

# INSPECTION REPORT

## INGLEHURST INFANT SCHOOL

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester

Unique reference number: 120015

Headteacher: Mrs S A Palmer

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Silcock  
21261

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 189117

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:	Ingle Street Leicester
Postcode:	LE3 9FS
Telephone number:	(0116) 262 2479
Fax number:	(0116) 262 2479
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Ipgrave
Date of previous inspection:	9 <sup>th</sup> September, 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs P Silcock	Registered inspector	Mathematics	Standards in learning
		Music	Teaching
		Areas of learning for children under five	
		English as an additional language	
		Equal opportunities	
Mr K Patel	Lay inspector		Care and welfare of pupils
			Partnership with parents
Mr K Hodge	Team inspector	Science	Leadership and Management
		Geography	
		Physical education	
Dr K Wood	Team inspector	English	Curriculum
		Art	
		Information technology	
		Special educational needs	
Mr P Thrussell	Team inspector	Religious education	Pupils' attitudes and behaviour
		History	
		Design and technology	

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd  
7 Hill Street  
Bristol  
BS1 5RW

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Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

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# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Inglehurst is a large school for 3 to 7 year olds. There are 292 pupils on roll, including 111 children in the Nurseries, 51 of whom attend part-time. Children’s attainment on entry at three years of age varies but, overall, is well below expected levels in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. At age five, children’s attainment is broadly comparable to that of other children of the same age. Approximately 38 per cent of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals – a higher than average figure. Fifty-three (also higher than average) have special educational needs. Two pupils have Statements of special need – below average. Eight children are learning English as an additional language. There is a high and increasing level of pupil-mobility. The school has noted a change in its intake in recent years with a growing number of children judged as needing substantial support in their learning. Levels of attendance are well below national averages. Most neighbouring schools are in a designated Education Action Zone, but the school is not included in the zone because of its good results in the 1999 statutory tests for seven-year-olds.

## HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is a warm and friendly community where the welfare and care of children are highly valued. Importance is placed on building good relationships between home and school. Children are secure in their relationships with adults in the school and make good progress. In response to consistently high expectations, pupils of all ages (including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language) frequently reach standards better than might be expected. This is especially true in English, mathematics and personal and social development where weaknesses are identified on entry to the Nursery. Standards reached by children are due to the good quality of teaching and to teachers’ very good skills in managing pupils. They are also due to the very good quality of leadership and management and expectations set by the headteacher in striving for excellence. Senior managers, staff and governors work hard in their pursuit of a common goal - to provide every child with the opportunity to reach her or his potential. Inglehurst is an effective school and gives very good value for money.

### What the school does well

- Quality of learning is good. Children achieve good standards in many areas of work, especially in classes for under fives. They develop good literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils enjoy school. They have positive attitudes to classroom learning and are well behaved.
- Frequently good or better teaching has a marked impact on standards achieved by pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and plan effectively for different levels of learning need.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities is very good. Commendable breadth and balance is achieved in curricular planning for all pupils. Good cross-curricular links are made.
- Assessment procedures are very good. Assessment information is well used to inform planning.
- Provision for children under five is of a very high quality.
- Provision for children with special educational needs is very good.
- Procedures for Child Protection and the care and welfare of pupils are very good.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and is well supported by senior managers, staff and governors. Governors are active in school life and are proud of the school’s work and achievements. Financial management is very good.
- Great strengths are evident in the quality of team-work throughout the school. Staff members value one another. They have high expectations of children’s work and behaviour and provide good role models.
- Parents think highly of the school. The school sees partnership with parents as vital to good educational provision and values parents’ views.

### What could be improved

- Levels of attendance.
- Teachers’ marking of pupils’ work.
  - The outside environment.
  - The toilet facilities.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Very good strides have been made in addressing issues raised in the previous inspection (1996). Pupils develop good speaking and listening skills. Standards in music have improved and are now at least satisfactory. A music scheme of work supports teachers' planning well, giving teachers confidence where this was lacking. Very good assessment procedures are consistently used across the school. Teachers plan effectively for pupils' different learning needs. The quality of annual reports to parents is now very good. School development planning has been improved to good effect. Teachers' professional development is well supported, with effective informal procedures in place for assessing and agreeing individuals' development needs. The school is aware that the quality of teachers' marking is still a matter for improvement.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	D	E*	E	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
Writing	C	E*	C	A	
Mathematics	B	E	B	A	

Compared with all schools, standards in mathematics are above average. In writing they are in line with the national average but they are well below this average in reading, although slightly better than results in the previous year. Pupils do well when tested in these subjects compared to pupils in similar schools. Inspection evidence shows seven-year-olds achieve good standards overall in reading, writing and mathematics. The majority achieves in line with national expectations. Higher attaining pupils do better than this. The National Literacy Strategy and teachers' concentration on writing skills (after analysing last year's test results), has led to good gains in pupils' skills. These factors have helped pupils to make considerable gains in reading and the majority reaches at least the standard expected. Teachers' work at developing pupils' quick responses in 'mental maths' has been well supported by the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, with a consequent impact on standards. The school has set challenging targets in English and mathematics in light of its 1999 test results. Pupils reach sound standards in science. They develop good investigative skills. Good standards are reached in geography and history where teachers use first-hand experiences to support learning. High standards are achieved in art where pupils acquire very good skills in handling a range of media. Pupils demonstrate competent skills on the computer and apply these well in subjects across the curriculum.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils of all ages are keen to learn and are highly motivated.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils from Nursery age upwards work purposefully and concentrate well. They move around the building responsibly.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are courteous and polite. They form positive relationships with adults and work very well on co-operative tasks.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. A significant minority also arrives late into school.

The school's ethos is marked by very good adult-child and pupil-pupil relationships. Members of the school community care for and about one another. Teachers across the age-range work hard to create

collaborative learning opportunities for children through tasks set, not only as a productive way of gaining good results but also as a means of supporting pupils' social and personal development. This is a strength of the school. The school is aware of weaknesses relating to attendance and lateness and strives hard to overcome these. It continues to identify the building of good relationships between home and school as a major part of its work.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Across the school, the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and is most frequently good (80 per cent). Strengths are evident in classes for children under five where teaching is also most frequently good (87 per cent) and is often better than this (51 per cent). It is never less than good in the Nurseries. Teachers have very good skills in teaching literacy and numeracy. Great emphasis is placed on this teaching from Nursery upwards, where children develop good speaking and listening skills and gain secure knowledge and understanding of basic skills needed for reading, writing and mathematics. These skills are built on successfully in the Reception year and Key Stage 1. Teachers take good account of pupils' different learning needs when planning lessons, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and are very well provided for. Those with English as an additional language are readily included in all learning activities through teachers' very good use of a range of visual and practical stimuli.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. Overall, good breadth and balance evident in planning with very good cross-curricular links where practicable.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Very good management by co-ordinator. Makes sure pupils assessed and monitored regularly and parents involved as necessary.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Few pupils, but they make good progress because of emphasis given by teachers to practical work and good quality visual stimuli. School celebrates diversity and values experiences pupils bring into classrooms.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Strengths evident in provision for social development. Teachers take every opportunity to promote spiritual development in assemblies and lessons. Pupils consistently reminded about 'right' and 'wrong' in their dealings with others. Good awareness of diversity in cultural provision.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Procedures for welfare of pupils clear and known to all. Very good programme of personal and social education, dealing with wide range of health and safety issues.

The school works in close partnership with parents and continues to see this partnership as important to school-improvement planning. Curricular provision is of very good quality. It takes full account of recommendations relating to areas of learning for under-fives and of National Curriculum requirements and requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education in Key Stage 1. Information technology is used well to support curricular aims. The school's care for the health and welfare of its pupils is of consistently good quality and clearly central to its work.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good leadership and management. Excellent qualities evident in headteacher's leadership. Key staff make excellent contribution. Good leadership from co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	To very good effect. Governors are committed and work hard. Good committee structure, well run and efficient. Good strategic overview and support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Thorough. Secure knowledge and understanding of strengths and weaknesses through wide variety of monitoring activities by all members of staff with responsibilities and governors.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Specific grants well directed. Finances for school improvement planning carefully targeted.

Staffing is sufficient for the age-range taught and staff members are well qualified. Accommodation is adequate overall. Internally, it is well kept. Externally, it is bare and unimaginative and does not reflect the welcoming warmth of its interior. Toilet facilities are inadequate. Learning resources meet curricular demands and are of good quality. The quality of leadership and management is of a high standard. The headteacher sets the tone for the school with her high expectations of what pupils of all ages are expected to achieve. Principles of 'best value' are mostly applied in budgetary matters, although the school does not, yet, compare its information to that of similar schools.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• They make good progress and reach good standards in work and behaviour.</li> <li>• Teaching is good. Teachers work hard to get best from children.</li> <li>• Quality of Nursery provision very good. Very appreciative of pre-school home visits.</li> <li>• Teachers very approachable and accessible.</li> <li>• School is friendly and welcoming. Values parents' opinions and contributions.</li> <li>• School is extremely caring of pupils. Bullying and name-calling dealt with promptly.</li> <li>• Targets set regularly to improve children's learning. Homework supports learning targets.</li> <li>• Good quality of work evident in school events such as concerts.</li> <li>• School well led and managed. Admire headteacher's commitment to raising standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and information about how racist incidents are dealt with and how policies relating to such matters are implemented.</li> <li>• More staff in Nurseries to support the large classes for the excellent work Nursery staff are seen to do by parents.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings support parents' positive views of the school. No incidents of bullying or name-calling of any kind (including those of a racist nature) were seen during the inspection. The school shows good knowledge and awareness of such matters and recognises the vulnerability of its minority ethnic pupils in this regard. The headteacher is vigilant in pursuing any incidents which occur and – where known to staff - procedures for recording these are very good. As a majority of parents perceive, the school has an 'open door' policy for parents and is always willing to hear their concerns. Although Nursery classes were operating almost to capacity during the course of the inspection, staffing levels were found appropriate to the requirements of children of this age.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. On entry to Nursery, at three years of age, assessments for children's Early Learning Profiles show that attainments in language and literacy, mathematical and personal and social development vary across individuals. However, in general, almost all children are found to attain well below expected levels in these areas. In their knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, children's attainment on entry is also judged by teachers to be well below average. Children's physical development - judged in relation to their ability to ride wheeled toys, run and climb - is seen as broadly in line with expectations for three-year-olds. Development of physical skills associated with manipulating tools, such as pencils and scissors, is judged below average. At four, when most children transfer to the Reception year, children's skills, knowledge and understanding in almost all areas of learning are still assessed as being below what might be expected, although gains in learning have been made and recorded as additions to Early Learning Profiles. Low attainment is especially notable in language and literacy, mathematical, personal and social development.
2. By five years of age, most pupils attain broadly in line with expectations. Clearly, the very good progress made in the Nurseries has been built on successively in the Reception year. However, concerns remain about the attainment of the youngest children (that is, those who are five during the Summer term, whilst still in the Nursery) who transfer to a Year 1 class without the benefit of additional time spent in the Reception year. Evidence collected over time by the school shows the continuing impact of children's low starting points combined with reduced time in the Early Years classes on later assessment results. It is plain that many of these youngest pupils do not perform as well in tests as their older, more experienced peers.
3. In the 1999 statutory assessment tests, seven-year-olds attained well below the national average, overall, at the nationally expected Level 2 and above in reading. Pupils attained in line with the national average in writing, overall, at expected levels and above this average in mathematics. They did particularly well at the higher Level 3 in mathematics when compared to results nationally. When compared to the results of pupils in similar schools, pupils' attainment is judged in line with the average attainment in reading and well above the average in writing and mathematics. Over a period of four years, pupils' attainment in statutory tests has varied, with a dramatic drop downwards in all tests in 1998. Results generally reflect differences in cohorts of pupils from year to year but show a rising trend in writing and mathematics over the relevant period. Since tests themselves have changed over time (especially in 1998), it is difficult to make direct comparisons. Teachers assessed their pupils to be well below the average reached by pupils in all schools in speaking and listening in 1999. In science, teacher-assessments judged pupils' performance to be well below the average reached by pupils in all schools and below the average of results achieved by pupils in similar schools. In light of comparisons with these schools and especially in view of its good results in English and mathematics, the school is looking carefully at its teacher-assessment procedures for science and at last year's results, to check whether these were calculated accurately.
4. Inspection evidence demonstrates a more positive picture in science and shows pupils at the end of the key stage to be attaining solidly in line with national expectations. Inspection evidence also confirms the good picture of 1999 for writing and mathematics and shows most pupils at the end of the key stage to be achieving in line with national expectations. Higher attaining pupils (approximately a third) are doing better than this in both subjects. Evidence likewise demonstrates improvements in reading standards, which are judged good overall for pupils in Year 2. Most pupils achieve at least in line with nationally expected levels and a significant number does better than this. All pupils make good progress. Pupils learning English as an additional language attain at least in line with their monolingual peers. Those with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, attain in line with their prior attainment and frequently do better than might be expected because of the good support they receive. Inspection evidence found no significant differences of attainment between girls and boys.
5. The school has set itself more challenging targets for this year in light of the 1999 results and in response to recommendations by the local authority. The school sets its targets in relation to very good assessment information gathered regularly in the course of pupils' schooling from the Nursery

onwards. It looks closely at each pupil's performance over time and makes informed judgements about likely test results in English and mathematics. The school has clear evidence to show a number of important factors affect pupils' performance in teacher-assessed work during the course of each school year as well as their performance in end-of-key-stage assessments and tests. Firstly, approximately a third of the current Year 2 cohort are 'Summer born' children who transferred from a Nursery class to Year 1 soon after their fifth birthday (see paragraph 2). Secondly, 18 (24 per cent) pupils in Year 2 did not attend the school's Nurseries and most did not enter a Reception class but transferred to the school at a later stage. Some of these pupils have had a chequered schooling career, having left Inglehurst to attend schools elsewhere before returning. Lastly, a significant proportion of pupils in Year 2 classes are deemed to be in need of learning support, with some on the Code of Practice register for special educational need (including pupils with Statements of such need). A number of these children are also the youngest in their year group.

6. By seven years of age, pupils show very good speaking and listening skills within a lesson-context. During lessons, they are well supported in all curricular areas by teachers' skilled questioning and their close matching of vocabulary to lesson content. Pupils acquire good skills in listening to others' ideas and in expressing their own, in response to teachers' consistently high expectations of how they will behave and work. Outside classrooms, many pupils are uncertain about discussing their classroom-based learning, although they talk at length about matters of immediate personal concern to themselves. Pupils develop good writing skills. They write for a variety of purposes and spell simple words correctly. Spelling of more complex words at least reflects pupils' secure understanding of letter sounds. Higher-attaining pupils apply their understanding with reasonable accuracy to most writing. Pupils across the attainment range develop good reading skills. They tackle unknown words using a range of strategies (such as interpreting picture clues and building on letter sounds) and make sensible predictions about what is likely to happen next in a story. Pupils transfer their good language and literacy skills to subjects across the curriculum, such as religious education and history.
7. From Nursery age, pupils build up good basic number skills through daily practice in all classrooms, calculations about daily registration, for example, being routinely made. Teachers use these opportunities well to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of number operations (such as subtraction and addition). By seven, pupils reveal a secure understanding of these operations. They can also use their knowledge of the two and ten times tables to make quick calculations in 'mental maths' sessions. Those of average and higher attainment are developing good problem-solving capability involving the operations of multiplication and division. In science, pupils at the end of the key stage have good investigative skills. For example, pupils' experimenting with electricity and the conductivity of different materials was well recorded, showing a sequencing of significant events. Pupils' improved speaking and listening skills are having a marked impact on their ability to reason and think through problems in science and so on the standards achieved. Pupils develop sound keyboard and 'mouse' skills on the computer by age seven. They can apply these skills well when word-processing for story-writing purposes and when using data-handling programs to construct graphs in mathematics. By the end of the key stage, pupils attain in line with expectations stated in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. They have a satisfactory grasp of the precepts of Christianity and other world religions. Pupils know how people care for one another and that religious beliefs often guide people during their lives. In art, pupils throughout the school reach standards higher than might be expected for their ages. Younger children in Key Stage 1 create boldly painted, recognisable images (for example, of the crossing-patrol lady). By the end of the key stage, pupils reproduce landscapes they have studied, by handling watercolours and drawing media with extremely well developed skill.
8. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and are having a good impact on standards achieved. The still-improving picture in English reflects the positive impact of the literacy hour over the past 18 months. The National Literacy Strategy has focused teachers' planning and organisation on specific targets, with a consequent rise in pupils' achievements in all aspects of English, but most especially in writing, where weaknesses were earlier identified. This focus, allied to other reading work in the literacy hour, has led to the lifting of reading attainments. The Numeracy strategy has given good support to teachers' planning in areas identified by the previous report as weak. Thus, pupils' ability to respond quickly in 'mental maths' sessions and, generally, to solve mathematics problems has improved. Since the previous Report, standards have risen overall, with marked improvements in pupils' speaking and listening skills in lessons and their ability to participate actively in classroom events.

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

9. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has successfully maintained very high standards in this aspect of its life and work. Parents recognise this fact and acknowledge how positively the school's values have affected their children.
10. Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to their teachers and show interest in what is being taught. They are keen to contribute to classroom discussions, waiting patiently for their turn to speak. Pupils settle quickly to their tasks, thinking carefully about their work and sustaining concentration until it is finished. They enjoy what they are doing and talk happily about it. When given the opportunity, pupils are well able to work independently and take initiative.
11. Under-fives in the nursery classes soon acquire positive attitudes because of the sensitive way they are introduced to school life. They delight in a rich diet of experiences and take part keenly in all activities. Children have a warm relationship with their teachers and helpers and try hard to please. All nursery staff present excellent role models for pupils, both in work and in promoting good relationships. Children notice this and try to follow adult example. They enjoy playing 'teacher', sitting on the teacher's chair and dismissing the children at the end of a session; they show initiative by, for example, tying their own aprons before water play or painting.
12. Pupils' behaviour is very good, both in lessons and around the school. In the classrooms, pupils work quietly with minimum supervision, so teachers do not have to waste any time keeping order. Pupils walk around the school in a calm, self-disciplined and orderly way. At lunch-time, they display good manners and social skills in the dining hall. They show an awareness of and consideration for others during outside play. Pupils treat their surroundings with respect, handling resources with care. Nursery children who tidy away equipment at the end of lessons demonstrate this respectful attitude. It is also observed in the playground, where children of all ages take care of the play equipment provided. Nevertheless, one pupil with severe behavioural problems, for which the school could not make appropriate provision, has been excluded within the last year.
13. The quality of relationships formed by the pupils is very good. They are polite, open and helpful towards adults and work and play well together. The playground is a harmonious place, with children sharing play equipment. Pupils co-operate well with one another in the classroom and collaborate well where necessary. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics' lesson where pupils were working through money problems, one pupil helpfully devised a problem for a partner to solve; in a Year 2 design and technology lesson, groups of pupils planned, productively, how to improve the playground facilities. Pupils know how to treat others considerately.
14. Pupils take any opportunities they have to assume responsibilities around the school, contributing thoughtfully to communal life. Older pupils act as nursery monitors, looking after younger children; they supervise the placing and collection of playground equipment.
15. The level of pupils' attendance at the school is less than satisfactory, being well below the national average for both authorised and unauthorised absences. The school sees the improvement of attendance as a priority and is promoting better attendance as strongly as possible (see paragraph 30). The headteacher takes a close interest in matters of attendance and punctuality. Clear procedures for following up unexplained absence are in place and are pursued diligently. Attendance data are analysed fortnightly and the educational welfare officer is used as appropriate. Late attendance is also a concern the school is addressing, similarly. Problems relating to attendance and lateness affect all year groups and are mostly confined to a minority of families. Children of Nursery age are liable to be absent through illness, as when a significant number were away from school because of chicken pox during the inspection.

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

16. Teaching is a strength of the school. Marked improvements since the previous inspection are evident across the school in the quality of teaching, which is judged to be never less than satisfactory and more frequently as better than this. In 80 per cent of lessons, teaching is of good quality. It is very good or better in a third of lessons with eight per cent of teaching seen to be

excellent. Very good or better teaching is evident in a number of subjects, but most especially in areas of learning for children under five and in English and mathematics lessons in Key Stage 1. Very good teaching skills were also seen during assemblies when a lead teacher deployed stimulating resources to excellent effect. Children were enthralled, with many eager to join in at appropriate moments.

17. In classes for children under five, teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent. It is good in 87 per cent of lessons, being very good in 51 per cent, with 15 per cent of teaching judged excellent. Particular strengths are evident in the Nurseries where teaching is never less than good and is frequently very good or better (58 per cent). Across Early Years' classes, teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the age-range taught. They organise rich learning environments, changing activities regularly to meet planned objectives across all areas of learning, but also in order to retain children's curiosity and desire to explore what is on offer. There is a marked emphasis on raising children's awareness about literacy and numeracy in planned activities. This shows in adults' sharp focus on children's language and number skills, in adult-child interactions and in displays (many showing work produced by children), which skilfully mix visual images, print and numbers. Teachers also stress children's growing social and personal skills by carefully organising daily routines so children take an increasingly responsible role. For example, children identify the correct pictures or numbers to slot into the class weather chart and calendar. Nursery teachers work closely with nursery nurses and non-teaching staff to plan and organise activities. The good expertise of nursery nurses is recognised in their deployment. They take groups of children for structured language and literacy sessions and share monitoring and assessment tasks for agreed purposes. Children's learning is effectively enhanced by the very good collaborative practice of adults. Their learning is similarly well supported by a curricular consistency arranged across classes, which enables children moving to the Reception year at four or transferring to Key Stage 1 to transfer smoothly. Children are well prepared for this transition.
18. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent, with most judged good or better (74 per cent). Overall, 18 per cent of teaching is assessed as very good or better. Teachers generally plan well for all National Curriculum subjects and to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. At times, some teachers are seen to lack confidence in teaching music because they do not have expertise in the subject, although there have been good improvements, here, since the last inspection. Teachers generally plan effectively, incorporating an interesting range of activities in lessons to keep pupils motivated and on task. For example, a Year 1 teacher kept good pace in a music lesson by using a range of stimuli. Pairs of pupils were led to compose their own rhythms through carefully structured activities, which successfully consolidated previous learning and encouraged pupils to move forward. Teachers are very good at developing pupils' numeracy, language and literacy skills, both in lessons designated for this purpose and during other subjects. For example, in another Year 1 class, in a lesson on personal and social education, a teacher insisted pupils attended carefully to views expressed. She underlined the importance of paying attention by listening closely, herself, to each contribution from pupils and modelling how to speak clearly, making sure everyone could hear. Teachers are skilled at gaining pupils' attention, as when a Year 2 teacher briskly introduced multiplication work by inviting pupils to explain mathematical terms listed on the whiteboard. Teachers consistently emphasise the importance of pupils knowing, understanding and using a subject vocabulary correctly.
19. Regular planning liaisons between teachers in each year group in the key stage ensures pupils of the same age are taught equivalent curricular content. They also help familiarise teachers new to the school with daily routines and planning procedures. In this way, new teachers receive good support. Teachers take very good account of pupils' learning needs, matching work well to different levels of attainment. This matching informs plans for pupils with special educational needs (including those with Statements of special need) and those learning English as an additional language. Teachers skilfully structure lessons on pupils' previous learning. Worksheets and related tasks are carefully designed to meet teaching objectives, with particular groups or individuals in mind. At times, imaginatively presented work adds impetus to pupils' learning - as when higher attaining Year 2 pupils were intrigued by multiplication and division problems set out during a mathematics lesson on long sheets of paper. Teachers deploy classroom assistants effectively on the whole. A good example of effective deployment was seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson when a classroom assistant helped two pupils join in whole-class 'mental maths' work and then collaborated with them in a small group on a multiplication game with die, to consolidate the prior learning. Teachers use classroom computers effectively, in so far as this is practicable, during lessons. They ensure pupils have appropriate opportunities to apply skills taught in information

technology lessons to all curricular subjects.

20. Teachers make good, ongoing pupil-assessments during lessons. They assess progress through questioning and perceptively judge when to intervene to push learning forward, or when to recap on previous work. Frequently, teachers pose challenging questions. Pupils enjoy their interactions with teachers and often finish tasks as a result of discussions with renewed interest and determination. Teachers use assessment information well to adjust future planning. Their marking, however, is not particularly helpful, consisting, in the main, of 'ticks' or 'smiley faces'. It does not register the good quality classroom discussions, nor does it inform pupils about where they succeed and where they might improve. Teachers match homework suitably to pupils' different learning needs, frequently building well on classroom learning in ways that can usefully give parents opportunities to support their children's learning.

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

21. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It gives pupils good access to a wide range of potential studies. Its particular strengths lie in its provision for under fives, its support for pupils with special educational needs and the range of learning opportunities it offers generally. Cultural studies such as music, art, geography and history receive more emphasis than is usually found.
22. The school provides a well-balanced curriculum. It fully satisfies recommendations currently in place in relation to the Desirable Outcomes for children's learning for the under-fives and the requirements of the National Curriculum for 5 to 7 year olds. It has good provision for religious education, following the locally agreed syllabus. Where available, recommendations by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority are carefully considered when schemes of work are revised. Overall, curricular planning is very good, preparing pupils well for their next phase of schooling. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies effectively, so answering one criticism from the previous inspection. Medium and short-term planning, now, indicate very clearly how set tasks match pupils' different learning needs. Co-ordinators' formal programme of classroom observations ensures aspects of teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated. This programme usefully supplements their other monitoring of teaching plans and their sampling of pupils' work for closer scrutiny.
23. The curriculum promotes good standards, especially in all areas of learning for children under five and in English, mathematics, science, art, history and geography in the key stage. Good account is taken of enhancing curricular provision through visitors to school and study visits organised within and beyond the immediate locality across the age-range taught. For example, art provision has been well supported by 'artists in residence'. As part of their work in geography and history, Year 2 pupils benefit from a residential visit to a village not far distant from the school. This visit provides rich opportunities for extending cross-curricular links to other subjects too. Information technology is also well taught. Pupils use computers for a range of activities from the Nursery upwards.
24. The school makes good arrangements for pupils' sex education and meets statutory requirements. There is very good provision, too, for health and social education: due attention is paid to drugs and their misuse. The school provides very suitably and beneficially for pupils with special educational needs and those with Statements of special need in each year group - especially in literacy and numeracy. Provision is of very good quality. These pupils' different needs are taken well into account so planned tasks in lessons are matched suitably to meet identified learning needs. Pupils' individual education plans are properly in place and known to all relevant staff for planning purposes. They are monitored and assessed regularly and changed accordingly in light of assessments. Very good links with outside agencies ensure additional expertise is used effectively when necessary.
25. Currently, extra-curricular activities are not provided on a regular basis. The school prefers to concentrate on such matters for specific periods (usually a week at a time), especially in warmer weather when use can be made of playground and grassed areas for games, for example. During the inspection, the school heard it had succeeded in its bid for funding with two neighbouring schools to provide a variety of after-school clubs. This will add a new and welcome dimension to school life in terms of giving pupils extended opportunities for properly supervised play.
26. The school makes good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are good opportunities provided within the life of the school for pupils to

develop moral understanding. Their social development is especially well provided for.

27. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. At times, during assemblies and within day-to-day activities, pupils are helped to become more spiritually aware. Assemblies, centring for example on the value of 'co-operation' and on the beauty of the first day of spring, well illustrated the school's approach. Within religious education lessons, valuable opportunities are arranged for pupils to reflect upon the beliefs and values of others. For example, after recalling events surrounding miracles performed by Jesus and listening to a bible story about these, Year 2 pupils considered how the disciples felt on being given the power of healing. Provision for pupils' moral development is also good. Rules setting expected standards of behaviour in the playground are regularly rehearsed and reinforced. Time is given during assemblies to remind pupils how to behave and how to distinguish right from wrong. In classrooms, teachers routinely talk to pupils about such matters and the need, when working collaboratively, to share tasks responsibly. All teachers promote a positive ethos of respect and the headteacher leads strongly in this area.
28. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Adults set very good role models for pupils in the respect they show towards them and towards one another. They consistently teach children how to take care of resources, as when they demonstrate how to hold and play musical instruments properly. Turn-taking is very well promoted. Teachers discuss courteously with children why it is necessary to wait until someone has finished a task before they have a turn (for example, on the computer) or they gently suggest that someone might let another pupil have their turn. In a Reception class, for example, one child willingly agreed his painting was finished so that another could take her place at the table. Teachers very frequently plan work in ways that positively promote co-operation between pairs or small groups of pupils. For example, in Year 1 pupils had to listen very hard to what their partner was saying in an exercise designed to help the listener report information back to the class. The playground equipment has been chosen and arranged purposefully to promote social play.
29. Provision for cultural development is good overall. Pupils benefit from being told traditional stories from other lands during literacy sessions and professional musicians have enhanced music provision for pupils across the school. Teachers make good use of a range of musical traditions, such as western classical and Latin American rhythmic pieces as well as providing instruments from different cultures for pupils to play in the course of lessons. Teachers are mindful of planning curricular content to reflect views and experiences from a diversity of cultures and do this effectively. Year 2 pupils thus learned about Gandhi in history to illustrate the life of a famous person in the past. Pupils' own culture is explored effectively through traditional nursery rhymes and by visiting local places of interest, such as churches and museums. Different faiths are encountered within religious education lessons and assemblies (for example Krishna's birthday was celebrated). A good range of books, posters and other materials covering different cultures, languages and faiths underwrites the school's commitment to widening pupils' experiences. Teachers take good account of children's personal experiences, as when a Nursery teacher created an attractive and informative display about a pupil's recent experiences on a visit to India to see relatives.

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

30. The school has very good systems and procedures in place to care for pupils. Teachers know each pupil well and are fully aware, for example, of any personal, special educational need, an individual may have. Such needs are identified early in pupils' schooling careers and are well catered for. Very good assessment procedures are in place for each subject, comprehensively recording pupils' academic progress and personal development. Particular attention is paid to monitoring and assessing pupils' progress in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development, where weaknesses are consistently identified when children start their schooling at three years of age. Pupils' school histories are regularly reviewed to check how well they are achieving learning targets set for them and whether new achievement targets should be set. There is frequent praise for good behaviour and good academic work; pupils are awarded stickers and certificates for full attendance. The school monitors attendance levels proficiently. It has a variety of approaches to address poor attendance (see paragraph 41) and promotes positive attitudes in pupils through curricular activities where possible. This was seen, for example, in the poster competition "Why do you like to come to school?" (see paragraph 92).
31. Members of staff show a caring, supportive and patient manner towards pupils who, therefore, feel

safe and valued. Pupils perceive the school environment as a learning environment and they respond positively to it. Very good staff supervision operates at lunch and break times. In the nursery, 'milk and apple' break times are used effectively to check what children have learned during the session and also as a means of ascertaining if pupils are in need of any additional support. This is done sensitively and unobtrusively.

32. The school places a high priority on personal, health and social education and a comprehensive programme (covering a range of learning issues such as smoking, drugs, healthy eating and personal safety) has been developed. A clearly defined ethos of order, coupled with very effective behaviour-management strategies, produces a general air of harmony throughout the school. Effective procedures exist for eliminating unacceptable behaviour and teachers react quickly to any aggressive acts of a racist or sexist nature. Such incidents are very rare.
33. Procedures for ensuring the health and welfare of pupils are very good. Effective child-protection measures are securely in place and staff-members are aware of relevant issues. Very good health and safety procedures are also in place, with regular safety checks to make sure, for example, equipment requiring attention is readily identified. Teachers pay due care and attention to health and safety issues in the classrooms and pupils are reminded of these where necessary. Good reminders about safety were given, for example, in physical education lessons in the hall and in an outside playground when Nursery children needed to be reminded about how to use tricycles sensibly.
34. Since the last inspection, there has been a very good improvement in procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and these are now applied consistently throughout the school. The quality of teachers' comments in annual reports has also shown very good improvement. These are of good quality and give clear information about what pupils do well and what they could do to improve. However, weaknesses are evident in the marking of pupils' work where few comments are written to show what pupils have done well and how they might do better.

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

35. Very effective links are maintained between the school and the parents. Home-school agreements were put in place last September and help to strengthen these links by ensuring closer co-operation between home and school. Parents express approval of these agreements and state they have a positive effect on their children's learning.
36. Parents feel welcomed by the school and, although there is no formalised parent teacher association, many individual parents contribute to school life in a variety of positive, valued ways. For example, they help out within classrooms and on field study visits.
37. At the start and end of each day, parents can approach teachers with any concerns they may have about a child's progress or welfare. Parents express appreciation of the ready availability of teachers at such times and like the two-way nature of this communication. For example, a teacher may approach a parent to say how well a child has done that day in working towards his or her learning target. This face-to-face encounter is particularly welcomed in the Nurseries, where there is a good rapport between staff and parents.
38. Parents are kept well informed of school matters via a newsletter. They are sent comprehensive annual reports, which contain a full, on-going picture of their child's performance, attitude to work, current attainment and progress. In the key stage, attainment is put in the context of national expectations for children's ages. Parents find these reports informative and generally like the way they are told what their child is doing well and where there are weaknesses to be worked on. In addition to reports, termly parents' evenings give parents further opportunities to discuss their child's education, review existing learning targets and agree new ones. Parents at the meeting prior to the inspection stated they really feel these targets show how much teachers know about individual children. The school also hosts a number of supplementary parents' evenings where academic issues like standard assessment tests at the end of the key stage and aspects of the curriculum are discussed. During these meetings, parents are also consulted on other issues of interest or concern to them. Again at the parents' meeting, parents explained how they felt they were properly consulted about matters of importance to them (for example, school uniform) so that consultation was seen as more than a 'paper exercise'.



39. A current series of 'Partners in Reading' courses for parents (run by a local College of Further Education and hosted in the school) exemplifies well how the school helps parents contribute effectively to their children's learning. Parents attending the course speak highly of the way it has helped them to understand the reading process and the way young children learn.
40. Parents are satisfied with the school's standards of education, its code of behaviour and the information it provides. They speak highly of the very good quality provision they believe the school makes for their children.
41. The school informs parents effectively about its expectations in relation to pupils' attendance and absences through such means as the school prospectus and newsletters. Parents are also given their child's record of attendance at the end of each term, as well as for the school year on annual reports. Where problems persist, the school addresses these on an individual basis, aiming to improve links with parents who experience difficulty in getting children to school regularly or on time. Parents at the meeting prior to the inspection stated the school works hard to address such matters and the problem is mostly confined to a minority of families. The school regrets the lack of a post-holder with responsibility solely for home-school liaison, which might have resulted had the school been included in the Education Action Zone. The strengths of the school's commitment to furthering home-school links is evident in its decision to designate a teacher as co-ordinator for Parental Involvement since last Autumn in order to pursue better, identified targets in school development planning. This appointment has already ensured good progress in meeting planned objectives.

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

42. The management and leadership of the school is very good overall and the headteacher, especially, gives excellent direction to the school's daily life and activities.
43. The school is very well managed. The headteacher is instrumental in promoting and maintaining the school's aims, which are posted around the school as a good reminder to all of what is expected. Staff-members' clear commitment and sense of purpose ensure they set high standards for pupils. This commitment is seen in the way they insist upon good standards of behaviour in classes and is evident in their own professional expertise. Teaching is regularly monitored by the headteacher and her senior colleagues, whose structured observations allow consistent feedback to be given to colleagues. Although official appraisal-arrangements are not fully in place, the school's systems for improving professional abilities are well established and effective. These systems contribute to an ethos of improvement, which has raised the quality of teaching considerably since the last inspection. High standards are set throughout the school, from the Nurseries to the older Year 2 classes. The valuing of every individual pupil and a commitment to raising standards of behaviour and academic ability combine successfully to make pupils feel secure and motivated. The headteacher's quiet and reflective though decisive manner is very influential in setting a tone of high expectation and success for all.
44. Co-ordinators have a good oversight of their subjects or areas of responsibility (including special educational needs and classes for children under five) and monitor teaching and standards within these to very good effect. Co-ordination of provision for children under five is particularly effective, with shared approaches ensuring a consistently high teaching quality and learning for pupils. A lot of assessment – information informs planning and teaching throughout the school. This banking of information in itself helps raise standards, since teachers retain a very clear knowledge of pupils' abilities as they add to their records of achievement. Test results are monitored and analysed annually, which has in turn, for example, led to teachers re-setting targets and so improving writing and reading. Computer programs are enabling increasingly sophisticated methods to be applied to analysing assessment information, from baseline assessment on entry to Nursery to results of statutory tests at the end of the key stage. The school is keen to ensure such good quality information is used profitably to target particular groups and individuals. Throughout the school, teamwork is very successfully encouraged. The supportive and positive nature of all staff has a noticeable and beneficial effect upon pupils' behaviour and the standards pupils strive for.
45. The governing body's appropriate number of committees gives it effective oversight of the school's activities. Governors fulfil statutory responsibilities and their roles are well defined. Good relationships exist between the governing body and the staff and governors are keen to be involved in school life. Governors are linked to subject areas. They observe lessons and discuss difficulties

with an appropriate member of staff. A curriculum committee oversees subject areas and members of staff report issues to it for consideration. A chair of finance has effective oversight of current expenditure under various budget headings. The headteacher reports to the full governing body regularly and through observation, questioning and analysis of test results, governors positively influence the direction taken by the school. They oversaw the successful implementation of planning to address issues raised as matters of concern in the previous inspection. With two exceptions, these have all been dealt with (see page 6). The formalising of appraisal for teachers awaits outcomes relating to national negotiations in these matters but, in the meantime, appropriate arrangements are in place (see paragraph 43). The school is aware that teachers' marking remains unsatisfactory. In improving the quality of teaching, it has placed emphasis elsewhere as a means of raising standards. Substantial improvements are evident in the quality of teaching and the school is now well placed to extend these improvements into the marking of pupils' work.

46. A number of clear priorities covering three years are included within the school improvement plan. These priorities are well linked to raising standards in many areas, such as Literacy and Numeracy. Other priorities, such as improving teaching and learning, are markedly affecting standards attained by pupils and are seen by the school to be of continuing importance. Other areas - such as the need to review schemes of work - have been dealt with effectively and are now supported by class teachers' individual action plans. Governors and staff together devised the school improvement plan. It presents a good overview of the school's ongoing development. This plan signifies a step forward since the last inspection, when school development planning was picked out for attention. Its review of activities enables governors and staff - particularly the headteacher - to gain a realistic insight into where school policy needs to change. For example, test results in science, the need to refine teachers' planning and the need to upgrade the school's external appearance have been identified as areas for improvement. This identification has helped pupil attainment to rise (especially in art and in aspects of English). Analysis of past statutory test results has, similarly, led to improvements in English.
47. Resources are well deployed throughout the school. Finance is allocated through careful assessment of need after staff and governors have agreed on areas for improvement. Grants are well targeted. Spending priorities are also helping raise standards – for example, in numeracy lessons where good quality teaching is having a positive effect. The school looks forward to utilising funding made available from the National Grid for Learning immediately after the inspection to improve provision for information and communications technology, in line with school improvement planning. The most recent audit report made a number of minor recommendations which have been addressed. The school employs a local authority bursar for half a day per week, who oversees good administrative systems, using a computer to keep accounts. Regular meetings between bursar and headteacher to discuss progress guarantees that finances are administered very effectively.
48. Principles of 'best value' have been applied in nearly all areas of school life. Competitive tenders are required for any area of building work or significant spending on resources such as computers. Spending decisions are scrutinised by a finance sub-committee. Other sub-committees justify expenditure proposals before a budget is set for the coming year. The school improvement plan is carefully costed and linked to its highest priorities. The school is good at consulting internally about proposals for change but there are few formal methods for consulting with parents before changes are implemented. The school can account for its spending but does not properly compare its information with that of similar schools to assess its level of expenditure more accurately. Overall, taking into account its level of income, the high standards of teaching and improving standards in pupils' levels of attainment, the school gives very good value for money.
49. The school has sufficient well-qualified teachers to cover its age range of pupils. nursery nurses are well qualified and classroom assistants are suitably trained to meet the requirements of pupils in their remit. Teaching staff work with each age group over time, so that all teachers eventually have experience of working in a Nursery or with the oldest children in the school. This management decision to increase staff members' knowledge and understanding of all young children's learning ensures good quality professional development. It also ensures cohesive teaching and learning practices across the age-range taught and so strengthens whole-school approaches to curricular delivery. Special educational needs' work is well managed throughout, with pupils having good support within classes. An experienced administrative staff complements the work of the school with its own expertise.
50. Learning resources are sufficient to meet curricular demands on the whole and are of good quality.

English work is particularly well supported by two well-equipped libraries, which are regularly and properly used. The school plans to resite one of these when a planned computer suite is installed, pending funding from the National Grid for Learning. Accommodation is adequate, overall. Every available space is put to good use. For example, the provision of a parents' room and nursery playroom are good features. A good-sized hall provides accommodation for a variety of school purposes, such as physical education lessons. Its use as a dining-room, however, means it is out of commission for a period before and immediately after the lunch break. Two classrooms are housed in wooden 'mobile' units across the school yard, which is especially inconvenient in wet weather. These classrooms quickly become stuffy and are clearly problematic in extremes of weather, especially when it is very hot. Good ventilation is difficult to achieve, even in warm Spring weather. For such a large school, there is a lack of sufficient toilets and the situation is exacerbated when problems occur (for example, when a drain is blocked). Internally, the school is well maintained through good care-taking arrangements. It is made bright and attractive with a wealth of displays in classrooms and public spaces, many showing the good quality of pupils' work. Throughout the school, well-equipped classrooms create a very pleasant ethos for learning. By contrast, the external appearance of the school and playground is very barren and not very welcoming. The potential of pleasant grassed and hedged areas is not, currently, utilised to create an interesting or stimulating environment. The school is aware of this weakness, as witness school improvement planning and a current design project for pupils in Year 2 aimed at improving the outside environment.

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

The headteacher, staff and governors should ensure that:

- every realistic means is used to improve pupil attendance and lateness so building on good work already done in this matter;

(paragraph 15)

- teachers' marking of pupils' work more closely reflects the good, oral practice frequently found in classrooms, where pupils are plainly told what they do well and how they might improve their work;

(paragraphs 20, 33, 80, 86, 103)

- planned improvements to the school's outside environment take place;

(paragraphs 45, 49)

and

- toilet facilities are improved.

(paragraph 50)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	44

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	25	47	20	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	86	181
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	22	80

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	46

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	30

### Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	10.3	School data	2.8
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	36	40	76

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	31	31
	Girls	28	33	36
	Total	53	64	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (55)	84 (57)	88 (70)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	30	31
	Girls	28	31	27
	Total	55	61	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (55)	80 (57)	76 (68)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	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	0
Black – other	6
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	169
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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	1	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.1
Average class size	22.6

### Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	95

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.7

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	98

Number of pupils per FTE adult	14.3
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	469,487
Total expenditure	466,179
Expenditure per pupil	1,690
Balance brought forward from previous year	31,183
Balance carried forward to next year	34,491

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	292
Number of questionnaires returned	140

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	29	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	35	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	37	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	34	10	2	9
The teaching is good.	71	28	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	31	4	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	19	1	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	25	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	53	42	2	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	64	33	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	39	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	26	11	8	29

## PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE

## **CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

#### **Personal and social development**

51. Children reach good standards of personal and social development in Nurseries and Reception classes. All children make good progress following entry to Nursery, at three. On transfer to Key Stage 1, most achieve what is expected for five year olds. Provision for promoting children's personal and social skills is excellent. Teachers provide learning opportunities geared to children's interests, encouraging co-operative work and play. Adults know their pupils as individuals and are sensitive to their different needs. For example, a Nursery teacher was very prompt to enquire why a girl was upset on one occasion and pursued the issue gently, in private, giving comfort calmly and in a way enabling the pupil speedily to rejoin her class.
52. Activities are well supported by good quality resources. For example, after registration, two children in a Nursery settled quickly to play with a pirate ship, inventing a story together. In a Reception class, pupils drawing lines on the computer screen asked a peer for help to clear the screen. Their 'helper' efficiently and politely demonstrated what they had to do. At times, some children in the Reception year find sharing resources difficult. For example, when four children were engaged in a mathematical task involving large blocks, each pair wished to requisition all the blocks to build the tallest tower instead of working to achieve two towers of different heights. On this occasion, the children knew how they should behave as they strove hard to please the teacher after her timely intervention. Other children in the class showed high standards of co-operation, using a range of materials to make models of different sizes in their groups. All children attended carefully to others' explanations when work was shown at the end of the lesson. They talked confidently about this.
53. Children are highly motivated and can sustain interest in tasks for appreciable periods of time. The quality of teaching from both class teachers and nursery nurses is never less than good and is frequently very good. Teachers have a high regard for establishing good relationships and reinforce co-operative behaviour across all curricular areas. There are frequent injections of fun. For example, in a personal and social education session, Nursery children enjoyed crawling under a parachute in the hall to find their 'named person' in a different part of the circle; they knew everyone should be chosen in the course of the game because that was 'only fair'. At the start of each Nursery session, very good routines enable children to settle at self-chosen tasks until the class gathers for registration when parents have left. The youngest children then quickly learn to join in counting activities associated with taking the register. They know they must sit quietly, watch and listen carefully. Such good practice is built on during the Reception year. It reinforces not only the structure of the school day but also the purposeful nature of school activities within their communal setting.

#### **Language and literacy development**

54. Children reach consistently good standards in language and literacy in the Nurseries and Reception classes. In a lesson in the Reception year, children produced work of a very good standard in response to an information book on 'bubbles'. Overall, they make very good progress following entry to Nursery. Children with identified needs, such as those in the early stages of acquiring English and those with special educational need, make better progress than might be expected for their age. Provision for these children is excellent. Teachers place great importance on developing core skills, seizing every opportunity to engage children in purposeful activities, so that speaking and listening, reading and writing attain real meaning. Teachers' very good knowledge and understanding of young children's learning needs are regularly evident.
55. The quality of teaching is most frequently very good and is never less than good. Excellent teaching was seen in a Nursery when the teacher took the oldest pupils in the class for a literacy lesson pitched at their level. They showed secure knowledge and understanding of initial letters and sounds of familiar words in the story and in their own names. They benefited from the teacher's lively approach and good skills in focusing a task through using soft toys to depict characters in the book. Across the age-range, teachers exploit the sensory qualities of real objects effectively and present children with images the children can readily identify with. For example, in another Nursery class, a teacher picked up objects with a glove puppet, indicating the initial letter



of the objects, to very good effect. The children thought it hilarious when the puppet got the wrong letter sound. They enjoyed putting him right. In a Reception class, a teacher's skilled questioning helped children recall a story-line and encouraged them to predict what happened next.

56. Children in all classes for under-fives are seen to write for a variety of purposes, sometimes under adult direction and sometimes spontaneously as part of a self-chosen task. So, in a Nursery, children wrote a menu for dinner in the Giant's castle. The children's 'emergent' writing (especially that of older children) frequently shows knowledge and understanding of how to form some letter shapes. Some place recognisable words in their sentences and are starting to realise how to use full stops. Higher attainers can copy adults' writing and spell simple words accurately for themselves. They can read what they have written and talk about their work with understanding. In the Reception year, children continue to develop related skills beneficially. For example, they write their own information books about bubbles, following a stimulating lesson, guided by a commercially published book. Lower attaining children in these classes can tell a story from a book's pictures and read the accompanying words with support. Higher attainers read books fluently, making sensible guesses about the meaning of some words. These children and those of average attainment use their knowledge of letter sounds very well to work out new words. Almost all pupils interpret pictures with good understanding to suggest what might happen next in a story. Children across the age-range enjoy the chance to engage in role-play. Younger children tend, predictably, to play alongside one another, although each may pay attention to what the other says. Older children sustain mutual play over most of a session (as when Reception children talked together in the shop about how much to pay for items and whether they should have change).

### **Mathematical development**

57. Pupils reach at least satisfactory standards in mathematical development. Good standards were seen in some lessons. All children make very good progress following entry to Nursery, including those children learning English as an additional language and those identified as having special educational needs. Most attain broadly in line with expected levels by the time they reach five. Across all classes for under fives, children reach consistently high standards in the counting activities linked to morning and afternoon registration. Through these activities, even quite young children in a Nursery class showed a secure grasp of one-to-one correspondence when counting a set of less than 10 pupils. More mathematically experienced pupils counted the number in the whole class correctly (up to 27). When children count, they always include themselves in the set with a last 'pat' on their own heads. Older Nursery children can also add 'one more' or even, at times, 'two more' (for example, to 25), when counting how many are seated in a circle. They understand the language of subtraction in terms of 'one less than' and 'take away' and can compare sets of children, calculating, for example, whether there are more boys present than girls. In the Reception classes, children are starting to use language relating to size with good understanding. Thus, children placed a sequence of four objects correctly according to size and talked knowledgeably about these using the appropriate vocabulary. They illustrated different heights graphically with their hands, copying the teacher's actions correctly.
58. The quality of teaching is at least good and is more often very good or excellent. Excellent teaching was seen in a Reception class when a teacher introduced a lesson about comparing tall and short objects by showing the children a bunch of daffodils and telling how she acquired them. Once her pupils' attention was grasped, she slipped easily into comparing the different heights of the flowers, so that interest was sustained throughout the lesson. Teachers make very good provision for children's mathematical development. They plan a range of stimulating activities geared to key basic concepts, assimilating these naturally to classroom life. Teachers frequently make learning fun. In the Nurseries, for example, children thoroughly enjoy counting backwards and forwards between zero and five or zero and 10 when singing a good variety of counting songs. They explain that 'zero' means 'nothing'. Most can keep pace with holding up the correct number of fingers as a song progresses, or taking fingers away one-by-one. One boy noticed that the children had not made a circle shape round the carpet, as the teacher said, but more of a square shape. Teachers across the classes provide very good 'props' for learners and classrooms are made lively by attractive number lines, sited where children can easily see and use them as prompts when answering questions, or when singing. Children count the number of places taken up in an activity as a matter of course and are familiar with how many are allowed to participate in each. In a Reception class, one girl commented she would like to paint, but knew she could not because four children were already at the table. Teachers purposefully use mathematical language to support learners, as when a nursery nurse asked how many more pieces a girl needed to complete her jig-

saw. In a hall 'parachute' game, a class teacher and nursery nurse consistently referred to 'behind', 'next to' and 'under' to reinforce children's understanding of their position relative to the position of others.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

59. Children achieve satisfactory standards overall. In some lessons, standards are better than satisfactory. Children, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, make good progress in finding out about their world. Most ask questions with reasonable confidence and make perceptive observations about what they see and do, although many three year olds find this difficult on entry to Nursery. By the time they reach five, a majority attains broadly in line with levels expected for this age, although an insufficiently wide vocabulary hampers the ready expression of ideas for a significant minority, on occasion.
60. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and is most frequently good or better. In all classes, teachers' very good planning and organisational skills very easily absorb children in a variety of self-chosen activities during each school day. Adults in the Nursery are deployed well so as to concentrate on specified activities as a means of both promoting children's learning through talk and of assessing their progress. Thus, children at the water tray knew to comment on whether containers were 'full' yet or 'almost empty' and pointed out what happened when the containers had holes in the bottom. Reception children reached very good standards when a teacher aptly commented on what they were doing and carefully questioned them. Those icing some fish-shaped biscuits made earlier added to their knowledge of the names for different parts of the fish, as well as learning about what happens to icing sugar when water is added.
61. Children in all classes for under-fives have good opportunities to learn about the passing of time and weather changes. Daily discussions channel children's attention well to a day of the week and its date and what the weather is like, so that correct entries can be made to class charts. During 'milk and apple' time, a teacher questioned Nursery children about their role-play in the home corner, asking whether they played in the 'day time' or 'night time' and how they knew the difference. In an assembly for all Nursery and Reception children, a teacher's skilful questioning and very good visual stimuli guided children's sequencing of the seasons of the year. When finding out about past times in Leicester, children in a Reception class enjoyed looking at copies of old photographs. They talked sensibly about 'then' and 'now' and had a sound grasp of passing time in relation to everyday life. For example, they could explain the difference between buses from 'a long time ago' and those of today. Some children were intrigued by places in the photographs and asked a lot of questions. Some found it hard to express anything beyond a one or two-word sentence, although their interest in the images they studied was clear.
62. Children have good opportunities, too, to develop computer keyboard and 'mouse' skills. In a Nursery, for example, a small group of boys became excited when counting objects on a screen for a number game, because they could click on the 'mouse' to move the program on. Children enjoy listening through headphones to taped stories at the 'listening post'. In the Reception year, they manage such equipment with ease. Children are beginning to link 'right and wrong' appropriately and are learning about moral values through class story sessions and discussion. In response to a teacher's well-aimed questions, Reception children offered sensible opinions about whether Krishna behaved in a 'funny' or a 'naughty' way in a story they had heard. In another class, children studied the story of Noah through the use of a model Ark complete with animals. They showed care and respect as they handled the animals. Children across the age-range enjoyed an assembly on the start of Spring and the birth of new things and were delighted by pictures of baby animals. A large poster of ducklings evoked a long 'ahhh!'

## **Physical development**

63. Children attain in line with what can be expected for their age by the time they reach five. All children make good progress in each aspect of physical development through the range of activities undertaken both in classrooms and during outdoor play. Very good, daily provision is made for this. Nursery children, too, have access at times to a small playroom containing a range of indoor climbing and other equipment, including large 'soft' toys. Children in the Reception year have good opportunities for physical exercise within regular hall lessons.
64. Teaching is good or very good and is sometimes better. Very good teaching was seen in a

Reception class when children worked hard to make different body shapes following a teacher's instructions. The teacher demonstrated effectively how to jump and land with two feet together then keep as still as possible. One boy's very good skills were recognised and he was invited to demonstrate them. Children move sensibly in the large hall space, weaving in and out quickly and with agility, showing good awareness of each other's spaces. They stop and start promptly in response to signals and balance on a hand or foot to make interesting shapes. When using apparatus, children showed varying levels of confidence when balancing along a beam. One girl made good progress through a teacher's timely support and the opportunities she had to practice. Children know how to put a movement-sequence together – for example, they completed moving along, over or under apparatus with a jump on the mat. Teachers make good judgements about when to intervene. For example, in an outdoor Nursery session, a teacher stopped children tricycling randomly when they had been instructed to go in the same direction as part of a 'traffic' game. They were reminded about the need for safety and about following red and green 'stop' and 'go' signs held up for them. Children returned to manoeuvring their trikes expertly round their space, stopping and starting in obedience to signs, once their attention was refocused on the game.

65. Children develop good manipulative and control skills using small equipment and when using malleable materials such as pastry and dough. They paint and write with a wide range of tools and experiment profitably by finding out what effects they can achieve with different kinds of marks (for example, using thick and thin brushes). Children have many opportunities to use a range of construction kits, work with jig-saws of differing complexities, sort objects such as buttons into sets and make patterns with pegs on boards. They persist at activities until they succeed - as when a girl in a Nursery toyed with the final piece of a jig-saw for quite some time before she realised how to slot it into place. Older children in the Nurseries grip pencils correctly when writing. Such skills are built on well in the Reception year. Adults across the classes provide good role models for developing basic skills and consistently aid children in recognising how to succeed.

## **Creative development**

66. Children frequently achieve good standards in all areas of creative learning. They make very good progress in developing suitable skills, knowledge and understanding following entry to Nursery. By the time they reach five years of age, children attain at least in line with expectations for their age. They handle paint particularly well to produce lively images of the things they do and see. Teaching is most frequently good or better and is never less than satisfactory. Teachers make very good provision for all aspects of creative development, ensuring children play imaginatively each day.
67. Children in the Nurseries sing tunefully and in time to their teachers. They know all the words to a wide variety of songs and rhymes and can perform actions to many of these. For example, in one Nursery, children co-ordinated hands, feet and head to represent five hammers beating time to a song, first slowly and quietly, then getting louder and faster. They thoroughly enjoyed speeding up and meeting the challenge of remembering the words while maintaining pace. Older children in the class enjoyed performing some of the songs they had learned in a 'Family Assembly' and did so with commendable assurance in front of a large audience. They reproduced noises devised in class to accompany a favourite story, as the teacher read this out, displaying their good sense of timing and ability to follow the story events. For example, they loved making aeroplane noises and hooting like an owl. In a Reception class, some children played a simple sequence of notes on a xylophone correctly. All pupils recognised the highest and lowest notes. They could clap in time to a beat when singing and also beat on untuned percussion instruments (such as a tambour) successfully. Pupils clearly benefited from taking part in these ways. All children really enjoy music lessons and show great respect for the correct way to play and handle instruments.
68. Across the age-range, children paint confidently. Whatever the size of paper, they make very good use of picture space, boldly placing colours and shapes to produce pleasing results. In the Nurseries, children organise themselves efficiently to paint. They know the names of colours in the paint pots and how to keep these clean. Children experiment with and mix colours competently. In a Reception class, children could explain they were painting self-portraits in black paint on white paper (or drawing with white chalk on black paper) to make their work look like the old photographs they had been studying. They confidently handled the media used to make their images, showing suitable awareness of features and proportions. Children enjoy playing with 'small world' toys, inventing stories together about what the 'small world' people are doing. Nursery children have a proper regard for different spaces in classrooms. For example, one very young boy was anxious

that their visitor should know a space beyond an archway was a Giant's castle: venturing there was a serious business. Children talked proudly of the beanstalk they had made for Jack to climb.

## ENGLISH

69. In the 1999 statutory assessment tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 and above and the higher Level 3 was close to the national average, in writing. They attained well below this average overall in reading at nationally expected levels, although the results gained at the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. When compared to the results of pupils in schools of a similar background, pupils' performance was in line with the average for reading and well above this average for writing. Over a period of four years, results have fluctuated in relation to national trends, generally reflecting differences occurring in each cohort of pupils. The school quite rightly takes into account such differences in its target setting (see paragraphs 5). The predicted target figures for this year's statutory tests suggested that 72 per cent of pupils would attain Level 2 or above in reading; while 80 per cent would attain Level 2 or above in writing. Inspection evidence shows Year 2 pupils are already achieving at this level.
70. Baseline assessments demonstrate pupils attain broadly in line with expectations for their age on entry to Key Stage 1, although concerns remain in relation to a significant number of children (see paragraph 2). All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, make good progress. By the end of the key stage, inspection evidence shows standards are good in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Overall, children achieve better standards than might be expected, especially considering the poor skills seen on entry to Nursery classes. The very successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, coupled with consistently good or better teaching, has made possible significant improvements in attainment. Findings show significant improvements since the last inspection report.
71. Overall, standards of attainment in speaking and listening are very good throughout the school. Many pupils listen and respond well to questions, particularly during the literacy hour. For example, they imaginatively discussed the main events in the story 'The Mango Tree' and reacted excitedly to a letter received from the Little Red Hen in Year 1 lessons. In Year 2, pupils showed animation during the story of 'Clever Katya' and worked co-operatively and collaboratively discussing ways to bring the nightingale to the sickly Emperor's room. Pupils thoughtfully considered the plight of Nawang and his mother and were keen to share ideas about the story of 'The Stone Lion' in a Year 2 lesson.
72. Pupils in Year 2 have good reading skills. They benefit from the introduction of the literacy hour and an increased stress on literacy in the school. They enjoy sharing a book in a group-reading session. They usually sound out letters for unknown words well and pick up clues in pictures and stories to check meaning. Most pupils express ideas about their favourite parts of a popular story, revealing the kinds of stories they like and whether they prefer information books. They read simple texts with increasing fluency and enjoyment, showing their understanding in discussions and predicting outcomes. For example, in Year 2 sessions, pupils generated ideas about the traditional stories 'The Emperor and the Nightingale' and 'The Stone Lion'. Pupils are taught effective library skills and have a good grasp of classification systems for finding both fiction and non-fiction books.
73. When working on the sound of words and what they evoke, pupils in a Year 1 class write words with 'ss' and 'ff' sounds, following their class reading of 'The Wolf and the Three Little Kids', in response to a teacher's challenging questions. Elsewhere, others improvised imaginatively upon the familiar story of 'The Little Red Hen'. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in these lessons through the good planning and clear structure given to tasks by teachers. In Year 2, pupils entered answers on a chart about the number of syllables in a word and copied their choice of word from a word wall. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs can, with help, competently identify phrases in a story and copy these phrases into character profiles they build of the wolf for their own writing. Pupils express a range of feelings associated with language used in other subjects. For instance, in science their writing is typified by neat, well-articulated questions such as 'What do tadpoles drink?' In Year 2 history, pupils considered the reasons why Grace Darling helped to rescue men; they listed questions they would like to put to Mary Seacole about her work in the Crimean war. Pupils record their experiences of a school residential study-visit to a nearby village in journal form and show good understanding of the purpose journals serve. They compose diaries, posters, labels and stories using appropriate, sometimes imaginative, language and format. Pupils attempt to spell words using their knowledge of letter sounds and higher attaining

pupils spell simple words and some more complex ones correctly.

74. Pupils' attitudes, including the attitudes of those with special educational needs, are very good. They enjoy sharing books for whole class and group tasks. Pupils are effectively aided in this by teachers' good planning and organisation, together with teachers' briskly maintained pace. So, after a class reading of 'The Mango Tree', Year 1 pupils had fun 'brainstorming' ideas with a partner about the kind of tree they would choose for their own garden. They were intrigued by the possibility of making up imaginary trees, but one pupil reasoned that apple trees are a good choice 'because they are healthy for you'. In Year 2, pupils talked animatedly about their class book and how a character might feel on leaving his Tibetan village.
75. Teaching is judged to be not less than good. In half the lessons observed, it was judged very good. Teachers have worked hard to implement the National Literacy Strategy, which they do with good understanding of its requirements and a confident knowledge of the English curriculum in relation to the learning needs of the age-range taught.
76. A highly motivated co-ordinator leads the subject. There are good cross-curricular links made with, for example, science and information technology. The subject meets statutory requirements. With the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, a building on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding is assured. The co-ordinator is committed to raising achievement of literacy even higher and is well supported in this by senior management. She has good opportunities to monitor the impact of the literacy hour in classrooms. All assessment information is rigorously analysed to determine targets for teaching and learning. Governors have a close and supportive oversight of the subject.

## **MATHEMATICS**

77. In last year's statutory test results at the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment was above the national average when compared to pupils' results in all schools. Their attainment was well above average when compared to pupils' results in similar schools. Over four years, pupils' results have generally been at least in line with national trends and mostly better, with the exception of 1998 when results dropped dramatically below the national average. Inspection judgements confirm 1999's more positive picture. These judgements show pupils in Year 2 attaining in line with national expectations overall, with approximately a third of pupils doing better than this. Pupils learning English as an additional language attain at least in line with their monolingual peers. Those with special educational needs make good progress and attain in line with their prior attainment. A significant number of pupils, however, are not, yet, attaining at nationally expected levels. There are clear reasons for this under-attainment (see paragraphs 2 and 5).
78. Teachers explain a lesson's purpose clearly, making sure pupils understand their tasks. They deploy resources imaginatively, gaining and maintaining pupils' interest by involving them in practical work. Thus, in a Year 1 class, pupils were intrigued when their teacher arranged tiles along a floor to make a number line, thoroughly checking pupils' recall of sequencing from 20 to zero as she did so. Following demonstration and discussion, pupils confidently found the difference between a high and a low number, as class members stepped along the line, following instructions from peers in the audience. Pupils of average and higher attainment could state a number difference when counting down from 17 to 9, for example. Those of lower attainment managed the task with support, using smaller numbers. All pupils made good progress in acquiring concepts being taught because of the lesson's practical approach, with key examples repeated. In another class, higher attaining pupils showed understanding of the relationships between addition and subtraction when working with money. They knew how to check their answer to a subtraction problem by 'counting on'. For example, pupils counted on from the 7 pence they had left in change after shopping until they reached the 15 pence they had to start with and so knew they had spent 8 pence. They could, then, record  $15 - 7 = 8$ . Lower attaining pupils worked out how many pieces of fruit they could buy with sums of money below 10 pence, with varying success. They were well supported in their learning by realistic plastic fruit and money, appreciating the practical group activities of choosing, buying and receiving change, although they found it hard to remain on task without adult support.
79. In Year 2, pupils responded enthusiastically to 'mental maths' sessions led at a brisk pace by teachers. In one class they counted quickly and accurately in twos, both forwards and backwards, with odd or even numbers, when given starting and stopping points below 100 (for example, 43 to

- 93). Most pupils showed a good grasp of doubling and halving, effectively using knowledge of the 2 and 10 times tables in such work. Higher attaining pupils applied their knowledge of the 5 times table. Pupils worked out answers to multiplication problems, set appropriately by throwing pairs of die, to challenge their different levels of understanding. Pupils of average attainment worked with partners and recorded their answers quite quickly, sometimes aided by mental calculation, as well as by using groups of cubes to calculate numbers of sets. Pupils with special educational needs benefited from close supervision for their die game and could dictate answers for an adult to record. Elsewhere, older pupils in the year group, of average and higher attainment, developed sound understanding of division when 'sharing' a number between sets. More able pupils also began to see how to check answers to problems mentally by applying their good knowledge of times tables. Some could use division and multiplication symbols correctly to record number statements, when solving problems. They made good strides in comprehension during the course of a lesson. So, three girls realised that  $16 \div 2 = 8$  could be checked by stating  $2 \times 8 = 16$ . They were gripped by the attractive presentation of problems on a long length of paper produced by the teacher on a computer.
80. Teachers' persistent use of a relevant subject vocabulary and their good monitoring of pupils' progress throughout lessons, supports learning effectively and ensures pupils across the age-range learn a mathematical language. Teachers also make good use of plenary sessions at the end of lessons to check on what has been learnt and to reinforce teaching points (as when a teacher drew attention to the relationship between the 10 and 5 times tables after multiplication work with die). Teaching is mostly good or better and is never less than satisfactory. Teachers are skilled at posing challenging questions and setting tasks well matched to pupils' different levels of capability. 'Pennies' can be seen to 'drop' quite often as pupils make links with previous learning to solve problems. Excellent teaching was seen in a Year 2 lesson where the teacher's very good subject knowledge allied to evident enthusiasm motivated pupils into wanting to please. An extra buzz was added to classroom work, which lasted from the initial 'mental maths' to the plenary session at the end. Although pupils' work is marked regularly, teachers do not indicate what has been done well and what might be improved.
81. During the inspection, lessons concentrated on number work, suitably following guidelines from the National Numeracy Strategy. However, the scrutiny of work completed, alongside teachers' planning and a wealth of displays in classrooms and around the school, uncovers the good attention paid to all aspects of the mathematics curriculum. Good use is made of computer programs to aid pupils' learning and develop their skills, as when data handling programs are used. Practical work is strongly emphasised in lessons, relating everyday situations to pupils' mathematical concepts. At the start of morning and afternoon sessions throughout the school, teachers use good strategies to provoke discussion about numbers of pupils present and what number sentences should be written about this for classroom display.
82. The school's self-imposed challenge is to raise its targets in mathematics for the current year in line with recommendations from the local authority. To date, results over time confirm good progress since the previous inspection, signifying a strong commitment to raising standards. The school has successfully addressed weaknesses identified in the previous inspection Report (for example, in relation to mental arithmetic and mathematical reasoning). Success is owed to the firm direction given by the co-ordinator and the school's commitment to analysing assessment-information as a means of understanding what can be improved. The co-ordinator has good knowledge and understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject through the variety of monitoring activities undertaken. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy from the beginning of this school year has strengthened whole-school approaches to teaching and learning. It has also increased teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in framing teaching strategies to improve pupils' speed of responses in 'mental maths' and their skill in problem-solving. Statutory requirements are fully met.

## SCIENCE

83. In last year's teacher assessments, pupils' attainment was judged as well below the average managed by pupils nationally. Their attainment was below the average of pupils' results gained in similar schools. Although results vary for each cohort of pupils (and last year's cohort was judged to be weak), the school is reviewing its teacher-assessment procedures and levels for 1999, to confirm that its judgements about pupils' attainment are accurate. The school sees this as necessary in light of comparisons made with the results of similar schools across all tests, since results in

science are shown to be anomalous with those gained in English and mathematics. Inspection findings show pupils in Year 2 attain standards broadly in line with national expectations, overall.

84. By the time pupils are seven, they make simple battery-powered circuits, identify the parts of a flower, such as stem and stalk, and know the difference between a 'push' and a 'pull'. In Year 1, pupils recognise parts of the body and differences observed when growing from toddlers to adults. In two Year 1 classes, good investigative work was seen when pupils tried out ways of moving objects without touching them, using air power. Pupils show good skills in approaching problems. Many make sensible guesses about what they think might happen. They can identify difficulties in their experimenting and make simple suggestions about what might improve matters. In Year 2, pupils' work on simple battery circuits and conductivity of materials was recorded well. They correctly identified which materials would conduct electricity and their circuits were constituted so as to light a bulb. In a Year 2 class, pupils correctly named different parts of flowers and made accurate observational drawings. These are also labelled well, showing features accurately. Past work shows that pupils cover issues related to living things and to materials. For example, pupils sorted materials according to which were rough, smooth, dull or soft. Work is recorded well using graphs at times, for example to highlight different eye colours. The school has sustained standards attained since the last inspection, particularly in investigative work.
85. In the lessons seen, teaching was not less than satisfactory and was sometimes judged to be good. Teachers plan their work well and make good provision for giving pupils 'hands on' opportunities to experiment. All are expected to try their best. Good pupil relationships are promoted through co-operative work, as when teachers in Year 1 organised pupils groups to devise moving objects without touching them. Teachers are very good at encouraging pupils to try different approaches to science. Good explanations combined with allowing pupils to work quickly were features of a good lesson. Learning is enhanced by teachers' probing questions, tempting pupils to think why things happen. Teachers' marking is rather cursory, however, and does not serve to inform pupils how well they have done, or how they can improve in the future.
86. The co-ordination of the subject is managed effectively. In line with the school's policy on such matters, the co-ordinator monitors work in classrooms as well as teachers' planning and pupils' work and so has a sound overview of standards achieved. An action plan highlights areas selected for improvement or change. This plan suitably includes a review of teachers' assessment of pupils' work and illustrating appropriate levels of attainment for each year group by collecting together a portfolio of samples of work. The scheme of work is also being reviewed so as to include changes to National Curriculum guidance for September 2000. Resources in science are good. Classrooms and adjacent areas allow good practical work to take place and the school uses its resources effectively.

## ART

87. Pupils' standards in art are consistently much higher than might be expected from pupils of their age.
88. In Year 2, pupils design covers for their favourite books. They experiment with materials and techniques to achieve effects suited to their versions of 'In the well of the Great Wave'. Year 1 pupils use bold colours and papercut-outs to create 'Mr Giant'. In Year 2, pupils convey thoughtful images of their residential visit to a nearby village. They use crayon and pastel wash, line drawings of the local church and photographs. They also produce evocative portraits of pirates in poster paint. The exuberance of work around Brett's golden earrings' and 'Captain Toothless' is impressive. Pupils explore clip-art images on the computer productively and type labels for the key to 'Treasure Island'
89. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the key stage. They consolidate skills and experiment with techniques. For example, pupils in Year 1 know how to use clay and decorate thumb pots. Clay models of dinosaurs, displayed, reveal how development of skills is very well planned by teachers.
90. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They listen carefully to instructions. They behave well. Pupils understand how to appraise their own and each other's work in helpful ways.
91. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection week. However, a scrutiny of work and the

delightful displays in classrooms and around the school showed that teaching is at least good overall and often better than this. A wide range of activities suggests teachers have good subject knowledge and, further, that they know how to extend pupils' creativity. Effective assessment procedures are in place and a portfolio of work usefully illustrates different levels of attainment.

92. Co-ordination of the subject has very effectively promoted art in the curriculum, raising teachers' expectations of the standards pupils actually attain. The co-ordinator gains a good overview of teaching and learning in classrooms through monitoring activities undertaken in line with the school's planned programme of such work. Clear targets for the development of the subject are identified by the School Development Plan. Knowledgeable, enthusiastic advice and encouragement are made available to staff and outside specialists are well used. For example, two Artists-in-Residence working with Year 1 pupils created the attractive Friendship Mural at each entrance. Art's high profile is achieved through school-based work and community projects such as the healthy eating poster 'Why it's good not to smoke'. The school kitchen runs an annual Easter Egg competition and the Education Welfare Service awarded first prize to a pupil of the school in their poster promotion 'Why do you like to come to school?' Art displays, such as 'Treasure Island' in the hall, make clever use of drawings, paintings, models and photographs to clarify their meaning. There are good cross-curricular links with English and information technology.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

93. Standards in design and technology are satisfactory. An analysis of work shows pupils using a range of materials, including junk materials and construction kits, in their constructions. Most have a sound knowledge of the many ways to fasten materials with, for example, staples, clips, glue, string and paper fasteners. In Year 1, pupils had been shown how to fix together model clowns with paper fasteners and re-deployed this skill when designing and making model animals. Pupils evaluate products to find ways of improving them as an integral part of their learning. As part of a topic, 'on the move', they checked how well model land-yachts (already made) sailed.
94. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good. Clear planning, good introductions and questioning ensured good learning opportunities for all pupils. Lower attaining pupils were paired with higher attaining peers to complete a task, which proved an effective means to develop the pupils' social skills as well as proving an effective way for the pupils to work. Pupils saw the relevance of design and technology in a true-life situation and were keen to carry out the related task: £2000 was dedicated to improving the playground and pupils were invited to redesign its layout and leaf through catalogues to choose suitable equipment.
95. Design and technology is taught as part of topic work and links in well with other subjects. For example, teachers' well-produced playground plans, for use in planning improvements to playground provision helped develop pupils' mapping skills. Consideration of different materials and their uses linked with science. As well as pushing pupils' understanding of the task in hand forward, good discussion and questioning within lessons improved speaking and listening skills.
96. The co-ordinator has clear views on how to develop the subject and improve provision. She has reviewed and updated the policy and Qualifications and Curriculum Authority materials are being piloted usefully in Year 1 with a view to updating the school's scheme of work. The present scheme of work contains detailed lesson plans which teachers regularly evaluate. There are adequate resources for design and technology, which the co-ordinator audits, making sure that everything required to cover the curriculum is available.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

97. Owing to timetable arrangements, only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Evidence from this lesson and a scrutiny of past work in books and on display reveals how pupils reach standards expected of seven year olds. Higher standards than this were seen in work connected to a residential visit for Year 2 pupils. These findings suggest that sound standards found by the last inspection have been maintained and consolidated.
98. By the time they are seven, pupils work out simple co-ordinates, appreciating the different features of a street and how shopping habits have changed. Work arising from a residential field study-visit is especially impressive. Pupils map the locations of buildings and natural features well. Their drawings of buildings (such as a church) and recording of patterns made by field layouts are also



very good. Back-up work in a class lesson showed these pupils' well-established skills in picking out similarities and differences between the countryside and the town. Many spotted obvious differences, such as the number of people living there; others noticed more subtle differences, such as lack of public transport.

99. In the one lesson observed, teaching was very good. The content of the lesson was very interesting, built upon the pupils' exciting experiences of their field study-visit. The lesson was enhanced by its interesting introduction and its good resources, such as local photographs. Very good questioning of pupils' previous and developing knowledge was skilfully handled to improve learning. Past work shows that suitable standards of presentation and recording are expected, although the marking of pupils' work gives insufficient guidance about how it might improve or develop. The planning of an extended visit to a rural location was very good, with a wide range of relevant activities worked out. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
100. Pupils enjoy their activities and this enjoyment contributes to good progress within the lesson observed and generally through the key stage. The co-ordination of the subject is good. There is a well-developed system for monitoring teaching and learning combined with a good awareness of where developments should take place. This shows an improvement since the last inspection. The collection of pupils' work to record progress and standards achieved, as well as celebrate their work, is especially good. The scheme of work is good at outlining topics to be taught and the good level of resources supports standards attained.

## HISTORY

101. From lesson observation and from studying pupils' work and a portfolio of past work completed by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in history are judged sound and in line with what can be expected at this age. Pupils progress satisfactorily in acquiring historical facts and in developing skills of historical investigation.
102. In Year 1, pupils learn about the past by comparing past and present, as in the work on 'teddy bears' and 'shopping'. In a lesson on transport, pupils looked at pictures and photographs of trams, old bicycles, cars and steam trains, recording differences with modern-day modes of transport. In Year 2, pupils compared historical figures, their impact on life at the time and what we can learn from them. Their work on Mary Seacole and Grace Darling showed their sound knowledge and understanding of these people's lives, what influenced them and what resulted from their actions. In a lesson on Gandhi, pupils gained a good understanding of his life and methods for bringing about change by comparing it with the life of Mrs Pankhurst, the suffragette. Pupils are well able to sequence historical developments and events on time-lines. They see how their own lives have changed and can order different teddy bears, by age, by studying the materials from which the bears are made and their appearance.
103. From the three lessons observed and other available evidence of work, teaching is judged to be good. Lessons are well introduced, tasks are clearly explained and good use is made of artefacts, pictures and photographs. For example, when studying the history of light, pupils were able to examine for themselves different forms of lighting. Slides and photographs were effectively used when studying bygone modes of transport. Pupils are well able to work independently in groups or in pairs, enabling a teacher to give support and encouragement where it is required and make assessments. When learning about Gandhi, pupils 'brainstormed' in pairs, with a good level of 'on task chat', showing their grasp of the lesson's salient points. Pupils' good behaviour and keen interest are strong factors in facilitating their learning. Those with special educational needs are well supported. Good opportunities are provided for developing speaking and listening skills, using introductions, tasks and plenary sessions organised within lessons. Work is consistently marked, although teachers make few comments to aid future learning. Homework is set, encouraging (for example) pupils to elicit information from parents and grandparents about the types of food they ate as children.
104. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator. History is taught through a range of topics. A history scheme of work consists in part of well-written lesson plans with clear learning objectives, which teachers regularly adapt and evaluate. Consideration is being given to the fuller use of some Qualifications and Curriculum Authority materials. Teachers plan satisfactorily across year groups. Half-termly planning is well monitored and teachers observe each other's lessons, sharing strengths

and weaknesses between them. The co-ordinator keeps an excellent file showing the provision made for history and how the subject is being monitored and developed. Good resources are categorised and stored under topics. There is a good range of artefacts and a museum loan scheme is fully exploited. Good use is made of visits to (for example) a stately home for a 'Victorian' experience. A Year 2 field study visit provides good opportunities for studying history within the community.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

105. Standards of work are in line with national expectations by the time pupils leave the school. As national expectations have risen since the last inspection, this outcome represents an improvement in attainment since the previous inspection.
106. By the end of the key stage, pupils competently communicate ideas in picture form using a painting program for their project on 'Food and Drink'. In Year 1, they explore a multimedia program, seeing that it conveys information through words, sound and pictures. In art, pupils use a computer to select clip-art images for pasting into their work. A variety of tasks in information technology provides scope for pupils to progress in knowledge and skills. Word processing is notable and is done well. Pupils composed passages about themselves for their topic 'Our Journey', for example. In Year 2, pupils prepared kit lists for their residential visit, putting a string of items into list form by using the return/enter key. They typed labels for a key to the 'Treasure Island' map in the school hall, using a suitably large font. In mathematics, pupils learn that information can be represented as graphs using computer facilities. Across the key stage, they print out their work mostly unaided. There is effective consolidation of skills achieved while giving commands to the computer and when using other similar equipment.
107. Pupils respond well and confidently to information technology. They attend to instructions, offering ideas and explanations to on-screen questioning. For example, in the 'Lesson Maker' element of 'Information Around Us', pupils ask, enthusiastically, 'what made the noise?'
108. Across the key stage, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers provide good opportunities for skill development and give positive feedback and encouragement. When teaching skills directly, teachers are informative, supportive and challenging. They have very good relationships with pupils whom they motivate well. Teachers draw effectively on pupils' own experience and knowledge of information technology. Teaching is especially effective when provision is made to do cross-curricular work on a computer. For example, two Year 2 pupils compiled a list of high frequency words with the 'ur' and 'er' sounds in them from a story and printed them out to share with their class as part of a literacy lesson.
109. Co-ordination of the subject is effective. Together with advisory help, its co-ordination has been instrumental in increasing staff confidence in using computers. A related subject policy and scheme of work illustrates how teaching skills should be developed across the school. An audit of resources has identified shortages in computer programs and hardware. Funding from the National Grid for Learning became available to the school immediately following the inspection, thus ensuring planned improvements can take place. The co-ordinator has sensibly drawn up a priority list of developments that take regard of the possibility of acquiring a computer suite.

## **MUSIC**

110. Pupils achieve standards in line with what is expected for their age in each curriculum element, by the time they reach the end of the key stage. This outcome represents an improvement since the previous inspection. The school has successfully addressed weaknesses identified in that inspection's Report and is in a good position to develop the subject further.
111. In Year 1, pupils build well on skills/knowledge and understanding acquired in the Nursery and Reception classes. They know a wide repertoire of songs by heart. They enjoy singing as a year group when accompanied by the piano. The quality of their singing is generally good. However, opportunities for improving performance are lost when teaching does not emphasise the practising and developing of needed skills. Pupils perform actions to the songs correctly. Ones who are chosen play instruments, such as triangles, castanets and shakers, in time to a rhythm. In a class lesson, pupils recognise the rhythm of familiar nursery rhymes when the teacher taps or claps one out. As chime bars are passed around a class, each successive group improves its performance

and manages to keep time accurately in line with the teacher's beat. Pupils work co-operatively in pairs or in small groups to create their own compositions of sound patterns. They show good understanding of how to use visual images and letter sounds on charts with different sized spaces representing short or sustained musical notation.

112. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy singing as a year group. They come in on time after an introduction and sing pleasantly in tune to the piano. They can modulate their voices when reminded that "good singing is not shouting" and do so to very good effect. They improve a performance by repeating each line of a verse after their teacher, practising with piano accompaniment. Such a teaching strategy is very effective. In class lessons, pupils listen attentively to taped music and identify different styles, with words aptly chosen to describe these. For example, they suggest 'calming' and 'choey' after listening to a chant from an Abbey. Pupils explain musical terms such as 'dynamics' or 'tempo'. They enjoy creating musical textures. They hold instruments correctly, shaking, striking and beating them so that a suitable sound is achieved. Pupils maintain a simple rhythm and keep time to their teacher's guitar accompaniment. When listening to taped music, many beat time with their hand or play an imaginary instrument. For example, they simulate playing a violin with a bow, or pretend to move the slide of a trombone in and out, making appropriate mouth movements.
113. Pupils evidently enjoy all aspects of lessons. They work well together - for example, to achieve an agreed sound-pattern when composing. They like listening to music. In Year 2, they enjoy the contrast between a Latin American rhythm and the sound of violins in a piece by Sade. Pupils quite obviously like playing instruments and take great pride when it is their turn to play.
114. Teaching is most frequently of good quality and is not less than satisfactory. Teachers generally plan and organise lessons effectively. They maintain a good pace, sustaining interest with a variety of activities usually built around two musical elements. Teachers consistently use subject vocabulary to good effect. They provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to perform in lessons, so achieving a good level of participation as well as helping pupils grasp skills involved - for example, the need for a performer to be heard and seen by everyone in an audience.
115. The co-ordinator is committed and enthusiastic. She has worked hard since the previous inspection to make sure the scheme of work supports teachers' planning successfully, addressing issues relating to some teachers' lack of confidence. Realistically, she awaits guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority before reviewing the existing scheme of work. She rightly identifies the need to ensure planning encompasses the full age-range taught, so that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are built on from the Nursery to Year 2. It is evident from the co-ordinator's records that pupils engage in a stimulating range of musical activities across the school year and that interesting links are made with other subjects where practicable.
116. To enhance provision, professional musicians are invited into school. Importantly, they extend pupils' musical experience through workshops. Pupils also participate in whole-school musical events, such as a Christmas concert. At the meeting prior to the inspection, it was stated enthusiastically that everyone, including parents and members of the local community, enjoys these.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. By the time they are seven, pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. The school has maintained standards reached at the last inspection. All the lessons observed on this inspection were indoors, although these lessons included a mixture of gymnastics, dance and indoor games.
118. Pupils use apparatus effectively, being able to pass through, over and under it well. They land safely coming off apparatus and control their movements when using floor space. In Year 2, pupils fashion a range of imaginative shapes and movements in response to music illustrating the birth of a butterfly. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils also moved imaginatively to the ticking of a clock and the sounds of its chimes. In games, pupils throw and catch small balls skilfully. Some pupils extend their skills by bouncing balls and judging distances accurately. This enables them to throw with appropriate speed and force, sometimes using a bowling action.
119. Teaching is good, with activities well planned to promote good learning. Lessons have lots of pace

so that pupils rarely stand around waiting for turns on apparatus or for instructions from a class teacher. Good attention is paid to warming up activities and to safety on apparatus. Appropriate and interesting music in dance stimulates pupils' interest and they respond well to the direction and guidance of the teacher. Skills' development in games is promoted well, with good attention paid to refining throwing and catching skills. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and the modelling of skills and procedures by teachers helps to raise standards.

120. The co-ordination of the subject is good. The scheme of work has been recently reviewed as a good base for further development. Time allocated to the subject is now in line with that generally recommended and pupils' progress is regularly assessed. This marks an improvement since the last inspection. There is a clear action plan for the subject and this plan incorporates staff development and strategies for exploiting related skills within the wider curriculum. Good equipment contributes significantly to standards attained. A spacious hall supports the teaching of gymnastic activities and indoor games.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. Standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have gained a satisfactory understanding of Christianity and other world religions through looking at 'special people' and places, things and journeys and through studying the way people of different faiths worship. They learn about their own place in a family, how people care for one another and that religious belief often guides people's lives.

122. Pupils' attitudes to religious education are good and this attitude is linked to the school's very positive approach to the subject. Pupils are not only taught facts about religion but are also expected to reflect on the meaning and relevance to their experiences of what they are taught. In a good lesson, where pupils learned about Jesus the healer and miracle worker, pupils were able to recall some of the healing miracles and went on to consider how the people felt when they had been cured and the difference being fit and healthy makes to our lives. Religious education satisfactorily contributes to pupils' spiritual development and, through a study of other world religions, it makes a good contribution also to their cultural development. When looking at Hindu festivals and celebrations, pupils learned about angoli patterns, making their own. When learning about Islam, they looked at Islamic art and design.

123. Overall, teaching in religious education is satisfactory. At times, it is better than this. Themes are introduced very effectively through stories and presentations in assemblies. An assembly story from Hinduism was told in so dramatic a way pupils were held spellbound. Good use of an overhead projector illustrated the story and the scene was set with diva lamps and Indian music. The story illustrated people's belief that God is caring and looks after us. This assembly was recalled through class lessons about caring, during which pupils reflected its importance and what it means to care for others.

124. Good links are made with literacy through extended writing and opportunities for speaking and listening are exploited well during stories and discussions.

125. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator who has a clear view of the subject and its development. A scheme of work is being reviewed to match learning objectives more directly related to the locally agreed syllabus. At present, it consists of well-written lesson plans which teachers use. The co-ordinator gains a good oversight of classroom practices through a planned programme of monitoring activities. Assessment sheets, which record pupils' responses to religious education as well as improvements in knowledge and understanding, are being trialled. Resources are satisfactory. Visitors to the school are much appreciated. These visitors include a classical Indian dancer who danced the story of Rama and Sita and the 'mothers in Religious Education' group, who talk to groups of pupils about Islam. In Year 2, pupils taking part in a field study visit have an opportunity to study a village church.