At the time of the last inspection in 1996, a "substantial majority" of pupils were judged to achieve the expectations of the National Curriculum. Standards are, therefore, lower now. However, the characteristics of pupils on entry to the school have also changed. In 1996, pupils were predominantly from families originally from the Asian sub-continent. This has increased to the point where they are almost entirely so. Furthermore, 89 per cent are from homes where English is an additional language. A direct comparison with the results of 1996 cannot therefore be made fairly. National Curriculum requirements are met.

### 103. **Science**

100. The results of the 1998 statutory teacher assessments in science of pupils aged seven indicate that attainment is very low in comparison with national averages. The percentage of pupils who attain a higher than expected level is well below average in each of the attainment targets and very low, overall. When compared with similar schools the results are similar. The results were lower in 1998 than in 1997 but have remained static in 1998 and 1999.
101. In the lessons observed and from the pupils' books it can be seen that many pupils are now reaching average levels in knowledge and understanding as a result of clear direct teaching, but their skills of experimentation and investigation are well below average and prevent them from achieving higher standards. Their slow writing skills hold back the recording of their work and ways need to be found to address this so that their attainment in the subject is not held back by lack of English and the ability to work independently at investigations. By the end of the key stage, pupils know that we can make things move by pushing and pulling them, that there are different sources of light. They know what electricity is used for and how to be safe with it. They show a good understanding of different materials and their purposes and know that their properties can change.
102. Progress is good. Coverage of the National Curriculum is satisfactory and, within lessons, pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding, for example, of the importance of safety when using or storing drugs and medicines. By the end of Key Stage 1, they have learned about light, forces and electricity and have a good knowledge of how their body works and how to

keep healthy. They have studied parts of a plant and seasons of the year and have recorded facts about different animals onto a grid. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good in relation to their prior attainment.

103. Pupils' attitudes are good. They listen very well, have a good sense of safety and are keen to contribute to class discussions. They do this better when in smaller groups with support from bilingual teachers. When the pace is too slow for the higher attainers they sometimes find it difficult not to call out the answers and become impatient. When working in groups they enjoy discussing with each other what they are doing.
104. The quality of teaching is good. Very good use is made of bilingual teaching, both in mother tongue and for translation. Cross curricular links are well developed, for example with design and technology and with mathematics when pupils discuss birthdays. Speaking and listening skills are developed through discussion. Teachers question the pupils well and give good support to individuals while they work. The organisation of class groups is good and very good use is made of classroom assistants to release the teacher to carry out assessments.
105. There is good leadership from the coordinator who has introduced the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance, supported by the Bedfordshire science scheme of work and has a clear action plan for the subject. She monitors teaching and discusses her findings with the teacher after an observation. There is a very good range of resources. Accommodation and the local environment are used well to support the subject. National Curriculum requirements are met well.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **109. Information technology**

106. The attainment of seven-year-olds in information technology is below national expectations. This is largely because pupils' past work and technological experiences have not been sufficient to ensure that the required standard is reached. There have been several recent developments, however, and the quality and range of the curriculum are improving rapidly. Levels of skill in using computers vary greatly. By the end of Key Stage 1, a few higher attaining pupils are very confident. They use a mouse to 'click' areas of the screen, buttons and toolbars, controlling what they want computers to do. They know where the letters are on the keyboard and they type effectively. They 'drag' images or numbers across the screen, checking whether their solution to a problem is the correct one, before moving the program forward. Whilst the majority of pupils works on similar tasks, confidence is generally at a much lower level. Pupils are hesitant in their knowledge of what to do, requiring a lot of help and prompting from the more advanced pupils, or from adults in the classroom. A further significant minority is very slow. These pupils have little idea of where to find letters on the key board and are inaccurate in their handling of the mouse.
107. Progress is currently satisfactory. Teachers are aware of pupils whose attainment is low and they help them accordingly. Tasks are suitable for them, are thus based on their present levels of skill, and consolidate and refine them at a sound rate. Pupils whose English is insecure, however, are often very slow in finding the letters on the keyboards and a lack of resources is a barrier to speeding up this skill. For example, the keys are marked with letters in upper case and there are no overlays, which slows down their typing. The school is aware of this and overlays have recently been ordered. The school's range of resources is improving. Programs to support art, mathematics, geography and spelling have already been introduced and others are being ordered. Most of the school's personal computers are recently rented machines of sound quality. Pupils are



keen to use them and this has a strong impact on the satisfactory rates of progress that are usually achieved. Pupils with special educational needs use particular programmes which are well matched to their attainment and make good progress in relation to the skills they already have.

108. Pupils' attitudes are often very good. They like using technology. Even those who struggle to find letters or to operate programs are well motivated and are willing to try hard. They help each other sensibly and listen well to advice about what to do. They respect the equipment and use it properly. Behaviour is nearly always good and, often, very good.
109. Teaching is satisfactory. Knowledge and understanding of the subject are adequate to meet and support pupils' needs. For example, instructors and teachers of English as an additional language support pupils well. They withdraw groups, sit alongside them in classrooms and, where necessary, explain tasks by using the pupils' home language. Methods are satisfactory and appropriate to the requirements of tasks, including instruction to whole classes, individual work and working in pairs. In a lesson in Year 2, a teacher explained clearly the relevant vocabulary, using terminology such as "delete button", "return" and "space bar". An instructor with English as an additional language was at hand to help particular pupils. Organisation of relevant tasks is sound and the management of pupils is good, which leads to good behaviour. Thus, time is soundly spent on the set tasks and activities. Teaching contributes satisfactorily to the rate of progress.
110. The coordinator's vision for the development of the subject is good, with many planned improvements. Examples are further purchases of both software and hardware, links with the community, making visits to offices and supermarkets to learn about the impact of computing on society and extending the use of programmable toys to increase pupils' perceptions and understanding of the use of technology to control devices. Overall, the requirements of the National Curriculum are met.

114.

### **Religious education**

111. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with those expected of the Agreed Syllabus in terms of knowledge and understanding, but lack of English language skills holds back written attainment and the pupils' ability to communicate fully in class. However, by the end of the Key Stage they have a good knowledge of Bible stories such as Moses as a baby which they learn about both from the Bible and as told in the Koran. The shared stories of different faiths are an important dimension of the religious education teaching. Pupils learn about celebrations of different faiths as well as birthdays, weddings and other customs. They discuss school and classroom rules and the importance of sharing, being kind and playing together. They consider how they feel and what makes them feel as they do. This is done well and helps the pupils to express their feeling well. They know about the special books of three of the major world faiths and show respect for them. They are able to say, for example, that the Torah should be put back in the cover after use.
112. Pupils make very good progress, particularly in learning from religion as they bring with them to school a positive attitude to the subject and enthusiasm for their own religion which they can apply to others they learn about, for example, when they learn about special books and recognise the Koran. They make good progress, related to growing knowledge of the shared traditions and particularly to the skills of empathy such as when learning about the concern of the family when Moses was a baby. There is also good progress in subject vocabulary, although this could be better planned for.

113. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They listen well, join in enthusiastically, especially when they want to know more, such as, when learning about a synagogue, one pupil asked if Jesus went to one. Pupils show respect for each other's traditions and beliefs and are very interested in what is taught. They settle quickly to written work and enjoy looking at each other's work at the end of a lesson and learning more from it.
114. The quality of teaching is very good. All teachers have a good command of the subject and the team teaching between Christian and Moslem teachers is an example to others and provides pupils with excellent role models. It both affirms pupils' own knowledge and adds to it. It is done very well and clearly helps the pupils to understand the stories through translation and through telling both in English and in mother tongue and also conveys the differences in the traditions as well as the similarities. Pupils' keen interest is very much due to this joint teaching which relates well to their own experience. Methods and organisation are very good and cross-curriculum links are developed well and include Literacy Hour. The emphasis on Attainment Target 2, applying what they learn, is evident in such lessons as 'How I can be a Good Samaritan' when literacy skills are used in their writing. While teachers assess well through questioning, they do not assess those who do not give answers in class. The subject contributes very well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
115. The subject is well led by the specialist coordinator who makes good use of advice from the Islamic Centre and works well with the bilingual teacher. Visits have been made to the Islamic exhibition, the town library to see work on Judaism and to the parish church. The subject is very well resourced except that the school has no Bibles suitable for the age group. The school's own scheme of work matches the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus.

#### 119. **Art**

116. There are many strengths in pupils' attainments. Throughout the school, they are developing skills of observation and appraisal that are often above what is usually found. Through looking carefully at the work of famous artists and hearing their teachers' explanations, they discover a lot of detail about how characteristic styles and effects are achieved. They use the results of this to create works of their own, similar to the styles that they see. They also use computer programs such as 'Dazzle' to produce pictures based on geometric shapes in a style similar to that of Mondrian. Pupils in Year 2, represent what they see with a growing accuracy. Their still-life paintings of fruit bowls with fruits are often above the standard that is normally expected. Displayed work around the school is clearly imaginative and carefully composed, with examples in the style of Jackson Pollock and Monet. Examples of three-dimensional art using salt-dough and collage further support these judgements, containing evidence of different textures and careful shaping of the materials. A weaker element is the lack of pupils' work representing their own culture that is displayed around the school. Conversely, displays of pupils' art and artefacts enhance the appearance of the building, making a strong visual impact.
117. Pupils' progress is good. It is based on a systematic development of skills, which uses the work of famous artists as a starting point. Discussions are of good quality, focusing on how artists achieve different effects. It is promoted well through the school's planning. For example, Year 1 pupils learn how to mix paints to achieve good matches of the colours that they need. After careful observation of "The Cholmondeley Sisters", they work on their own portraits, mixing skin-tones very carefully to get the best match that they can achieve. Work of this kind is taken forward by looking at how to use brushes and is used in the more advanced work that occurs as pupils move on through the school. A weekly art club, which is equally accessible to all pupils by opening it on rotation to each Year 2 class also makes a strong contribution to standards in the subject. The progress that pupils with special educational needs make in relation to their prior

attainment is good.

118. Pupils' attitudes to art are good. They work with a lot of care. They listen to the advice and instructions of their teachers. For example, they are willing to practise skills before beginning work, trying out the shapes of objects before putting them into their paintings. They speak sensibly to each other, offering ideas, help and advice. Personal development is very good in this respect, as pupils accept each other's comments in a good spirit. Pupils throughout the school accept responsibility to help their teachers by carrying paints, water and similar materials with considerable care for their age.
119. It was possible to observe only two art lessons. However, a range of evidence indicates that the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the National Curriculum, which results in thorough planning. Teaching includes a broad and balanced range of knowledge and skills. Methods in the lessons seen are good, carrying forward this emphasis on the development and use of skills. For example, in a lesson on self-portraits, the teacher explained that it is important to get the colours correct first. She gave plenty of support and praise to pupils who took care and time over the process.
120. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The coordinator has a clear knowledge of her role. She monitors displays and is beginning to gather a portfolio of pupils' work, including both originals and artefacts, in order to check progress in the development of skill.

124. **Design and technology**

121. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in most lessons and over time. They build up a good understanding of techniques through carefully planned progression of the teaching of skills. They can make moving pictures and dancing dolls. They can weave using different materials and threads, design and make models to show how the joints work. They use scissors with increasing confidence and use glue carefully and sparingly. Pupils learn to design and then make to that design well. They evaluate how well they have achieved what they set out to do. In some classes, they are beginning to be more independent and choose their tools and materials on their own. When slow progress is evident, new units of work are being piloted and planning has not been sufficiently thought through in advance. The strengths of the subject are in the progress pupils make over time.
122. The response of pupils is good. Pupils listen well, are clearly enthusiastic and concentrate hard when they are working. They are very well motivated. There are, however, few opportunities for them to work in pairs or in groups collaboratively, although the Millennium tapestry in the hall shows an example of where this has taken place successfully.
123. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. There is a good balance of investigative, disassembling and evaluative work and teachers plan well for both designing and making. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, classroom management is such that too many pupils need help at the same time and resources are not always appropriate.
124. The subject is well led by the coordinator who has good subject knowledge. Resources are satisfactory at present, but more resources will be needed to support the recently introduced Qualifications and Assessment Authority scheme of work, which is being piloted. There is a policy in place but this will also need updating.

125. Standards have remained similar to the last inspection.

129. **Geography**

126. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in Key Stage 1. After listening to the story of 'The Gingerbread Man', pupils in Year 1 draw his route as he runs away. In another Year 1 class, pupils make a simple map of the route they took on a walk near the school. Skills of geographical enquiry and communication are developed as pupils interpret the map and share their ideas with the class. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, they can identify a significant number of countries on a world map. Pupils collect information from holiday brochures and explain the features which attract them to certain resorts. They want to see the animals in Kenya and the beach in Corfu. They study contrasting localities and know that there are differences between town and country environments. Understanding of the human impact on the environment grows as pupils learn about modes of travel. They reach standards in line with those expected of pupils of their age.
127. Literacy, numeracy and information technology are developed well in geography. Support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good when teachers introduce and consolidate vocabulary with labels which are pinned to maps and displays. Mathematical ideas of distance and direction are reinforced through work on maps.
128. Pupils' attitudes in Key Stage 1 are good. Pupils in Year 1 show great enthusiasm as they carry out fieldwork and remember their walk along roads near the school. In Year 2, pupils concentrate well so that they are able to answer questions effectively after listening to a story about the seaside. Pupils find it more difficult to be attentive and contribute confidently when lesson material does not draw closely on their experiences.
129. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and teachers have secure subject knowledge. Most lessons are planned well but lesson objectives do not always build effectively on pupils' experiences. Relationships with pupils are very good. This encourages them to review their answers and change their ideas without losing self-esteem. In the best lessons, teachers ask probing questions to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teaching is less effective when discussion sessions are too long to sustain pupils' interest. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported by bilingual assistants. Teaching is good when pupils' experiences are used to bring relevance to current learning. Pupils are managed effectively during group activities and those with special educational needs are provided with work at appropriate levels.
130. There is a succinct subject policy and the cycle of topics provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop geographical skills, knowledge and understanding in a systematic way. Skills are identified in the scheme and the co-ordinator has introduced an effective method of recording pupils' progress. Resources for geography are satisfactory and the school premises and locality are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning.
131. National Curriculum requirements are met. Since the last inspection, the role of the co-ordinator has been developed. She now monitors teachers' plans and classroom implementation of the schemes of work. Standards at the time of the last inspection were sound. These findings, therefore, represent an improvement.

135. **History**

132. The progress pupils in Key Stage 1 make is good. In Year 1, they can identify significant events and people in their own lives as they develop a sense of chronology. They know about changes over time and question their parents about life in the past. Lively displays of baby clothes, photographs and birthday cards show pupils' involvement in historical enquiry. They sequence toys such as teddy bears, Asian dolls and clockwork models in order of age and recognise the changes in materials and technology. Pupils talk to older people and find out about childhood games in the past. Design and technology skills are used to make 'pick up sticks' so that pupils can play old fashioned games. Pupils share their different cultural experiences during discussions.

133. The range and depth of pupils' historical knowledge increases as they move through the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils know that we learn about the past from a wide variety of sources. They study photographs of seaside holidays now and many years ago and discuss the similarities and differences. They see changes in clothing, toys and entertainment. Pupils know about historical figures such as Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale and record their findings in drawings and simple narrative. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress because of the emphasis on the development of appropriate language and literacy skills and the high level of bilingual support. They reach standards that are line with those expected of pupils of their age.

134. Pupils' attitudes in Key Stage 1 are good. They enjoy their history lessons and concentrate well. Behaviour is always at least good and often very good and pupils are keen to learn. They listen attentively to the teachers and contribute enthusiastically to discussions. Pupils work well together, are keen to share their ideas and are inventive in their interpretations of history. They were very quick to observe a difference between old and new styles of clothing in photographs of seaside holidays. Independent research in the school library is at an early stage as books in the library have only recently been classified.

135. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection. From these and from examination of planning and pupils' work from the previous year, teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. Teachers plan their lessons well and there is a period of direct teaching, followed by activities and a class discussion to consolidate learning. Teachers are enthusiastic and this is reflected in the pupils' enjoyment of history. Subject knowledge is secure and pupils are managed well. Learning is reinforced in informative displays and 'museums' of old artefacts and there are good links with other areas of the curriculum, for example, in the study of coastlines and seaside features in geography. Support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good as teachers reinforce written vocabulary with flash cards and well-labelled displays.

136. The coordinator leads the subject well. She has worked with colleagues to introduce a scheme based on national guidance and there is an appropriate and helpful assessment system to record pupils' achievement and share information with parents. The school is aware of the continuing need to bring relevance to pupils' learning through recognition of their cultural backgrounds. Resources are adequate; staff and pupils' families bring items to enhance the school's provision. There are sufficient books to support current history study in classrooms and in the school library. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Findings broadly match those of the previous inspection. Assessment procedures have improved.

140. **Music**

137. The progress that pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak

English as an additional language, make in Key Stage 1 is good. In Year 1, they learn a good range of songs and join in collective worship and school concerts with increasing confidence. They gain skills of listening, playing percussion instruments rhythmically and performing together. Pupils have a very good knowledge of the names of musical instruments and how they are played. They use their artistic skills effectively to sketch musical instruments. This consolidates their learning and gives them success in a way which is less demanding on their writing skills. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils sing a good range of simple songs and hymns and have a satisfactory sense of pitch. The quality of singing is variable when pupils are learning songs, but with practice and appropriate teaching to encourage them to listen, the quality improves. Pupils listen appropriately to the teacher as they repeat clapping sounds. They create rhythms and textures on percussion instruments and evaluate their performances with the help of the teacher. Pupils use their imagination to explore musical sounds and are aware of pitch, tempo and duration. They reach standards that are in line with those expected of pupils of their age.

138. Pupils' attitudes in Key Stage 1 are good. They enjoy their music lessons and most listen well to advice from teachers and want to improve their performance. Learning the words of songs in English is not easy for many pupils, and they try very hard indeed. Social skills develop well during musical activities, when pupils realise that it takes effort from everyone to achieve a good performance. They are proud to perform for their parents at the Harvest Festival service. Pupils show respect, happiness and thoughtful attitudes when they sing during collective worship.
139. Literacy is developed effectively when pupils learn the words of songs and hymns. There are appropriate books for pupils to find information about composers and the history of music in the classrooms and the school library. Use of the computer to create simple compositions is at an early stage, but the school is keen to develop this aspect of the subject.
140. Few music lessons were seen during the inspection, but from those observed, examination of planning and the quality of music in collective worship, the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. There is some very good teaching in Year 1. Teachers plan and prepare lessons effectively, with clear learning objectives and appropriate resources. Their subject knowledge is satisfactory. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils and this is a strength in the teaching. Pupils know what they are expected to do and this helps them to improve. Their interest is captured effectively when they have opportunities to use instruments and perform. The elements of music are taught systematically and there is a clear sense of progression in lessons. The development of pupils' knowledge of instruments is very good and there are very good links with other subjects, such as art.
141. The co-ordinator supports colleagues well with advice and good management of resources. These are good, except for the provision of a broad variety of recorded multicultural music. The school is aware of this and is enhancing provision. There is a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, including some interesting multicultural examples. The helpful school policy and scheme of work, based on national guidance and a commercial scheme, give good support for non-specialist teachers. The curriculum is enriched by visitors, such as an Indian dancer, who add excitement and a wider perspective to pupils' learning. Inspection findings are broadly in line with those in the previous report.

145. **Physical education**

142. The lessons in Year 2 that were observed suggest that attainment is in line with what is normally expected. A reasonable majority of pupils sequence the necessary actions to throw and catch with an increasing degree of accuracy. They run, hop and skip around the hall with the necessary

regard for their own and others' safety. A strength is that many of the skills that are taught in gymnastics are transferable to dance. For example, pupils learn to travel to the apparatus, varying their steps and speed of approach. The completion of exercises and sequences are often a weaker element, however, with no clear end. For example, after jumping from the apparatus, pupils land and immediately walk away, rather than hold a smart balanced position.

143. Pupils' overall progress, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. In one of the lessons, it was good. This is closely related to the quality of teaching. For example, in the lesson where better progress occurred, there was a very good use of time when pupils began warming up for themselves as soon as they entered the hall. This was clearly an established routine in this class and meant that more time was available for the teacher's planned work later on in the lesson. Activities are developed well, so that pupils build on what they have already done, developing their control and the complexity of sequences of actions.
144. In general, pupils' attitudes are good. However, there is variation. A few pupils become over-excited and, when this happens, it affects the pace and flow of work, reducing the rate of progress. On other occasions, attitudes are very good, with pupils getting on sensibly, practising actions and using their own ideas and routines. Pupils enthusiastically accept opportunities for personal development. In one lesson particularly, they carried apparatus sensibly, moved it into position safely and helped their teacher by setting it up and putting it away at the end.
145. It was possible to inspect only a few lessons. However, evidence from these and a range of other sources indicate that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. In one of the lessons, it was good. Good, overall and developmental planning in the subject support this. Teachers are confident and the subject is well coordinated, which encourages sound expectations of pupils' work. Pupils respond by trying hard and, in general terms, equipment and time are used effectively.
146. Extra-curricular activities such as coaching clubs in tennis and football and a skipping club in the summer term enhance standards. Pupils take up these activities enthusiastically. At the last inspection, attainment was meeting national expectations. Therefore, present findings suggest that standards have generally been maintained.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

147. The team of four inspectors, one of whom was a lay inspector, were in school for a combined total of 13 days. The Registered Inspector spent a day conducting pre-inspection meetings with teachers, non-teaching staff and governors and was joined by the lay inspector for the pre-inspection meeting with parents. Translations were provided for parents with English as an additional language and almost all parents contributed to the meeting. Seventeen parents attended the parents' meeting and 30 returned questionnaires, three of whom added written comments.
148. During the inspection, 63 lessons or parts of lessons were observed and additional observations and interviews about lessons were recorded. Inspectors heard a sample of pupils read from each year group. At least three pupils' work from the present year groups in most subjects and work from last year's Year 2 pupils in the core subjects were scrutinised. Time was also spent gathering information from the displays about the school. Four whole-school assemblies were attended including a Harvest Festival, to which governors, parents and two representatives from a residential home came.
149. Teachers' plans and records were examined, as were pupils' assessments and the individual educational plans of pupils with special educational needs. The morning arrival, breaks and lunch times were observed and morning and afternoon registrations attended. The school's wider documentation, class registers and a sample of pupils' reports were inspected. The school development plan, budget figures and the school's administrative procedures were scrutinised. Interviews were held with the headteacher, the office manager and the chair of finance governor, with regard to efficiency. The premises were inspected with the site agent and discussed with the premises governor.
150. Inspectors held nine interviews with governors and 19 with the headteacher and teachers. Inspectors talked to support staff about their work. The Registered Inspector reported back to the headteacher daily on the inspection team's preliminary judgements on the wider aspects of the school. Meetings were held at the end of the inspection, reporting back to the headteacher together with coordinators on ten subjects, the under-fives and special educational needs provision and to teachers individually on their teaching. The Key Issues were reported back to the headteacher at the end of the inspection. The inspection was monitored by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors who was in school for a day.



## 155. DATA AND INDICATORS

### 155. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR- Y2	122	1	35	60
Nursery Class	39	0	8	9

### 155. Teachers and classes

#### 155. Qualified teachers (YR- Y2)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	14.2

#### 155. Education support staff (YR- Y2)

Total number of education support staff:	8
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	160.5

#### 155. Qualified teachers (Nursery class)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	39

#### 155. Education support staff (Nursery classes)

Total number of education support staff:	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	97.5
Average class size:	24

### 155. Financial data

Financial year:	1999 / 1999
	£
Total Income	345,973
Total Expenditure	342,363
Expenditure per pupil	1,489
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,200
Balance carried forward to next year	23,810

## 155. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 200  
 Number of questionnaires returned: 30

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	23	70	3	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	40	57	3	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	37	57	7	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	23	57	13	3	3
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	33	57	3	3	3
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	23	60	10	3	3
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	27	67	0	7	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	17	53	13	13	3
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	30	63	7	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	33	50	17	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	63	37	0	0	0

### 155. Other issues raised by parents

- Too little homework given.
- Some concern expressed about supervision in the playground, some children feel isolated.
- More time is needed for working parents at parents' evenings.
- A need for more advanced notice about things happening.
- Family visits to Pakistan can lead to long absences.

The comments above are based on the views of the 30 parents who returned questionnaires out of 200 and the 17 parents who attended the parents evening. Parents' views and questions were translated, when needed, at the parents meeting and the questionnaire was sent out in Urdu as well as English.