

INSPECTION REPORT

PINEWOOD NURSERY & INFANT SCHOOL

Pinewood Avenue, Arnold, Nottingham

LEA area: Nottinghamshire

Unique reference number: 122520

Headteacher: Mrs C McAdam

Reporting inspector: Mr J Morris
23696

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th July 2000

Inspection number: 188741

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pinewood Avenue Arnold Nottingham
Postcode:	NG5 8BU
Telephone number:	(0115) 9521717
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Hannam
Date of previous inspection:	1 st July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr J Morris	Registered inspector	Science Information technology Music Physical education English as an additional language	How high are standards? (the school's results and pupils' achievements) How well is the school led and managed?
Mr T Hall	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development and attendance) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs D Franklin	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs L Howard	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Design and technology Areas of learning for children under five	How well are pupils taught?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	8 - 9
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	9 - 11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11 - 12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	12 - 13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	13 - 14
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	14 - 15
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	16
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	17 - 20
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	21 - 30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pinewood Nursery and Infant school is a smaller than average sized primary school in Arnold, Nottingham. There are 173 pupils on roll. A total of 60 children (31 boys and 29 girls) attend the nursery part-time. There are 62 boys and 81 girls between the ages of five and seven. Nearly all the pupils are white. There are three pupils with English as an additional language and this is a low percentage nationally. The percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals (22 per cent) and identified as having special educational needs (25 per cent) are higher this year than in the recent past and these are both above average. There are no pupils with a formalised statement of special educational needs and this is below average. Attainment on entry to the nursery is close to the national average, particularly in terms of social skills, but some children have limited language skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school. Leadership is very good and teaching is consistently good. This year, standards are broadly in line with national averages. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Leadership and management are very good.
- The teaching is consistently good.
- The provision for social development is excellent and the provision for moral development is very good.
- The pupils could not be more enthusiastic about school. Their attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good.
- The school's partnership with parents is very good.
- Everybody in the school community is totally committed to making this a better school.

What could be improved

- The religious education curriculum does not meet statutory requirements.
- The teaching and standards in information technology could be better.
- The provision for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development could be better.
- There are not enough extra-curricular activities.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made excellent progress since its last inspection in July 1996. The quality of teaching in particular has improved dramatically. Leadership is now clear and strong. There has been significant improvement in relation to all of the many issues identified in the last report, except for religious education. There is a clear commitment to raising standards and improving the school generally.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	E	E	E	E
Writing	E	D	D	E
Mathematics	C	C	D	D

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

The above table does not match standards this year. All the evidence suggests that standards have steadily improved over the last four years (although the table shows a fall in standards in mathematics in 1999) and that they are now improving rapidly. Standards in English, mathematics and science are close to the national average and the school has exceeded its set targets this year for National Curriculum tests. All pupils make good progress over time. The school has a good strategy for raising standards in information technology, which are not yet as high as they should be.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils could not be more enthusiastic about school and their interest and involvement in activities is very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. All pupils behave very well in class and at all other times. There were no examples of bullying or conflict during the inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are extremely mature and responsible for their age and there are very good relationships throughout the school. Pupils are very positive about the recently introduced School Council.
Attendance	Consistently above average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Thirty-eight lessons were seen during the inspection and all of these were judged to be satisfactory or better. Ninety five per cent of these were good or better and sixteen per cent were very good or better.

Teaching is good, overall, and in most subjects most of the time, particularly English and mathematics. It is satisfactory in information technology. Lessons are planned very well to include different activities for different groups of pupils. Teachers make the learning objectives clear at the start of lessons. Relationships and discipline are very good. The key skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. The support staff make a significant contribution to the good teaching and learning.

Pupils learn well during lessons. They listen to their teachers, are interested in their work and concentrate well. All children work well on their own, when asked to do so.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, overall, and particularly the provision for literacy and numeracy. The statutory requirements for religious education are not met and there are not enough extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are very good arrangements for the early identification of difficulties. These pupils receive good support and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Good support has been given to the three children who currently attend the school in this category and there are very good arrangements to keep their families informed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall. Provision for social development is excellent and it is very good for moral development. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for the pupils' personal development and well-being. The arrangements for academic assessment and use of this information are good.
Partnership with parents	The school has a very good partnership with parents. The school is very welcoming and provides very good information. Parents have very positive views of the school and many say it has improved in recent years.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and a very clear educational direction to the work of the school. The staff work very well as a team and teachers with responsibilities carry them out very well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and carry them out well.
Adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	Good in all respects. Available funding is used very well to employ a good number of staff and provide good learning resources. There are very good resources to support teaching and learning in literacy.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school carefully analyses all available information on the children's progress. Key staff monitor the standards of teaching very effectively.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Specific funds are used well in accord with the stated purpose. The school makes good use of available resources. The principles of best value are applied extremely well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Many parents say that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes school • The school is very approachable • The school helps their child to become more mature and responsible • The teaching is good • Their child is making good progress • The school works closely with them 	<p>A few parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think there are not enough out of school activities • Are not happy about homework – most of these think there is too much

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school. The arrangements for homework are good and none of the parents spoken to during the inspection week repeated concerns expressed through the questionnaires and meeting with the registered inspector before the inspection. There are not enough out of school activities, although these rely on additional, voluntary commitment from the staff.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards this year are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection and in relation to the results of National Curriculum test results, both in terms of national averages and in comparison with similar schools, over the past four years. Overall standards between 1996 and 1999 were well below average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics at age 7. Pupils are achieving more now, because the quality of teaching is consistently good and this is very much better than it was at the time of the last inspection. Teaching has improved, because leadership has also improved. A commitment to constantly trying to raise the quality of teaching and learning is now at the heart of the school's work.
2. The school believes that attainment on entry is below average and there is good historical evidence to support this view. However, baseline assessment results and inspection evidence show that the children currently attending the nursery are broadly average. Some children have below average language skills particularly in terms of speaking and listening. Most children are broadly average in terms of mathematical understanding and skills. Nearly all the children have broadly average personal and social skills and they respond well to the clearly explained school routines and structures. Children quickly develop very positive attitudes to school and, because they are taught well and want to learn, nearly all of them achieve the nationally recommended desirable learning outcomes by the age of five.
3. Pupils make very good progress in speaking and listening and the current 7 year-olds are above average. Pupils enjoy reading and average attainers read fluently with expression. Most of the pupils achieve the expected standard. Standards are in line with the national average in writing, including spelling and handwriting. Pupils are proud of their achievements and this promotes continuing progress. Pupils in Year 2 have made good progress in mathematics this year and about a quarter are above average. All pupils have a good understanding of numbers for their age, although about a tenth of them are still below the expected level, overall. All pupils, except for the least able, complete a good amount of work in science and have satisfactory knowledge of a good range of facts and phenomena. Many pupils are making good progress in experimental and investigative science.
4. Standards are not yet high enough in information technology. This is mainly because the teaching, although satisfactory, is not consistently good, as it is in English for example. The pupils' acquisition of knowledge and skills is variable and they do not, for example, have enough experience of data work. Standards are not yet high enough in religious education. This is because the school does not give enough time to this subject and it is not successfully teaching enough about religions other than Christianity.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and the targets on their individual education plans. This is often due to the good support provided for the pupils by well-trained learning support assistants. In a minority of cases, the targets on the individual education plans are too general, which results in these pupils making slower, but still satisfactory, progress. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress as a result of the focused support they receive and effective assessment of their progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good. This is an improvement on the good standards found during the last inspection and it is a strength of the school. These very positive personal qualities clearly contribute to the very good climate for learning.
7. The pupils' enthusiasm for school is excellent and all parents say that their children are happy

at school. Many pupils arrive early in the morning. They are very eager to enter school and start lessons. They care for their personal possessions and school equipment and even the youngest children in the nursery know where to put their things. Pupils are very attentive in class and in assemblies, with very few displaying occasional lapses in concentration. Pupils work industriously on individual tasks and they do so in pairs and in small groups very well. They respond openly to questioning and offer constructive suggestions in whole class sessions. They are keen to complete their work and produce good results.

8. Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and move about the school in an orderly way. There is good-natured play during breaks and cheerful conversation over lunch. Pupils are recognised as well behaved on trips and visits out of school. They are respectful of property. All this is largely due to the pupils' excellent attitudes to personal conduct, which is very well supported by parents. Pupils understand the school's positive rewards and sanctions systems very well. All are familiar with the 'Five Finger Code of Conduct'. Each class has negotiated its own additional set of rules. Consequently, pupils and all adults in school enjoy very good relationships and there is a distinct absence of bad or oppressive behaviour, including bullying. There are no exclusions.
9. The pupils' willingness to accept personal responsibility, carry out simple jobs or show initiative is exemplary for their age. For example, they take part in simple monitoring roles from the day they enter the nursery, supporting their lessons and helping with assemblies. Pupils accept increasing personal responsibility as they proceed through the year groups and this is planned for in the school's personal and social education programmes. Older pupils care for younger ones. Pupils view the recently introduced School Council in a mature manner. Elected representatives, from Years 1 and 2, have discussed a variety of suggestions from their fellow pupils and come to some constructive conclusions. For example, litter 'detectives' have been introduced for playground duty and recognition that tidiness around the school could be improved has been successfully acted upon.
10. Attendance is consistently above the national average, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Unauthorised absence is well below the norm. Parents encourage their children to come to school and be punctual. Registration is prompt. Lateness is minimal and confined to children from a few families. There is a good start to the day, which continues to be orderly and industrious.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 100 per cent of lessons. Of these, 95 per cent are good or better and 16 per cent are very good or excellent. In the nursery and reception classes, the majority of the teaching is good. At Key Stage 1, teaching is good in the majority of lessons, with very good teaching in half of the lessons in Year 1. This shows a vast improvement on the previous inspection because there is now no unsatisfactory teaching and the percentage of lessons in which the teaching is excellent or very good has quadrupled. This is particularly remarkable as there have been very few staff changes since the previous inspection. This consistently good teaching clearly has a positive impact on the pupils' learning in lessons, the progress they make over time and the standards they achieve.
12. The quality of teaching in English is good and in over half of the lessons it is very good. The quality of teaching in mathematics is good and in one fifth of lessons it is very good. The quality of teaching in science is good and in a quarter of lessons it is very good. The quality of teaching is good in the lessons seen in all other subjects except for information technology where it is satisfactory.
13. Overall, the teaching of children under five, in the nursery and the reception class, is good. It is never less than satisfactory and in six out of seven lessons it is good. This good teaching is characterised by detailed planning based on the teachers' accurate assessment of the children's abilities, which helps them to plan a wide range of learning opportunities. The teachers' careful use of questioning at the start and end of the sessions draws out key points to help the children extend their vocabulary and knowledge. Well-organised sessions, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons in the reception class, ensure sufficient time for whole class

and group activities. These proceed at a pace that maintains children's interest and motivation. The nursery nurse and classroom assistant provide effective support for the children who need additional help to make good progress.

14. The teaching of pupils between the ages of five and seven is consistently good. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of all subjects is good and it is particularly good in English and mathematics. This enables the teachers to give clear explanations to the pupils so that none is in doubt about what is expected of them and no time is wasted. For example, the pupils in a Year 1 science lesson were able to begin their work on different materials quickly because the purpose of the lesson was made clear to them. This is also true of the literacy and numeracy lessons where pupils quickly go to their groups, start work quickly and complete their tasks in the given time.
15. In literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers plan very thoroughly and make effective use of the guidance for both of these national initiatives. This ensures that each part of the lesson is given the right amount of time for the pupils to learn and to complete their work. The teachers prepare interesting resources. For example, ladybird number lines for mental mathematics which help pupils learn and, in Year 2 literacy lessons, where the teachers used the work of one author to illustrate a particular style of writing to the pupils.
16. Lesson planning is very effective. Learning objectives are clearly set down. Plans include time for introductory and plenary activities for the whole class. This enables teachers to explain the aims of the lesson and to check that these have been understood and achieved by the pupils. A particularly strong feature of many lessons in this school is the way in which the objectives are written on the board as a constant reminder to all of the pupils, even the very youngest ones in the nursery. Teachers plan work for the whole class, for groups and, at times, for individuals. When tasks are matched well to the needs of different pupils, which is most of the time, they learn well and achieve high standards. Pupils are well supported by the teacher, learning support assistants and other adults when new work is introduced. As pupils consolidate their understanding, teachers give them time to practise skills unaided. In practical lessons, such as art and design technology, teachers ensure that there is a balance of time between the adult input to support and inspire the pupils and the time needed for pupils to experiment, to practise skills and then to produce a satisfying result.
17. All teachers have high expectations of behaviour and of the standards of work pupils will achieve. The good pace at which lessons are conducted enables pupils to learn more quickly and for teachers to manage the class smoothly. Assessment information is used well in English, mathematics and science to match work to pupils' prior attainment and promote smooth progress.
18. The needs of all pupils identified as having particular abilities in some or all subjects, as less able or as having specific special educational needs, are met well. At times, the headteacher and support staff work with children individually or in very small groups outside the classroom. This is very carefully monitored so that pupils do not miss the same lessons regularly. During lessons, teachers ensure that the needs of the pupils are appropriately met through good use of learning support staff and suitable activities planned well to meet their needs. This is usually identified in the planning and is mainly to support the teaching of literacy and numeracy, although some pupils are supported for other areas of the curriculum. Teachers plan and discuss work with the learning support assistants and the high quality of the support enhances the quality of learning for pupils, especially the less able and those with special educational needs.
19. Homework is carefully planned to support the work done in class, to put skills learnt into a practical situation at home or to just have fun learning. These tasks effectively reinforce and extend pupils' learning.

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

20. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for its pupils. The school pays due

regard to the nationally recommended desirable outcomes for learning for five-year-olds and the teachers in the nursery and reception classes plan well to the six areas of learning. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 is satisfactorily broadly based, with the literacy and numeracy strategies well represented and effective in raising standards. The staff have developed some materials of their own and make satisfactory use of the national exemplar schemes of work and commercially produced materials, thus successfully addressing one of the key issues in the last report. However, the statutory requirements are not met for religious education, as it is not timetabled often enough and the school's scheme of work does not cover the teaching of any world faith, other than Christianity, in sufficient depth. This was an area identified in the previous report for development and little progress has been made since then. There is good provision for pupils' personal and social education, for example caring for their environment, in weekly well-planned sessions.

21. The curriculum is planned well, with long-term planning either as units of continuing work or blocked over several weeks. It includes assessment activities and ensures coverage and progression of skills in all areas except religious education. Joint planning across the year groups ensures that pupils in parallel classes get very similar learning experiences and a two-year rolling programme of topics ensures that these are meaningful and relevant. Daily planning is comprehensive and is usually recorded in the teachers' individual "day books".
22. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and those pupils identified with special educational needs are well provided for in the classroom through activities planned to meet their needs and through good support provided by the learning support assistants. Support is provided for the pupils within the classroom to ensure equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. When small groups are withdrawn from lessons, this is during the groups' activity time of the literacy and numeracy hours and it supports their learning well. All pupils identified as having special educational needs read regularly on an individual basis with the Special Needs Co-ordinator and an individual programme is drawn up for any pupil who has a behavioural difficulty.
23. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall, and has been successfully maintained since the previous report. Provision is very good for moral development and it is excellent for social development. The comprehensive behaviour policy clearly sets out expectations and school rules are displayed in every classroom. Good behaviour in the classroom is rewarded with praise, stickers and privileges and in the playground pupils can be given a "ticket", which specifies a reward, for playing well. There are clear strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour. Moral issues are addressed well during whole school assemblies. For example, there was a good assembly about the importance of sharing and the idea of fairness. There are high expectations by all staff of good manners and respect for each other and adults. The staff are very good role models. There is a very strong emphasis on everyone being valued as individuals. There are excellent opportunities for pupils in the school to take responsibilities. They have the opportunity to represent their class on the School Council where they discuss such issues as dealing with litter around the school. Older pupils are encouraged to look after younger pupils and some pupils are monitors in their class. There are also plenty of opportunities for pupils to be involved in fundraising activities (for charities such as Barnados) and to show initiative. For example, one pupil in the reception class suggested that the stick of rock he had brought from his holidays be given to a friend who had achieved five ' ladybird spots' for good behaviour and work.
24. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. All staff ensure that pupils understand the values and principles that the school promotes and there are satisfactory opportunities to reflect on these during assemblies. There are appropriate links with the local churches and the vicar regularly takes assemblies. Pupils acquire some knowledge and insight into Christian values and beliefs and celebrate some festivals such as Divali and the Chinese New Year. However, there is very little evidence of other contributions to the spiritual development of the pupils.
25. Satisfactory provision is made for the pupils' cultural development. Pupils' awareness of their own culture is promoted through local visits and walks. An understanding of other cultures is satisfactorily developed in assemblies and through visitors to school. A storyteller visits

regularly to tell stories from different cultures and the pupils have experienced Caribbean dancing and visits from theatre groups. There are limited opportunities to enhance cultural development through art and music appreciation and religious education lessons.

26. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is very good. Parental involvement is a strength of the school and the pupils benefit from regular visits to places of interest and visitors to the school. For example, a group of pupils visited a local supermarket to reinforce their work in mathematics. A theatre group and a storyteller regularly come to work with pupils. The local environment is used well and, for example, some pupils made plans of the school grounds in geography and then planned how the grounds could be improved. Some younger pupils have written to pupils in schools with the same name around the world through the electronic mailing system. However, the provision for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory because there are no additional clubs for the pupils. The links with the junior school are satisfactory and there are suitable arrangements for the pupils' transfer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

27. The school provides a warm, happy and purposeful environment for its pupils, suitable for their growth into rounded individuals.
28. All adults in school are familiar with child protection procedures. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. Concerns regarding access to the school site during the school day, along with a few minor issues, have been reported for the school governors to resolve.
29. Support and guidance for pupil's personal development is very good. Teachers know all the pupils very well and set very good role models for them. Staff work hard to build up the pupils' self esteem and have a natural rapport with them. Pastoral care is always evident and a strength of the school. Parents are aware that staff have high expectations of their children's progress. Teachers successfully promote the development of mature and responsible attitudes to work and respect for each other's feelings and opinions. Parents strongly support these attitudes and values promoted by the school.
30. The identification of pupils with special educational needs is primarily through concerns expressed by their teachers. This is followed by diagnostic tests and, if necessary, advice from the Local Education Authority's Learning Support Service. Reviews of individual pupils' progress are regular and parents are fully involved, but these reviews are not always recorded in sufficient detail.
31. Teachers are always available in the playground at the end of the day to talk to parents about their children's progress or share any concerns. Many parents state that staff are very approachable and that parents and their children can confidently share their thoughts and concerns with them. Suggestions are listened to and problems are discussed openly with prompt action taken, as appropriate.
32. Relationships between pupils and all adults in school are very good. This is clearly evident in lessons. There is good interaction by lunchtime supervisors to stimulate pupils' play. Pupils are taught to respect one another, adults in school and all at home.
33. Behavioural policies and strategies are very successful. For example, the positive rewards system for good work and endeavour starts in the nursery and continues throughout the school. Raised voices are rarely heard about the school and high standards of discipline are almost imperceptibly maintained. Parents strongly support this approach, reflecting the very good ethos of the school. Parents and pupils were invited to contribute to the development of these procedures. Procedures for monitoring any tendencies towards unacceptable behaviour, such as racism, sexism and bullying, are excellent. Such expressions of anti-social behaviour are not expected and were not seen during the inspection or reported by parents.
34. Staff work very well together in helping pupils to mature and be responsible. Pupils are encouraged to settle down well and soon become used to the routines. They are supported very well according to their individual needs.

35. Procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality are very good. The rates of attendance are consistently above the national average. Parents are regularly made aware of the different criteria for authorised and unauthorised absence. Monitoring is thorough.
36. The arrangements to assess what pupils know, understand and can do and the use made of this information, are good. The school makes effective use of the Local Education Authority's baseline assessment to record where the children are when they start school. Standardised tests and teacher assessments are used regularly and individual progress is measured at least once a year in English, mathematics and science. Teachers use this information in their termly, weekly and daily planning for different groups of pupils, including the most and least able, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Good use is also made of assessment information in predicting individual pupils' future achievements and setting whole school targets.
37. The school has very limited procedures for formal assessment in other subjects. Although this is not a national requirement, more detailed recording and careful analysis of pupils' achievements and progress, particularly in information technology and religious education, could have a positive impact on standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Parents value the very good and effective links this school provides. The parents expressed very positive views of the school, through the questionnaires, the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector and discussions, particularly with the lay inspector, during the inspection itself.
39. Parents are very well informed through the school prospectus, the governors' annual report and half-termly newsletters. Helpful, clear information on curricular and topic activity is provided each term. Curricular meetings, organised for the introduction of the literacy and numeracy schemes, were very well attended.
40. Parents feel well informed about the progress of their children. Consultation evenings are very well attended, when progress and targets are shared. There are good individual reports, with good detail specific to the pupil in the different subjects and some indication of what needs to be done next. Pupils' individual work is always available for parents to see.
41. Parents make a very valuable contribution to their children's learning. The home school agreement has been negotiated with parents and it has been very well received. Home-school reading books and the home-school homework books are extremely well used. They are full of helpful comments by both parents and teachers. A good number of parents read with their children before the start of the school day. The involvement of the parents of pupils with special educational needs is good. They are fully involved in discussions about the targets set for their children and informed about the progress they are making towards meeting these targets.
42. A very small number of parents express reservations that there is too much homework for young children. However, views expressed at the parents meeting and discussions with parents during the inspection confirm that most feel there is the right balance of homework. A small number of parents and voluntary helpers assist in lessons during the school day. Many more help with visits.
43. The Friends of Pinewood School Association works hard to support the school, raising significant funds for extra resources. All parents are members of the association and are automatically invited to meetings arranging forthcoming events. Parent governors and staff work with the association, organising activities such as fairs and raffles. Several more parents help at events on the day. The school greatly values this support.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and effective management. There is a clear commitment to raising academic standards and high expectations that the school will successfully meet the broader needs of the pupils. The headteacher has been at the school for some time as deputy headteacher and acting headteacher, but has been permanent headteacher for a relatively short period. It is an unusual arrangement that there is no deputy headteacher at present. However, the headteacher, Key Stage 1 co-ordinator and other class teachers with significant responsibilities work extremely well as a team and carry out their respective roles well. The governing body meets its roles and responsibilities well and is working effectively in partnership with the staff to raise standards. The governors have set the headteacher challenging personal targets alongside the current school development plan. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when the respective roles of headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors were not clearly defined and it was stated that they did not work together effectively.
45. The school has eight short, clear aims. These are shared with the parents and local community through the school prospectus and other information. They are evident in daily practice and reflected in the school's policies. This provides an effective framework for the work of the school, which is shared and understood by staff, governors, parents, pupils and other interested parties in the community.
46. The school identifies what it does well and what it needs to improve very effectively through an ongoing process of evaluation and auditing of provision and resources. Teachers and governors make significant contributions to the school development plan and parents and pupils are consulted. Over time, effective action has been taken, or is planned, to maximise strengths and minimise weaknesses identified in the last inspection report and by the school itself. Most significantly:
- The school has successfully implemented the national initiatives in literacy and numeracy;
 - The quality of teaching has improved dramatically. Teaching and learning in the classroom are considered to be the most important aspects of the school's work. The headteacher and literacy and numeracy co-ordinators effectively monitor standards;
 - Very good arrangements for professional development are in place and these have contributed positively to the improved teaching;
 - There are very good plans in place to improve provision and raise standards in information technology.

Insufficient action has been taken to address weaknesses in the provision for religious education.

47. There is an excellent shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed in meeting set targets is very good. The targets set this year for standards in the national tests in reading, writing and mathematics at age seven have been surpassed. There are very good arrangements for the induction and support of new members of staff, particularly newly qualified teachers. Support staff feel that they are valued members of the school team and they make a significant contribution to the life of the school, particularly the progress made by less able pupils and those with special educational needs.
48. The school development plan is an effective tool for managing change. It identifies appropriate priorities, responsible individuals, realistic time-scales and measures of success. Although it appears to be potentially excessive in the number and range of targets identified, the headteacher quite rightly states that there is a lot to do and both staff and pupils have already shown what can be done. Furthermore, action is carefully supported through rigorous financial planning by the headteacher and governors. Specific grants, such as the Standards Fund, are used effectively for the stated purposes. The principles of best value are applied extremely well. For example, the school is in need of a new boiler and the governing body has successfully saved over £20,000 by seeking competitive quotes and rigorously checking the quality and efficiency of the proposed new equipment. An excessive historical surplus in the budget was reasonably maintained during a period of uncertainty over the position of the

previous headteacher and planning for the new heating system. The surplus has been reduced to an acceptable level in the budget for 2000/2001.

49. The numbers, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff are good. The accommodation is adequate, overall, although there is not a sufficiently large, flat area for outside physical education activities. Learning resources are good, overall, and they are very good for children under five and for English.
50. The management of provision for pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs is good, overall, to ensure that each pupil receives good support to meet his or her individual needs. Bids for support from external agencies are usually successful and the local schools give each other good support when submitting joint bids to ensure that pupils get the support they need. The school has a good team of learning support assistants who are well trained and have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils.
51. The costs are very high. However, leadership is very good, teaching is good, attitudes and behaviour are very good, standards are now broadly average and there has been excellent improvement since the previous inspection. Therefore, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. The headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- a) improve the teaching and standards in religious education by time-tabling lessons in this subject in all classes every week and including consideration of at least one major world faith other than Christianity (paragraphs 20, 46 and 107-109);
- b) improve the teaching and standards in information technology by carrying out the planned improvements to the curriculum and resources and for staff training (as detailed in the subject action plan) (paragraphs 93-97);
- c) increase the range of opportunities provided to promote the spiritual and cultural development of the pupils (paragraphs 24, 25 and 100);
- d) provide some extra-curricular activities at lunchtimes or after school (paragraph 26).

53. Consideration should also be given to the following minor issues:

- a) investigate opportunities to improve the facilities for outdoor physical education activities (paragraph 49);
- b) extend the existing good assessment procedures for English, mathematics and science to other subject areas, particularly information technology and religious education (paragraphs 55, 96 and 97).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	13	79	5	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	143
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	31

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	35

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	33	22	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	26	27
	Girls	15	15	20
	Total	41	41	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (70)	75 (72)	85 (80)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	29
	Girls	15	20	16
	Total	41	47	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (70)	85 (77)	82 (78)
	National	82 (80)	86 (81)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	84
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	28.6

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	118

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Number of pupils per FTE adult	15
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	348,401
Total expenditure	338,681
Expenditure per pupil	2,312
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,186
Balance carried forward to next year	39,906

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	201
Number of questionnaires returned	68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	18	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	35	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	44	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	50	12	0	1
The teaching is good.	78	21	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	40	4	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	22	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	53	44	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	71	25	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	37	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	38	21	0	24

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

54. Overall, the provision for and the teaching of the children under five is good. Children spend up to five terms in the nursery on a part-time basis. Each term, the children who are nearly five move into a reception class and attend school full time. Their attainment on entry is broadly in line with the Local Education Authority's baseline assessment average particularly in terms of social skills, although some children's speaking and listening skills are below average. The children settle quickly into the routines of the nursery and, subsequently, the reception class. They make good progress towards achieving the nationally recommended desirable learning outcomes for five-year-olds. Those children who find aspects of learning more difficult are identified very quickly and offered good programmes to support their learning and they make equally good progress.
55. There is a suitable, early years policy based on the recommended areas of learning for children under five. Staff have already begun to discuss how they can move easily from these to the new foundation stage, early learning goals for children up to the age of six. Some good quality planning is already in place based on this new model. A vital part of the children's introduction to school is a home visit, which provides an opportunity for the family and school to exchange information. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to come into class and share their children's experience. Baseline assessment is carried out early in the child's first term and this provides a useful start to each child's profile. Termly assessments are used to help the teachers plan activities that challenge the children to learn well and make good progress. Informal daily assessments are not a well established part of the nursery routine and so some opportunities to record significant milestones in children's developments, or to note children who need to have more time to acquire a skill, are lost.

Personal and social development

56. Personal and social development is given an appropriately high priority, especially when the children first come into the nursery and they fully attain the nationally recommended levels. In a short time, they establish very good relationships with their teacher and the nursery nurse. They share and co-operate well, concentrate, select activities and occupy themselves for sustained periods. For example, two girls spent half an hour matching magnetic letters to the letters in words written for them. They had to sort through a whole box of letters to find the ones they needed. The children are already independent in many respects, such as dressing themselves, tidying up the toys they have played with and joining with older pupils in the playground. They are learning to be responsible for jobs in the classroom, such as giving out drinks. Routines are well established and the children's very good behaviour enables them to learn and make good progress.

Language and literacy

57. Overall, the children's attainment in literacy is satisfactory. They all participate in conversation and mostly make themselves understood well. They listen to instructions carefully and carry them out willingly. The children get very excited when listening to stories and they are eager to know what is going to happen next. Some are riveted by the story, they fix their eyes on the storyteller and do not move throughout the whole story. They recall characters from familiar stories such as Jack and the Beanstalk and make pertinent comments. For example, one girl said, 'The lady isn't as big as the giant' and a boy added, 'The giant is bigger than us'. The oldest children are already beginning to read simple texts and they use their knowledge of phonics to read words with 'ug' in them in a reading activity. By the time they are five, the majority recognise most initial sounds accurately. They are all beginning to form letters correctly and copy their names. The children make good progress, as a result of the carefully planned activities and well-structured discussions.

Mathematics

58. The children's attainment in mathematics is satisfactory. They are familiar with number rhymes and enjoy mathematical stories. They all recognise and name numbers from zero to ten and the oldest children count accurately to 20 and beyond. They are beginning to copy numbers accurately. The children co-operate well, obey the rules of a number game and sing a song such as 'Five little speckled frogs' while moving the frogs on and off the log in the water tray at the right time. The interesting activities provided give children the opportunity to develop their mathematical thinking and language and this supports their progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. The children are given the opportunity to investigate a range of materials, equipment and technology. For example, when using the computer, they use the number, space, delete and return keys to successfully complete a number-matching game. In a science activity, when learning about snails, they hold and observe the snails carefully and ask interesting questions. They look through a magnifying glass and describe the shells as 'swirly' and 'going round and round'. The wide range of learning experiences appeals to their curiosity, extends their knowledge and vocabulary, thus supporting learning.

Physical development

60. All children attain satisfactory standards in their physical development. They are well co-ordinated and control their movements when handling tools such as paint brushes, scissors and pieces of construction kits. Their development is promoted by the daily opportunities for physical outdoor play, including cycling, balancing and pushing and pulling toys such as trucks and trolleys. When cycling, they follow the track carefully and avoid collisions with other vehicles. Most cycle well, using two pedals, while younger children alternately scoot then cycle for one or two rotations. They enjoy these activities and have opportunities for taking turns and sharing toys. Some children spent a whole session pulling a truck, giving other children an enjoyable ride.

Creative development

61. The daily activities help children reach satisfactory standards. They demonstrate good painting techniques, competently cleaning their brushes, water pots and palettes when they have finished. They roll green dough to make peas in a pod and the toys in the sand and water trays promote the development of their imaginations. The children love to sing and singing rhymes to reinforce learning is a very well-established part of the nursery routines. The children play percussion instruments with enthusiasm and a reasonable sense of rhythm.

ENGLISH

62. The results of the national tests in reading and writing in 1999 were well below the national average and well below average in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was close to the national average in reading and above the national average for writing. The trend over time indicates that standards are rising and broadly follow the national trend.
63. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English are now in line with the national average. This is a significant improvement from the previous report. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced effectively and is having a positive impact on the attainment and progress of the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also make good progress, through good support from learning support assistants and individual support from the special educational needs co-ordinator.
64. Attainment in speaking and listening is above the national average and has improved since the previous inspection. Many pupils enter school with skills just below the national average and they make very good progress, particularly those pupils in Year 1. By the age of seven, pupils listen attentively to adults and follow instructions very well. They are confident to discuss their work with each other and the whole class. In one reception class, higher attaining pupils act out the story of The Very Hungry Caterpillar very well and, in another reception class, pupils

confidently talk about the weather and the things they have brought to school. In Year 1, pupils explore and develop their imagination well during a drama lesson based on the stories of Jack and the Beanstalk and Jim and the Beanstalk. All speak clearly and confidently, using their developing vocabulary very well. They respond well to the Giant's questions (class teacher) and each other's ideas. In Year 2, pupils tell the rest of the class in some detail about the authors they have been studying.

65. By the age of seven, most pupils achieve the expected levels in reading and this has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and accurately with expression, showing a good awareness of punctuation. They use a range of strategies effectively to read unknown words and have a good knowledge of a range of authors. Average attaining pupils can read simple text accurately with expression, can talk about the story and predict what might happen next. They have a satisfactory understanding of the use of simple punctuation when reading. Lower attaining pupils can read simple text mainly accurately and are beginning to use pictures and initial letter sounds to help them read unknown words. Most pupils enjoy reading and can name a range of authors. They use the school library confidently to select both fiction and non-fiction books. In reception, many pupils join in reading the text of "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and, in Year 1, pupils confidently use non-fiction books to find out and answer questions about animal movements. In Years 1 and 2, some pupils extract important information about an author and others discuss the main characters in their books. Higher attaining pupils compare and contrast two books by the same author.
66. By the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment in writing, including spelling and handwriting is in line with national averages and this has also improved significantly since the previous inspection. Pupils write for a range of purposes, including stories, poems, descriptive writing and information. Most pupils write a series of sentences sequenced correctly and pupils are beginning to choose words for variety and interest. Most are using simple punctuation accurately. Lower attaining pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the use of full stops at the end of a sentence. In reception, pupils use their limited writing skills to successfully record information about the life cycle of a butterfly. In Year 1, some pupils write simple questions to identify an animal and others use their information books to ask and answer questions about a specific animal. Higher attaining pupils write the answers to questions about animal movements. In Year 2, most pupils write a simple book review, while lower attaining pupils write about the contents of the book they are reading, with some adult support. Most use a range of strategies effectively to spell unfamiliar words and their handwriting is joined and legible.
67. The quality of teaching is good, overall, with 33 per cent of lessons being very good and 11 per cent excellent. Teachers have good knowledge of the literacy strategy and are beginning to adapt this appropriately to meet the needs of the pupils, which has a positive impact on their progress. All lessons are well planned and effectively introduced by sharing the objectives of the lesson with the pupils. There is a good pace to the lessons. Teachers manage the pupils well and use praise effectively to encourage them to participate in lessons. Pupils respond very well and their behaviour is very good in almost all lessons. Relationships with adults are often very good and this contributes well to the pupils' learning. Expectations are generally high and teachers set challenging activities. These aspects of teaching have improved significantly since the previous report. Support staff are well deployed to support learning and know exactly what is expected of them. For example, one group of pupils worked well with the support assistant in a separate area, discussing information from a big book about how to care for the school guinea pig. Where teaching is excellent, the pace is very good and extremely challenging tasks are set, using quite difficult text. Relationships are excellent, which enables pupils to make very good progress in their learning. Excellent support throughout the lesson gives the pupils confidence to work independently.
68. There are good assessment procedures in place, carefully planned throughout the year to ensure that pupils are making progress in their learning. Reading and spelling assessments are used regularly to identify concerns and those pupils who are of very high ability. Samples of pupils' work are regularly collected and teachers work closely together to agree on the National Curriculum levels for these pieces of work. The school is beginning to use test results effectively to predict individual pupils' expected level of attainment as well as whole school

results. This has enabled the school to raise standards and expectations as well as to target support for individuals and groups of pupils. The management of English is very good and the co-ordinator has worked hard in leading the implementation of the literacy strategy in the school. Planning, teaching and resources are effectively monitored and the co-ordinator supports her colleagues very well. Resources are very good and are used very well to support pupils' learning. Visits to the theatre and visits to the school from storytellers and theatre groups contribute positively to the school's provision.

MATHEMATICS

69. In the 1999 national tests for seven-year-olds, the pupils' attainment at the expected level or above was below average, both nationally and in comparison with similar schools. Pupils' attainment at the higher level was close to the national average and the results of pupils at similar schools.
70. Based on the evidence of pupils' work and the lessons observed, pupils are now attaining in line with national expectations by the age of seven. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There are variations in attainment in Year 2 where about a quarter of pupils are reaching levels of attainment which are above those expected nationally, but about a tenth of the pupils are not reaching those expected standards. Most pupils understand place value to 1000 and sequence numbers forwards and backwards. They shop for two or three articles, total the cost and give change from 50p. Higher attaining pupils write the answers to money sums using a decimal point correctly to separate the pounds and pence. They identify the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They recognise halves and quarters and tell the time to the half and quarter-hour on analogue and digital clocks. These pupils also use the two, five and ten times tables well and understand that halves are the inverse of doubling.
71. The quality of teaching is good for all the pupils and very good for some of the pupils in Year 2. Teachers' planning is thorough and the introduction of the national numeracy strategy model has had a positive impact on pupils' learning. During mental oral sessions effective questioning is used to challenge pupils' mathematical thinking and to reinforce their recall of number facts. Teachers give pupils of all abilities chances to develop their skills. For example, in one Year 2 class a lower attaining pupil was asked to double numbers up to 10, while a higher attaining pupil was challenged to double three figure numbers. Pupils are managed well and many lessons are made fun for them. The enjoyment of the challenge, the stimulation of the wide variety of activities and the interesting resources all contribute to the enthusiastic response of pupils. The good pace of working helps pupils to learn more quickly and to attain more highly.
72. Learning is good from five to seven years of age, especially for the Year 2 pupils. They are already consolidating basic number skills, learning to estimate and measure and being challenged to record information. The match of work to ability is good for group tasks. Pupils develop a good mathematical vocabulary. The emphasis on mental mathematics is having a positive impact on the quality of learning. It is providing pupils with an understanding of how numbers and number operations inter-relate with one another and how these links can be used to solve problems. The younger pupils enjoy the mental work and are able to calculate the correct answer rapidly because the teacher uses familiar characters such as Postman Pat and the Telly-tubbies. Pupils are asked to explain how they arrive at an answer and many come up with more than one solution. Teachers stress the learning objectives of each lesson and at the end of each lesson pupils are asked what they have learnt. This strategy helps pupils to focus on the outcome of the lesson as well as the activities.
73. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy mathematics. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils in mathematics lessons is very good for half the pupils and good for all other pupils. Lower attaining pupils have good attitudes and most behave well. They work well as individuals and in small groups, co-operate and remain on task, even when they find the work difficult. However, their enthusiasm for work often results in less care being taken in presenting their work neatly and writing numbers correctly.
74. The requirements of the mathematics curriculum are appropriately met with evidence in the planning of all elements of the programmes of study being covered. Most lessons include a

good amount of number work. The skills involved are often appropriately linked to follow up group activities focusing on other aspects of mathematics such as shape and space or data handling. The emphasis in most of the teaching is on the use and application of number to solve problems and there is good evidence of investigative work in most classes.

75. Teachers assess pupils during lessons and at the end of units of work. Baseline assessment gives an indication of pupils' mathematical ability and teachers identify pupils who are mathematically gifted. These pupils are given challenging work that develops their problem solving skills. All pupils have equal access to the mathematics curriculum and the needs of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately considered when group activities are planned. Lower attaining pupils are given interesting tasks carefully matched to their abilities and often receive extra support from the classroom assistants. Targets are set for individual pupils and pupils understand what they need to do to achieve them.
76. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and well informed. She has attended a number of relevant courses to keep informed about developments in the mathematics curriculum and has led staff training for the numeracy strategy. She has watched lessons delivered by other colleagues and has used information from these observations to disseminate good practice. This has had a positive effect on the quality of teaching. The classroom accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum with space for pupils to work together as a whole class as well as to work in smaller groups. The resources available for mathematics are good and are used effectively. Teachers make use of commercial worksheets as well as making their own. Pupils' worksheets are made into individual booklets at the end of each term and are a good record of pupils' attainment.

SCIENCE

77. Standards in science are broadly average by age seven. Pupils make satisfactory progress across the programmes of study and good progress in experimental and investigative science. Completed work in science shows that this subject is making a good contribution to the pupils' learning in both literacy, for example presenting their results in different ways, and numeracy, for example, measuring weights and distances and using charts to record their findings.
78. Above average and average attaining pupils in Year 2 have completed a good amount of written work in their science books this year. They have a good understanding of electricity. They make simple electrical circuits and predict and test what happens when more bulbs or batteries are added to the circuit. They make reasonable attempts at explaining the results of their investigations into push and pull forces. For example, one pupil wrote that, "the toy car won the race because it was the only one (of the four items tested) with wheels". These pupils identify five common characteristics of all animals and write quite a lot when asked to explain why certain animals live in certain places. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs do not complete so much work because of their writing skills and it also clear from the content of their books that they understand less.
79. There is clear progress as pupils move from year to year. Pupils in the reception classes are developing basic observation skills and writing simple sentences about what they have seen. For example, in their extensive study of mini-beasts pupils learn how to use labels to name the parts of ladybird and write short sentences about how worms move and where they live. Because pupils in Years 1 and 2 carry out the same series of investigations during the year and the activities are planned to meet the needs of different groups, it is easy to see the gains that older pupils make. Pupils gradually acquire a more extensive and sophisticated vocabulary to describe scientific phenomena and develop a clearer understanding of concepts and writing conventions. In their investigation of absorption during the inspection, Year 2 pupils had a better understanding than Year 1 pupils of why it was important to put the same amount of coloured water onto each paper towel and they were more successful in doing this.
80. Teaching is consistently good. Lessons are very well planned and classrooms and materials are very well organised. Lessons are well structured and the objectives are clearly stated in the introductions. There are good opportunities for pupils to contribute to whole class discussions and to show what they know and understand at the start and end of lessons. However, teachers

occasionally do not give sufficiently clear instruction about how to use equipment that the pupils have had little or no previous experience of.

81. The co-ordinator gives a good lead to developments in science. There is a good scheme of work and the co-ordinator plans whole school investigations. There are good arrangements for assessment, using Local Education Authority materials and the teacher's own tests. National Curriculum teacher assessment results are carefully analysed to identify particular strengths or gaps in the pupils' achievements. The co-ordinator is developing a portfolio of examples of pupils' work for each of the National Curriculum programmes of study and levels of attainment. This is satisfactory at present and it will be very useful when it is complete.

ART

82. At the age of seven, standards achieved are about the level expected of pupils of this age, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils use a range of paints and drawing tools. The youngest pupils combine vivid colours with lively free brushwork when painting butterflies and caterpillars. Older pupils have carefully studied pictures of animals in order to re-create the colours and patterns of their skins. Pupils try to create textures when drawing their teddy bears, using paints and crayons. Younger pupils recreate their favourite stories, such as 'The Three Bears' and 'Where The Wild Things Are', by making large collages using a variety of materials. In most classes, pupils use a computer program to create pictures on a common theme. They learn about the work of such artists as Lowry, Van Gogh, Hockney and Kandinsky and try to paint in their styles.
83. It was possible to see only one art lesson during the inspection. Teaching is good which helps pupils make good progress and attain appropriate standards. The teacher explains clearly what she wants pupils to do, drawing on the work of well-known artists and the pupils' prior experience of a walk round the local environment, to help them understand the task. While the pupils are working, she supports individual work through discussion and suggestion. Pupils enjoy the lesson, try hard and talk to each other giving sensible advice and suggestions. The whole class discussion at the end of the lesson helps pupils to appreciate the finished work and the opinions of others.
84. Art is often linked to other areas of the curriculum. For example, most of the work this term has been connected with the mini-beasts topic and the local environment study. The co-ordinator plans work for Year 1 and 2 pupils using the school scheme of work. This ensures that all elements of the subject are studied and pupils develop skills over time and make good progress. The co-ordinator gives practical help and advice to other staff. The accommodation is adequate for the teaching of the subject. Resources are satisfactory, though the range of artists' work available to be studied is limited.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. It was not possible during the inspection to observe enough design and technology lessons to make a secure judgement about teaching and learning. However, the judgement about what pupils know, understand and can do is based on the analysis of teachers' planning and pupils' books and from the displays of work and discussions about them.
86. Teachers plan one design and technology activity for each term, usually connected with the main class topic. Pupils use a planning sheet to draw their design, label it and to make a list of materials to be used. They then make their models. No evidence was seen of pupils evaluating and improving their work.
87. Older pupils have designed a vehicle to carry a toy, such as a Barbie doll or Action Man. Pupils made sure that the vehicle was big enough for the toy and that the wheels went round properly. They used card and straws to make a model of a piece of playground equipment. They joined materials using glue or sticky tape. Younger pupils joined their spider legs to the body using glue or paper fasteners. They learnt to make a pulley system using a piece of wood slipped through a cotton reel. By attaching a piece of string with a spider on the end they made a winding mechanism to move the spider up and down the drainpipe. They were delighted with

the finished model showing each other how it worked and reciting the familiar rhyme.

88. Teachers discuss what they intend to teach and plan together following the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work. The co-ordinator knows that the school needs to improve the pupils' designing and evaluating skills. She also plans to ensure that pupils begin to develop their skills from the reception class. At present, the management of the subject is at a developmental stage, but the school is well placed to raise the pupils' standards and their understanding of the subject.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

89. Only one lesson was observed in these subject areas, but evidence from the lesson, analysis of previous work and work on display indicate that pupils make sound progress and achieve appropriately for their age in both history and geography. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and there was no evidence of underachievement in these subjects during this inspection.
90. In reception, pupils are gaining a satisfactory understanding of the passing of time through daily routines involving changing the date and talking about their experiences yesterday, today and tomorrow. In Years 1 and 2, pupils look at different means of transport and compare their own bike with bikes from the past well. They sequence pictures of different transport though the ages and know the stages of the development of the wheel. Year 2 pupils complete a family tree as part of their homework and know about the lives of important people such as Florence Nightingale. They are making steady progress in developing a sense of chronology and finding out about the past from different sources.
91. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 study the immediate environment of the school playground to find out how places have become the way they are and how they can be improved. They satisfactorily make a plan of the playground and, working in pairs, decide what feature they would like to add to the playground. They discuss and record the advantages and disadvantages of the feature. Other pupils look at the buildings in their local environment and discuss what they like and dislike about the local area. They study the landscape on an imaginary island from a fiction book and locate treasure using simple co-ordinates. Some pupils satisfactorily draw their route to school. Pupils are making sound progress in investigating the physical and human features of their surroundings and in using simple geographical terms.
92. No judgement can be made on the quality of teaching in these subjects, because only one geography lesson was observed during the inspection. However, evidence from planning indicates that the subjects are taught effectively in separate units or blocks of history and geography work and this supports the pupils' learning well. Good use is made of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work to establish what is expected at each level and both subjects are taught through a two-year rolling programme of topics. Management of these curriculum areas is sound and the co-ordinator supports teachers well with planning and ensuring all the resources needed are available. Resources are satisfactory and used well to support learning. Good use is made of the local environment and pupils regularly visit places of interest, for example to experience life in Victorian times.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

93. Only one lesson was seen. Judgements are made from discussions with pupils in Years 1 and 2, a discussion held with the subject co-ordinator, analysis of school documentation and examination of resources.
94. Although teaching is satisfactory and resources are adequate, discussions with pupils show that there is considerable variation in the use of computers for different activities and in the standards achieved. For example, Year 1 pupils are more familiar with the Internet than Year 2 pupils. One Year 1 boy says that the Internet, "is full of information, there's a whole world out there". All Year 2 pupils have completed an adequate amount of writing using the computer. Some have written a good amount, using capital letters and full stops correctly and paying some attention to the layout of their work. All pupils know how to change the colour of text and some know how to change its position. There are not enough examples of pupils using

computers to record and analyse numerical data, using different forms of graphs and charts, although there was some good work on this aspect in Year 1 during the inspection.

95. From an early age, pupils acquire adequate knowledge of the different parts of the computer and learn basic mouse and keyboard skills. Pupils in Reception are learning to write their names, paying attention to spelling and the correct use of capital letters. They use the mouse and a simple computer art programme to draw basic self- portraits. They know how to give instructions to the Roamer (a common programmable device in primary schools) to make it go forwards or backwards and to turn.
96. The examination of pupils' work shows that teachers set clear learning objectives and occasionally set homework related to information technology. The use of the school's assessment and recording sheets is variable and teachers rarely note the date of pupils' achievements. Pupils have used the Internet and e-mail to identify and write to several schools with the same name in other British towns and other countries. This is a good example of the modern technology being used to promote the pupils' cultural development.
97. There is a very enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator, who is giving a good lead to the many developments in this subject and who has taken part in extensive training. There is a good, separate action plan, which explains how the resources and curriculum are going to be improved and also shows the arrangements for staff development. This was revised and rewritten based on Local Education Authority advice to support the school's bid for national funding. The co-ordinator has carried out a useful audit of staff knowledge and skills. The current arrangements to assess what pupils know understand and can do are not sufficiently detailed to fully inform what needs to be done next.

MUSIC

98. There is limited evidence to support judgements in music, but overall provision is good. Two lessons were observed, a discussion held with the subject co-ordinator, documentation analysed and resources examined.
99. Teaching and learning were good in the two lessons seen. Lessons start with a good recap of what has gone on before. In one lesson, there was very good questioning of pupils which made them think hard and intentionally included those who were reluctant to get involved. All of the children in one reception class name several instruments, understand changing tempo, and move in different ways to different music. Pupils in a mixed Year 1 and 2 class copy a variety of rhythms and read simple musical notation. They are learning about the key elements of music and, for example, are beginning to understand the difference between 'beat' and 'rhythm'.
100. There was good singing by the whole school in assemblies and a hymn practice. Good use is made of recorded music in assemblies on a weekly theme, which was the work of a particular South African group during the week of the inspection. There has recently been a visitor to the school who has worked with the pupils on Caribbean music, dance and stories. Music is used to promote the pupils' spiritual and cultural development, but some opportunities to exploit these contributions are missed.
101. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were always good and sometimes very good in situations that involved musical activities. The pupils are clearly very interested and highly motivated by these experiences and the staff are successful in conveying the fun that can be derived from music.
102. The co-ordinator has adequate knowledge and has successfully maintained and, to some extent developed, the subject whilst the school has been giving priority to other matters, such as literacy, numeracy and the quality of teaching. The staff agreed to adopt a commercial scheme of work, which the co-ordinator states has increased their confidence.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

103. There is limited evidence to support judgements in physical education, but overall provision is good. Three lessons were observed, a discussion held with the subject co-ordinator, documentation analysed and resources examined.
104. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have gymnastics skills similar to those of many pupils of this age in many other schools. They follow their teachers' instructions carefully and move and balance in different ways on the floor. They work well in pairs and small groups as well as individually. Most of the pupils sequence a variety of movements and balances quite well on a collection of pieces of small apparatus. A very small number show good skills, agility and imagination in performing these sequences. All pupils get changed quickly, dress appropriately for indoor physical activity and carry equipment safely. Pupils in one reception class move in a variety of ways to illustrate what they have learnt about the movements of mini-beasts and show good awareness of the available space around them. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good in two lessons and in one lesson they were excellent, with very careful listening to the teacher and hard work by all pupils very evident.
105. The teaching was good in all lessons seen. There are high expectations of work and behaviour and good attention to the particular safety considerations related to the subject. Lessons are well planned and conducted at a good pace, although, at times, pupils could be encouraged to be more energetic even in activities which require control. Activities are chosen well to build on what has gone before and teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to contribute to the whole class discussions. The use of individual or small group demonstrations to get all pupils to consider what they can do to improve is satisfactory, but teachers could usefully extend the use of this strategy, even in short lessons. Support staff make a good contribution.
106. There is a satisfactory scheme of work which covers all the required aspects of physical education to seven years of age. Every class has two lessons every week and all pupils experience a range of gymnastic, games and dance activities at some time each year. The school has good resources for physical education. The purchase of these has been supported by a sizeable donation from a local business.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

107. Standards, overall, in Religious Education are below those expected of pupils by the age of seven and has not improved since the previous inspection. The school does not fully meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus as there is no evidence in the school's scheme of work of studying in any depth one or more religions other than Christianity. Some festivals, such as Divali and Hanukkah, are celebrated during assemblies. There is very little written evidence of work undertaken by the pupils for religious education and this was identified in the last report.
108. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching, but analysis of teachers' planning and examination of pupils' completed work suggest that it is unsatisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 recall some of the important stories Jesus told. They successfully relate some of the events in the story of 'The Prodigal Son' to their own experiences. In this lesson, attainment is good and pupils talk confidently about what they are learning from religion. They respond well and the teacher values all contributions, which has a positive impact on their learning. From discussions with pupils it is evident that they know about caring for each other and name important people in their lives who help them. They recall some stories they have heard from the Bible, but are unsure whether they are in the Old Testament or the New Testament. They have very little knowledge or understanding of religious faiths practised in Britain other than Christianity.
109. The school has acknowledged that this is a curriculum area in need of development. Resources, which were identified in the previous report as limited are now satisfactory and are sufficient to support pupils in their learning. However, religious education lessons do not appear on the timetable frequently enough, particularly for the two school terms prior to this inspection.